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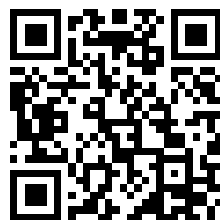
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ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

1638—1842.

of 17. 3. 1. 28th in 17

ACTS

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

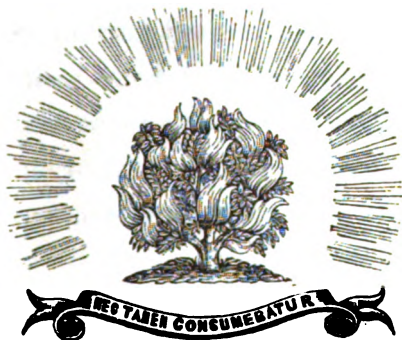
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

M.DC.XXXVIII.—M.DCCC.XLII.

REPRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITION, UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE

OF

THE CHURCH LAW SOCIETY.



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PREFACE.

THE extreme difficulty of obtaining a complete set of the Acts of the General Assembly, unless at a very exorbitant price, has long rendered a new and more compressed edition most desirable. Several years ago, the matter was brought under the notice of the Assembly, who appointed a committee with the view of considering whether this important object might not be attained. This committee was again and again renewed; but although it is believed that some progress was made in obtaining subscribers to the intended work, nothing effectual was accomplished.

Impressed with the importance of having the Acts of the Church in a form accessible, not merely to Kirk-Sessions and other Judicatories, but also to the Office-bearers of the Church individually, and her Members in general, and encouraged by the countenance so generally given to their Book of "Styles," THE CHURCH LAW SOCIETY have ventured to undertake the publication of a new edition of the Acts.

At a meeting of the Society, held in May 1842, a committee, consisting of the Rev. Mr Petrie of Kirkwall, Dr Cunningham of Edinburgh, Mr Pitcairn of Cockpen, Mr Omond of Monzie, and Mr Wood of Westruther, with Mr James Crawford, jun., W.S., and Mr William Wood, Accountant, was appointed for the purpose of taking the necessary steps for carrying the work into execution. The committee immediately entered on their labours; and having succeeded in completing the work, the Society has now the satisfaction of presenting, in one volume, the Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, from 1638 to 1842, inclusive.

As the proceedings of the Assembly do not constitute any part of the law of the Church, and as a republication of them would have swelled the work to an inconvenient size, and added very largely to the expense, these have been omitted in the present edition ; and, in the Acts themselves, all mere matters of form have been avoided, such as the Royal Commission, the Sovereign's Letter, with the Assembly's Answer, the Commission for discussing Affairs referred to them, and the Commission for managing the Royal Bounty. In regard to these, however, nothing of importance is omitted. The Royal Letter and Answer are always given when circumstances connected with the particular time, or with the communications themselves, appear to invest them with more than usual interest. The special Addresses to the Throne, of which there are many, are printed with scarcely an exception. Any change in the terms of either of the Commissions annually appointed by the Assembly is uniformly noticed. In the earlier Acts, the names of the Ministers and Elders appointed as Commissioners are generally given, also in a few cases in subsequent years, where, from particular circumstances, their insertion may be interesting. Notices are occasionally given, from the Abridgment of the Proceedings, of important discussions which took place in the General Assembly.

In regard to the many Overtures which appear among the printed Acts of the original edition, care has been taken in each case to ascertain whether an Act was ultimately passed on the subject ;—if so, reference is made accordingly, and the Overture is not printed ; but where the Overture does not appear to have been enacted, the fact is stated in a note, and the Overture itself is given at length.

Copious Indices have been appended to this Edition, which it is hoped will add much to its value, as the want of these has long been felt. Besides a Table of Contents, which appears at the commencement, there is a full Index of Matter, an Index also of Proper Names, with Lists of Royal Commissioners, Moderators, Clerks, Procurators, and Agents, from 1638 to the present date.

In passing through the press, the work has been compared with the Assembly's copy of the Acts, the use of which was kindly granted, and all possible care has been taken to secure accuracy. It is earnestly hoped, therefore, by those who have undertaken the work, that it will meet with the approbation of the Office-bearers and friends of the Church; and that it will not only be found a valuable acquisition in the conduct of the business of our Ecclesiastical Judicatories, but that it will be instrumental in making the history and actings of the Church of Scotland more generally known and better understood.

THOMAS PITCAIRN,

Convener of Committee of Church Law Society.

15TH MAY 1843.

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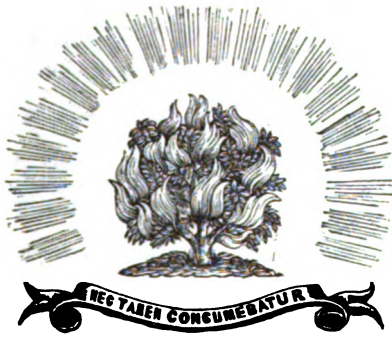
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CONTENTS.

	1638.	PAGE
To the Reader,		1
Act for trying the Registers,		2
approving the Registers,		3
condemning the Six Pretended Assemblies holden at Linlithgow, &c.,		5
against the unlawful Oaths of Intrants, exacted by the Prelates,		8
condemning the Service-Book, Book of Canons, Book of Ordination, and the High Commission,		9
deposing the pretended Bishops,		10
declaring Episcopacy to be abjured and removed out of the Kirk,		13
declaring the Five Articles to have been abjured, and to be removed,		18
restoring the Judicatories of the Kirk,		21
anent Constitutions to be removed or made new,		ib.
against Ministers who acquiesce not in the sentence of Deposition,		29
against the Civil Places and Power of Kirkmen,		ib.
repressing the Licentiousness of the Press, to the Prejudice of the Kirk, and discharging the printing of any proceedings connected with the Kirk, without warrant from the Clerk,		30
against such as will not acknowledge this Assembly,		ib.
appointing Presbyteries, Burghs, Universities, and Kirk-Sessions, to have a copy of the Acts of Assembly,		ib.
concerning the Confession of Faith, renewed in February 1638,		31
concerning the subscribing the Confession of Faith, lately subscribed by his Majesty's Commissioner, and urged to be subscribed by others, (1638,)		ib.
concerning yearly General Assemblies,		32
ordaining an humble Supplication to be sent to the King's Majesty,		ib.
	1639.	
Act ordaining the pretended Bishop of Orkney's abjuration of Episcopacy to be registered,		35
containing the causes and remedies of the bygone evils of the Kirk,		36
approving an old Register of the Assembly,		37
approving the Deposition of the Ministers by the Committees,		38
anent receiving of Deposed Ministers,		ib.
anent the keeping of the Lord's Day,		ib.
containing Articles and Overtures approved by the Assembly, anent printing of the Acts, and sundry other matters,		39
the Supplication of the General Assembly to the King's Majesty's Commissioner, concerning the book called "The Large Declaration,"		ib.
the Supplication of the Assembly to his Majesty's Commissioner and the Lords of Secret Council,		40
The Act of the Lords of Council at Edinburgh, Aug. 30, 1639, containing the Answer to the preceding Supplication,		41
The King's Majesty's Commissioner's Declarations,		ib.
Act ordaining the subscription of the Confession of Faith and Covenant, with the Assembly's Declaration,		ib.
anent Appellations,		42

	PAGE
Act anent advising with Presbyteries and Synods before determination in Novations,	42
anent Ministers Catechising, and Family Exercises,	43
The Assembly's Supplication to the King's Majesty,	ib.
1640.	
Overtures anent the ordering of the Assembly-house,	44
Act anent the demolishing of Idolatrous Monuments,	ib.
against Witches and Charmers,	ib.
for censuring Speakers against the Covenant,	45
against expectants refusing to subscribe the Covenant,	ib.
1641.	
His Majesty's Letter,	45
Act approving the Overtures of Assembly at Aberdeen, for ordering the Assembly-house,	46
anent old Ministers bruiking their benefices,	ib.
against sudden receiving Deposed Ministers,	ib.
approving Overtures anent Universities,	ib.
against Impiety and Schism,	47
anent Novations,	48
approving Overtures anent Bursars and Expectants,	ib.
against Unlawful Bands,	ib.
Letter from some Ministers in England to the Assembly,	49
The Assembly's Answer thereto,	50
The Assembly's Answer to the King's Letter,	51
Act anent the Kirk of Campheir, (Campvere,)	52
1642.	
His Majesty's Letter,	52
Act for bringing in of the Synod-books yearly to the Assembly,	53
anent the choosing of Kirk-Sessions,	ib.
approving the Interpretation of the Act at Edinburgh, relative to Trial of Ministers,	54
anent the orders for making Lists to his Majesty and other Patrons for Presentations; the order of Trial of Expectants, and for trying the quality of Kirks,	ib.
anent Lists for the Kirks in the Highlands,	55
approving Overtures against Papists, Non-Communicants, and Profaners of the Sabbath,	56
anent the joining of the Presbytery of Skye to the Synod of Argyle,	ib.
The Supplication of this Assembly to the King's Majesty,	57
The Declaration of the Parliament of England sent to the Assembly,	58
The Assembly's Answer thereto,	ib.
Act approving Overtures for Transplantation of Ministers and Provision of Schools, ordained by the late Assembly at Edinburgh to be sent to Synods, and reported to this Assembly,	61
anent contrary Oaths,	63
approving Overtures anent Family Exercises, Catechising, Keeping of Synods and Presbyteries, and restraint of Adulteries, Witchcrafts, and other gross sins,	64
against Petitions, Declarations, and such like, in name of Ministers, without their knowledge and consent,	ib.
anent the Assembly's Desires to the Lords of Council and Conservators of Peace,	ib.
The Assembly's humble Desire to the King's Majesty for the Signator of L.500 sterling, and recommendation thereof to the King's Commissioner,	65
The Assembly's Letter to the Commissioners of this Kingdom at London,	ib.
A Letter from some Ministers of England,	66
Answer thereto,	67
Act for the Lord Maitland's presenting the Assembly's Supplication to his Majesty, and for going to the Commissioners at London, with the Answer to the Parliament of England's Declaration,	i.

	PAGE
Commission for Public Affairs of the Kirk,	68
Petition from some distressed Professors in Ireland,	69
Commission to some Ministers to go to Ireland,	70
Act against Slandering of Ministers,	71
anent ordering of the Assembly-house,	72
for remembering in Public Prayers the Desires of the Assembly to the King and Parliament, and Indiction of a Public Fast,	ib.
Reference from the Presbytery of Kirkaldy, with Answer thereto,	ib.
Reference from the Synod of Fife, with Answer thereto,	ib.
Overtures to be advised by Presbyteries against the next Assembly,	73

1643.

His Majesty's Letter,	73
Act ordaining Overtures anent Bills, &c., to be given to Committees for their direction,	ib.
for election of Professors to be Commissioners to Assemblies by Presbyteries,	74
Petition of distressed Professors in Ireland for Ministers,	ib.
Act for subscribing the Covenant,	75
for searching books tending to Separation,	ib.
approving of the Proceedings of the Commissions of last Assembly,	76
Propositions given by the Commissioners of the Parliament of England to a Committee, to be presented by them to the Assembly,	ib.
Declaration of the Lords and Commons in the Parliament of England to the General Assembly,	77
Letter from Brethren in the Ministry in the Kirk of England,	78
Act against Burials, and hanging of honours, &c., in Kirks,	79
anent Reposition of Ministers deposed by Superior Judicatories,	ib.
against Masters who have Servants that profane the Lord's Day,	ib.
for preparing the Directory for the Worship of God,	ib.
Propositions from the English Commissioners presented to the Assembly,	80
Accompanying paper,	81
Act, with Recommendation to Presbyteries and Universities anent Students that have the Irish language,	82
Letter from the Assembly of Divines in the kingdom of England,	83
The result of the debates and consultations of the Committees of the Convention of Estates and General Assembly, appointed to meet with the Commissioners of the Parliament of England,	85
Act approving of the League and Covenant,	86
The Assembly's humble Desires to his Majesty anent the Lists for Presentations, with a recommendation to Presbyteries,	ib.
Commission for Ministers to go to Ireland,	87
Act against Ministers haunting with Excommunicated Persons,	88
anent an order for using civil execution against Excommunicated Persons,	ib.
The Assembly's Answer to the King's Letter,	ib.
The Assembly's Answer to the Declaration of the Parliament of England,	89
The Assembly's Answer to the Assembly of Divines in the Church of England,	90
The Assembly's Answer to the Ministers in England,	92
Commission of the Assembly to those that are sent to England,	94
Reference to the Commission anent the persons sent to England,	ib.
Commission for the Public Affairs of this Kirk,	ib.
Appointment of next Meeting of Assembly,	96

1644.

Letter from the Presbytery with the Army in England to the General Assembly,	96
Petition from the distressed Christians in the North of Ireland,	97
Act for the present entry of the newly erected Presbytery at Biggar,	98
concerning the Declaration subscribed by the Scottish Lords at Oxford,	99
against the Rebels in the North and South,	ib.
against Secret Disaffectors of the Covenant,	ib.
for sending Ministers to the Army,	100
Renovation of the Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk,	ib.

	PAGE
Renovation of the Commission granted to the persons appointed to repair to England,	101
The Assembly's Answer to the Presbytery with the Army,	ib.
Letter from the Commissioners at London to the General Assembly,	ib.
Letter from the Synod of Divines in the Kirk of England to the General Assembly,	103
The Assembly's Answer to the Assembly of Divines in the Kirk of England,	105
The Assembly's Answer to their Commission at London,	107
The Assembly's Letter to the Kirks in the Netherlands,	108
Ordinance concerning Bursars,	110
Ordinance for uplifting Penalties contained in Acts of Parliament upon pious uses,	ib.
Overture concerning Promises of Marriage made by Minors, to those with whom they have committed Fornication,	ib.
Act concerning Dissenting voices in Presbyteries and Synods,	111
concerning the Election of a Moderator in Provincial Assemblies,	ib.
for keeping the Fast by the Congregation in the Town where the Assembly holds,	ib.
Appointment of next Meeting of Assembly,	ib.

1645.

Letter from the Commissioners at London to the Assembly,	111
Letter from the Synod of Divines in England to the General Assembly,	113
Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission of the two preceding Assemblies,	115
Act for Establishing and putting in Execution of the Directory for the Public Worship of God,	ib.
Approbation of Overtures for Advancement of Learning and good order in Grammar Schools and Colleges,	117
The Assembly's Petition to the High Court of Parliament,	118
Overtures Ordained to be observed respecting Bursars of Theology,	119
Opinion of the Committee for keeping the greater uniformity in this Kirk in the Practice and Observation of the Directory in some points of Public Worship, and approbation thereof by the Assembly,	120
Act approving the Propositions concerning Kirk Government, and Ordination of Ministers,	121
Solemn and Seasonable Warning to the Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burghs, Ministers, and Commons of Scotland; as also to the Scottish Armies without and within the Kingdom,	122
Act against Lykwakes,	128
recommending Sessions to have the Printed Acts of Assembly,	ib.
for Censuring the Observers of Yule Day, and other Superstitious Days, especially if they be Scholars,	ib.
for encouragement of Scholars to Professions in Schools,	129
for restraining Abuses at Penny Bridals,	ib.
discharging Deposed Ministers to be Reponed to their former place,	ib.
Renovation of the Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk,	ib.
Renovation of the Commission to those appointed to repair to the Westminster Assembly,	131
The Assembly's Letter to the Westminster Assembly,	ib.
The Assembly's Remonstrance to his Majesty the King,	132
The Assembly's Answer to their Commissioners at London,	134
Recommendation to Presbyteries to consider matters formerly referred to them,	135

1646.

The King's Letter to the Assembly,	135
Act concerning the Registers and Acts of Provincial Assemblies,	136
concerning the Public Satisfaction of Married Persons for Fornication committed before Marriage,	ib.
Ordinance for Excommunication of the Earl of Seaforth,	ib.
Enormities and Corruptions observed to be in the Ministry, with the Remedies thereof,	137
Approbation of the Proceedings of Assembly 1645,	139
Act for Joining the Presbyteries of Orkney and Zetland to the Provincial of Caithness,	140
concerning Expectants Preaching in Public,	ib.

	PAGE
Act for Censuring the Compliers with the Public Enemies of the Kirk,	140
concerning James Graham's Proclamation,	141
against Loosing of Ships and Barks on the Lord's Day,	ib.
anent Children sent without the Kingdom,	ib.
Approbation of Overtures presented to the Assembly,	142
Renovation of the Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk,	ib.
Renovation of Commission for Prosecuting Treaty for Uniformity in England,	143
The Assembly's Answer to the King's Majesty,	144
The Assembly's Letter to the Parliament of England,	ib.
The Assembly's Letter to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of London,	145
The Assembly's Letter to the Assembly at Westminster,	146
Recommendation to Presbyteries and Synods,	147
Act for Public Fast before next Assembly,	ib.

1647.

Act allowing the Half of the Presbytery of Zetland only to keep the Provincial Assembly of Caithness,	148
A Declaration and Brotherly Exhortation of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to their Brethren of England,	ib.
Act for observing the Directions of the Assembly for Secret Worship and Mutual Edification, and for Censuring such as neglect Family Worship,	154
The said Directions,	ib.
Act against such as withdraw themselves from Public Worship in their own Congregation,	157
approving the proceedings of the Commission of Assembly 1646,	158
approving of the Confession of Faith,	ib.
for Revising the Paraphrases of the Psalms brought from England, with a recommendation for Translating the other Scriptural Songs in Metre,	159
recommending the execution of the Act of Parliament at Perth, for uplifting Pecunial Pains, to be employed upon Pious Uses, and of all Acts of Parliament made against Excommunicated Persons,	160
discharging the Importing, Vending, or Spreading of Erroneous Books or Papers,	ib.
for debarring Compliers in the First Class from Ecclesiastical Office,	ib.
for censuring Absents from the General Assembly,	161
Renovation of former Acts for Trial and Admission of Expectants to the Ministry,	ib.
Renovation of the Commission for prosecuting the Treaty for Uniformity in England,	ib.
Renovation of the Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk,	162
Desires and Overtures from the Commissioners of Universities, and the Assembly's Answer thereto,	163
Assembly's Letter to their Countrymen in Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and Hungary,	ib.
Act concerning the Hundred and Eleven Propositions,	164
Desires and Overtures presented from Presbyteries and Synods, with the Assembly's Answer thereto,	166
Recommendation to Presbyteries and Provincial Assemblies to report in matters formerly referred to them,	ib.

1648.

Letter from the Synod of Divines in England to the General Assembly,	166
Act concerning Commissioners from Burghs,	167
concerning the Examining of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of Assemblies,	ib.
approving the proceedings of the Commission of the preceding Assembly,	168
approving of the Larger Catechism,	ib.
against sudden Admitting of Deposed Ministers to particular Congregations,	ib.
Assembly's Answer to the Paper sent from the Committee of Estates of 24th July,	ib.
Act and Declaration against the Act of Parliament and Committee of Estates, ordained to be subscribed the 10th and 12th of June, and against all new Oaths or Bonds in the common cause, imposed without consent of the Church,	170
approving of the Shorter Catechism,	171

	PAGE
Act discharging a little Catechism printed at Edinburgh, 1647,	171
Declaration of the Assembly concerning the present Dangers of Religion, and especially the Unlawful Engagement in War against the Kingdom of England, with Exhortations and Directions to all the Members of the Kirk,	ib.
The Assembly's Answer to the Paper sent from the Committee of Estates, of date July 28,	181
Declaration and Exhortation of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to their Brethren of England,	183
Answer to the Letter of the Assembly of Divines in England,	186
The humble Supplication of the Assembly to the Committee of Estates,	187
Act for Censuring Ministers for their Silence, and not Speaking to the Corruptions of the times,	188
Approbation of Overtures concerning the Education of the Highland Boys in the Province of Argyle,	189
Explanation of the Fifth Article of Overtures anent Appeals passed in 1643,	190
Act discharging Deposed or Suspended Ministers from any exercise of the Ministry, or Meddling with the Stipend,	ib.
Declaration of the Falsehood and Forgery of a Lying, Scandalous Pamphlet, put forth under the name of Mr Alexander Henderson, after his death,	ib.
Act for taking the Covenant at the first receiving of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and for the receiving it also by all Students at their entry to Colleges,	191
concerning Presbyteries maintaining Bursars,	ib.
for disjoining the Presbytery of Zetland from the Synod of Orkney and Caithness,	ib.
Approbation of Overtures for the Remedies of the grievous and common Sins of the Land,	192
Act for Examining the Paraphrase of the Psalms, and other Scriptural Songs,	194
Overtures concerning Papists, their Children, and Excommunicated Persons, ordained to be observed by Presbyteries,	ib.
Act for Prosecuting the Treaty for Uniformity in Religion in the Kingdom of England,	196
renewing the Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk,	ib.
Exemption of Moray, Ross, and Argyle, from the Contribution granted to the Boys of Argyle, with a recommendation to Presbyteries to make up what is taken from them by this Exemption,	197
Act concerning Collections for the Poor,	198
Recommendation for Securing Provisions to Ministers in Burghs,	ib.
The Supplication of the Assembly to the King's Majesty,	ib.
Act Discharging Duels,	200
concerning Deposed Ministers,	ib.

1649.

Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of Assembly,	200
Approbation of the Commissioners sent to his Majesty,	201
Act Discharging Promiscuous Dancing,	ib.
concerning the Receiving of Engagers in the Unlawful War against England to Public satisfaction, with the Declaration to be Subscribed by them,	ib.
Supplication to Parliament,	203
A seasonable Warning and Declaration concerning Present and Imminent Dangers, and concerning Duties relating thereto, from the Assembly to the Members of the Kirk,	ib.
Act concerning Catechising,	211
Commission for Public Affairs,	ib.
Directory for Election of Ministers,	212
A Brotherly Exhortation from the Assembly to their Brethren in England,	213
Act for a Collection to Maintain Highland Boys at School,	216
Commission for a Conference of Ministers, Lawyers, and Physicians, concerning the Trial and Punishment of Witchcraft, Charming, and Consulting,	ib.
Recommendation for Maintenance of Schoolmasters and Precentors,	217
Act concerning Bursars,	ib.
Reference to the Commission for Public Affairs for Re-examining the Paraphrase of the Psalms, and Emitting the same for Public use,	ib:
Letter to the King,	ib.

CONTENTS.

iv

	PAGE
Presbyteries and Synods recommended to consider matters referred to them, .	220

1690.

1. Meeting of the Assembly, and Recording of their Majesty's Commission to Lord Carmichael,	221
2. His Majesty's Letter to the Assmbly,	222
3. The Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's Letter,	ib.
4. Appointment of a Diet for Prayer,	223
5. Proceedings anent Mr Thomas Lining and others,	224
6. Act anent Ministers that observe not the Public Orders of the Church,	225
7. approving Overtures anent Subscribing the Confession of Faith, &c.,	ib.
8. approving the Associations of Presbyteries,	226
9. against Ministers removing out of this Church,	ib.
10. anent the Administration of the Sacraments,	ib.
11. approving Overtures anent the Irish Bibles, &c.,	227
12. anent a National Fast, with the causes thereof,	ib.
13. against Sentences passed against Ministers from the year 1650, &c.,	230
14. The Assembly's Letter to his Majesty,	231
15. Instructions to the Commission for Visitations on the North and South side of Tay,	232
16. Commission for Visitations on the South side of Tay,	233
17. Commissions for Visitations on the North side of Tay,	234
18. Commission for Mr Gilbert Rule and Mr David Blair, to wait on his Majesty anent the affairs of this Church,	ib.

1694.

1. The Recording of their Majesties' Commission to Lord Carmichael,	235
2. Appointment of a Diet for Prayer,	ib.
3. Assembly's Letter to his Majesty, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act anent the giving in of Commissions,	236
5. anent the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly,	ib.
6. for regulating Transportation of Ministers, &c.,	ib.
7. anent the giving in of Processes,	237
8. anent Appeals,	ib.
9. anent Lecturing,	238
10. anent Probationers,	ib.
11. approving Overtures anent a Commission of the General Assembly, and Instructions thereto,	239
12. anent Processes against Ministers,	241
13. against Profaneness,	ib.
14. appointing some Ministers for the supply of the North,	ib.
15. Recommendation anent Vacant Stipends,	243
16. Act anent Intrusion upon Kirks,	ib.
17. anent Exercise and Addition, Privy Censures, and Bursars of Theology,	ib.
18. Commission of the General Assembly for Commissioners to meet at Edinburgh,	ib.
19. Commission for the North side of Tay,	244
20. Act anent the Irish Psalms,	ib.
21. against fixing, in the Lowlands, of Preachers who have the Irish Language,	245

1695-6.

1. Meeting of the Assembly,	245
2. Act continuing Mr John Law Moderator till Friday,	ib.
3. appointing Mr John Bannatyne to officiate as Clerk, <i>pro tempore</i> ,	246
4. Appointment of a Diet for Prayer,	ib.
5. Appointment of a Diet for Prayer,	ib.
6. Diet spent in Prayer,	ib.
7. Recording of the King's Commission to Lord Carmichael, with the Commissioners and Moderator's Speeches,	ib.
8. Act anent Commissions to the General Assembly,	247

	PAGE
9. Act anent trafficking Priests, and the education of young Noblemen, Gentlemen, and others, Children of Popish Parents,	247
10. anent Quakers,	248
11. Overture and Act anent Novations,	ib.
12. Act approving Overtures anent a more speedy and certain way of Planting the North,	ib.
13. anent Testimonials in the Case of Probationers,	250
14. anent the Supply of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness,	ib.
15. nominating and appointing Ministers to go North,	251
16. approving Proceedings of Commissions of 1690 and 1694,	ib.
17. approving Proceedings of Committee for the North, 1690,	ib.
18. recommending to Ministers to preach Catechetical Doctrine,	ib.
19. anent Recommendations for Charity,	252
20. appointing Commission,	ib.
21. against the Atheistical Opinions of the Deists, and for establishing the Confession of Faith,	253
22. anent Students,	ib.
23. anent Irregularities committed by Vagrant Ministers,	254
24. Letter to his Majesty,	ib.
25. Act continuing Supplies for the North,	255
26. declaring Appeals from the Committee of Assembly, 1694, for the North, to be fallen from and null,	ib.
27. and Sentence of Suspension against Mr John Hepburn,	ib.

1697.

1. Act recording his Majesty's Commission,	256
2. His Majesty's Letter,	257
3. Act for enrolling the names of all Probationers and Students of Divinity,	ib.
4. Answer to the King's Letter,	258
5. Act anent Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastical Judicatories,	ib.
6. anent those Ministers who have not obeyed the Appointment of last Assembly, concerning the Mission to the North,	259
7. anent Family Worship, and censuring of Elders and Deacons who neglect the same,	ib.
8. for punctual Obedience to Appointments of Ministers, to supply Vacant Churches,	260
9. anent the Method of passing Acts of Assembly, of general concern to the Church, (Barrier Act,)	ib.
10. Overture for punctual sending of Commissioners to General Assemblies,	261
11. Act against Profaneness,	ib.
12. Commission for planting the North, and other affairs,	262
13. Act and Recommendation anent Ministers to the Army,	263
14. appointing some Ministers to go for the supply of the North quarterly,	264
15. Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission of 1696,	265
16. Act approving Overtures anent Instructions to a Commission for the planting of the North,	ib.
17. against the Deists,	267

1698.

1. Act appointing his Majesty's Commission to Lord Carmichael to be recorded,	267
2. His Majesty's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to his Majesty,	268
4. Address by the Assembly to the King,	269
5. Act and Declaration for Vindication of the Church of Scotland from the Calumny of Thomas Gipps, Rector of Bury,	270
6. for punctual sending of Commissioners to the Assembly,	ib.
7. anent the Deficients in supplying the North,	ib.
8. approving Overtures for planting the North,	ib.
9. anent the printed Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastical Judicatories,	272

CONTENTS.

xvii
1772

PAGE

10. Act approving the Proceedings of the Commission of 1697,	273
11. Recommendation anent Subscribing of Synod Records,	ib.
12. Commission for Planting the North, and for other affairs,	ib.
13. Instructions to the Commission for Planting the North, &c.,	274
14. Act appointing Ministers to go to the North,	275
15 to 18. Overtures not printed in this Edition,	276
19. Act appointing Probationers to go North,	ib.
20. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1699.

1. King's Commission to Lord Carmichael,	277
2. His Majesty's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	278
4. Act Annexing Parishes to the Presbyteries of Stranraer and Wigton,	ib.
5. anent Proclamation of Banns,	279
6. anent a Solemn National Fast,	ib.
7. against Profaneness,	280
8. against Popery,	281
9. anent Planting of the Highlands,	282
10. Recommendation to Presbyteries and Synods anent Schools,	ib.
11. Act approving Overtures for Planting the North,	283
12. approving Proceedings of the Commission of 1698,	285
13. anent Subscribing the Confession of Faith,	ib.
14. appointing the Commission,	286
15. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
16. Act approving Overtures for Promoting the Knowledge of God in the Highlands,	287
17. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	288

1700.

1. King's Commission to Viscount Seafeld,	289
2 and 3. King's Letter, with Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act Disjoining the Presbytery of Strathbogie from the Synod of Aberdeen, and annexing the same to Moray,	ib.
5. anent a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation,	290
6. Letter from the Assembly to Mr Alexander Shields, Mr Francis Boreland, Mr Archibald Stobo, and Mr Alexander Dalgleish,	291
7. Act in favour of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland,	293
8. approving Proceedings of Commission of 1699,	ib.
9. anent the Revising of the Registers of Church Judicatories,	ib.
10. anent Schoolmasters, Chaplains, &c.,	294
11. anent Subscribing the Confession of Faith,	ib.
12. appointing Commission to Visit Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross,	295
13. appointing Commission to Visit Zetland, Orkney, and Caithness,	ib.
14. in favour of the Ministers sent North,	296
15. anent Scandalous and Contumacious Persons,	ib.
16. anent the Method of making Overtures and Acts of the General Assembly,	ib.
17. discharging the Printing of any Part of Ecclesiastical Processes without Allowance,	297
18. regulating the Reception of Converts from Popery,	ib.
19. appointing Commission,	ib.
20. Instructions to the Commission,	298
21. Act anent the Supply of the North with Ministers and Probationers,	299
22. and Recommendation anent Mortifications and Visitations of Parishes,	ib.
23. appointing Commission for Visiting the Presbytery of Middlebie,	ib.
24. for rendering Effectual the Supplies of the North,	300
25. Overtures Transmitted, (not printed,)	ib.
26. Act appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

c

	PAGE
1701.	
1. The King's Commission to the Earl of Annandale,	301
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's Letter,	302
4. Act re-transmitting Overtures of Last Year,	ib.
5. approving of Commission of 1700,	303
6. anent the Supply of the North,	ib.
7. disjoining the Synod of Angus and Mearns from Aberdeen,	304
8. Recommendation to Synods anent Bursars having the Irish Language,	ib.
9. Act for a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation,	305
10. condemning the Book, entitled, An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon,	306
11. deposing Dr George Garden,	307
12. approving of Commission sent to Zetland, &c.,	308
13. approving of Commission sent to Angus, Aberdeen, &c.,	309
14. against persons irregularly Licensed or Ordained,	ib.
15. appointing Commission,	ib.
16. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
17. Act for rendering Effectual the Supplies of the North,	310
18. against Intruders into Kirks,	ib.
19. recommending the more frequent Administration of the Lord's Supper,	311
20. against Abuses at Likewakes, &c.,	ib.
21. Overtures transmitted this Year, (not printed,)	ib.
22. Act appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1702.

1. Act recording the King's Commission to the Earl of Marchmont,	312
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. Act anent the Production of Synod Books,	313
4. Appointment of the Assembly anent a Commission, and drawing Instructions thereto,	ib.
5. Act of Recommendation anent Ministers' Stipends,	ib.
6. The Assembly's Answer to the King's Letter,	314
7. Act appointing Commission,	ib.
8. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	315

Address to the Queen on her Accession to the Throne, by the Commission of Assembly 1702,	ib.
--	-----

1703.

1. Act recording Royal Commission to Earl of Seafield,	316
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to the Queen's Letter,	317
4. Act appointing Commission,	318
5. Instructions to the Commission,	319
6. Act anent the better Attendance of Members of the Commission,	320
7. approving Commission of 1701,	ib.
8. Address to the Queen,	ib.
9. Act approving Overtures for Planting Vacancies in the North, &c., and promoting Religion there,	322
10. anent Reception of Converts from Popery,	323
11. for Preserving the Registers belonging to the Assembly, &c.,	ib.
12. anent Overtures concerning Church Discipline,	ib.
13. re-uniting the Parishes of Dalry and Carsphairn to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright,	324
14. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1704.

1. Act recording Royal Commission to Lord Ross,	325
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.

	PAGE
3. The Assembly's Answer to the Queen,	326
4. Act joining the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland, in one Synod,	ib.
5. anent Lecturing and Expounding the Holy Scriptures,	327
6. anent Commissioners to the Assembly, and their Subscribing the Confession of Faith,	ib.
7. anent Citations in Cases of Transportation of Ministers,	ib.
8. anent Scandalous Persons turning Popish,	328
9. anent Excommunication,	ib.
10. anent Students Passing Trials,	ib.
11. anent Profaneness, with a recommendation to the Commission thereanent,	329
12. anent preaching or disseminating Erroneous Doctrine,	ib.
13. for bestowing Bursaries on Students having Irish,	ib.
14. anent erecting Schools in the Highlands,	330
15. approving Proceedings of the Commission, 1703,	331
16. and Recommendation anent Regulation of the Commission of the General Assembly,	ib.
17. anent Libraries in the Highlands,	332
18. against Schism and Disorders, and anent Mr John M'Millan and Mr John Hepburn,	ib.
19. appointing Commission,	333
20. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
21. against Popery, and for sending in the Names of Papists to the Clerks of the Privy Council,	334
22. Recommendation against Protestants marrying with Papists,	ib.
23. Act appointing Presbyteries to send in their Opinions concerning some Overtures transmitted in 1698,	335
24. in favour of the Kirk of Campvere,	ib.
25. anent preparing a Form of Process, and the Overtures concerning Church Discipline,	336
26. anent a Fast,	ib.
27. anent the Registers of the Church,	337
28. recommending Presbyteries to consider Proposals anent Schools,	ib.
29. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in the Ecclesiastical Judicatories of the Church of Scotland, transmitted to the several Presbyteries to be farther considered, and they to send in their opinions thereanent to the General Assembly, or Commission thereof, ib.

1705.

1. Act recording Royal Commission to Marquis of Annandale,	381
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	382
3. The Assembly's Letter to the Queen,	ib.
4. Act concerning the Method and Form of Procedure of Judicatories of the Church against Scandalous Persons,	383
5. concerning Schools and Bursaries, and for instructing Youth in the Principles of Religion,	384
6. concerning the Regulation of the Commissions of the General Assemblies, and the attendance of Members thereon,	385
7. deposing Mr John Hepburn,	ib.
8. approving Commission of 1704,	387
9. against Profanation of the Lord's Day,	ib.
10. recommending the observation of the Directory for Worship,	ib.
11. anent Bursaries,	ib.
12. concerning the Libraries for the Highlands,	388
13. appointing the Commission,	389
14. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
15. Act concerning the attendance of the Members of the Commission,	390
16. concerning Students of Theology and Intrants to the Ministry,	ib.
17. concerning a Solemn Fast and Humiliation,	391
18. concerning the buying and observation of the Acts of the General Assembly,	ib.
19. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	392

1706.

1. Act recording Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow,	392
2 and 3 The Queen's Letter to the Assembly, and Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning the Scripture Songs,	ib.
5. anent the Form of Process,	393
6. recommending Method of giving in Overtures, References, &c., to the General Assembly,	ib.
7. approving of the Proceedings of Commission of Assembly, 1705,	ib.
8. concerning the method of approving the Commission-Book,	394
9. anent Registers,	ib.
10. anent Lecturing,	ib.
11. Recommendation concerning Admission to the Lord's Table,	ib.
12. Act concerning Stipends and Mortifications,	ib.
13. and Recommendation concerning Schoolmasters and Schools and Bursaries,	395
14. Recommendation concerning Penny Bridals,	ib.
15. Act and Recommendation against Profaneness,	ib.
16. and Recommendation concerning Visitation of Parishes, and also Ministerial Visitation of Families,	ib.
17. appointing Commission,	396
18. concerning the Libraries, with Additional Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
19. concerning a solemn National Fast and Humiliation,	397
20. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	398

1707.

1 Act recording Commission to Earl of Glasgow,	398
2 and 3. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly, and Answer thereto, (not printed,)	399
4. Act about Overtures concerning Visitation of Families,	ib.
5. anent Schools in every Parish, and a Contribution thereanent,	ib.
6. anent the Advancement of Learning,	400
7. anent Ministers publishing of Books, &c.,	ib.
8. for suppressing Popery, and preventing the Growth thereof,	401
9. approving of the Proceedings of the Commission of 1706, (not printed,)	403
10. concerning the Synod of Orkney, and erecting another Presbytery there,	ib.
11. approving a Form of Process in the Judicatories of the Church, with relation to Scandals and Censures, with the said Form of Process following, in Nine Chapters,	ib.
12. appointing the Commission,	416
13. Instructions to the Commission of the General Assembly,	417
14. Act concerning Planting of the Highlands, and maintaining Bursars, &c.,	418
15. against Innovations in the Worship of God,	ib.
16. concerning the Scriptural Songs,	419
17. concerning revising the Overtures about the method of Procedure in Ecclesiastical Judicatories,	ib.
18. Address to the Queen,	ib.
19. Act appointing the diet of next Assembly,	420

1708.

1. Act appointing the Queen's Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded,	420
2. Her Majesty's Letter to the Assembly,	421
3. The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's Letter,	ib.
4. Act against Popery,	422
5. Address to the Queen,	423
6. Act for suppressing Schism and Disorders in the Church,	424
7. concerning a solemn National Thanksgiving,	ib.
8. appointing the Commission,	425
9. Instructions to the Commission of Assembly,	ib.
10. Act and Recommendation concerning Ministerial Visitation of Families,	426
11. concerning the Settlement of Ministers and Probationers who have the Irish language,	428

CONTENTS.

xxi

	PAGE
12. Act for the better Observation of the Lord's Day,	429
13. Overture and Recommendation concerning Probationers and Intrants to the Holy Ministry,	ib.
14. Recommendation for preventing competing Calls,	430
15. Act and Reference concerning the publishing a version of Scriptural Songs,	ib.
16. concerning the larger Overtures, about the method of Procedure in Church Judicatories,	ib.
17. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Acts concerning the Proposals about Propagating Christian Knowledge, suppressing Popery, erecting Schools, &c.,	431

1709.

1. Act appointing the Queen's Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded,	432
2 and 3. Queen's Letter and Answer thereto, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning People's Behaviour in time of Divine Worship,	ib.
5. concerning the Planting of the Highlands, and anent Probationers having the Irish language,	ib.
6. and Recommendation for furthering the design of Propagating Christian Knowledge,	433
7. concerning the better attendance of Members on the General Assembly,	434
8. concerning a Fast,	ib.
9. appointing the Commission,	435
10. Instructions to the Commission,	436
11. Act for erecting Public Libraries in Presbyteries,	438
12. against Bourignonism,	ib.
13. concerning the Larger Overtures, &c.,	ib.
14. concerning Bursaries,	439
15. concerning Ministers deposed or suspended, and Probationers silenced,	ib.
16. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1710.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded,	440
2. Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto,	441
4. Overtures anent Probationers, (not printed,)	442
5. Act and Recommendation concerning Soldiers under Scandals,	ib.
6. for a Solemn Fast,	ib.
7. for the due observance thereof,	443
8. concerning Bills or Petitions for Charity,	ib.
9. for suppressing Bourignonism,	ib.
10. concerning Bursaries, and Students having Irish,	444
11. Representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with an Act and Recommendation thereupon,	ib.
12. Act for Preserving the Purity of Doctrine,	446
13. Overtures for Regulating the Calling of Ministers,	447
14. Act appointing the Commission,	ib.
15. Instructions by the Assembly to their Commission,	ib.
16. Act and Reference concerning the Larger Overtures, &c.,	449
17. appointing the diet of next General Assembly,	ib.

1711.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Annandale to be recorded,	450
2. Queen's Letter to the Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
3. Assembly's Answer thereto, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act recommending Prayers for the Queen, and for the Succession to the Throne, in the Protestant line, in the House of Hanover,	ib.
5. concerning Marriage,	ib.
6. Recommendation concerning the Administration of the Lord's Supper,	451
7. Recommendation concerning Family Worship,	ib.

	PAGE
8. Act appointing the Commission,	451
9. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
10. Act concerning Probationers and settling Ministers, with Questions to be proposed to, and Engagements to be taken by them,	453
11. concerning Beggars,	456
12. concerning Students of Divinity, and others who go abroad to Preach the Gospel,	ib.
13. concerning the receiving of Strangers into Church Communion, and Baptizing their Children,	457
14. concerning the Inspection of Universities and Colleges,	ib.
15. concerning Preaching in Vacant Churches,	ib.
16. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overtures transmitted by the Assembly of 1711,	
(1.) Overture concerning Admission of Infants to Baptism, (not printed,)	458
(2.) Overture concerning the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper, (not printed,)	ib.
(3.) Overture concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches, especially <i>tanquam jure devoluto</i> ,	ib.

1712.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Duke of Athol to be recorded,	459
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	460
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto,	ib.
4. Act concerning the Admission of Infants to Baptism,	ib.
5. Representation of the Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, with Act of Assembly thereupon,	462
6. Act concerning the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly,	465
7. directing the right Application of the Money granted by her Majesty for defraying the Public Charges of the Church,	ib.
8. appointing the Commission,	466
9. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
10. Act approving of the Representations and Addresses made by the Commission of the late Assembly to the Queen, concerning the Toleration and Patronages,	467
11. appointing the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper,	471
12. for the further Encouragement of Students having Irish,	472
13. Advice concerning Soldiers under Scandals,	ib.
14. Act concerning the Preservation of the Registers of the General Assembly,	473
15. appointing a Commission to join with the Presbytery of Lorn, for Visiting Lochaber, &c.,	ib.
16. concerning the Oath of Abjuration,	ib.
17. Address to the Queen concerning the Oath of Abjuration,	476
18. Address to the Queen concerning the Representations made to her Majesty by the late Commission,	477
19. Act appointing the diet of next Assembly,	478

1713.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Duke of Athol to be recorded,	478
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto,	479
4. Act containing Directions to the Visitors of Synod-books,	480
5. and Recommendation for furthering Contributions and Subscriptions towards Promoting of Christian Knowledge,	481
6. for maintaining the Unity and Peace of this Church,	482
7. and Recommendation for Teaching the Common Tunes,	483
8. appointing the Commission,	ib.
9. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
10. Act concerning Recommendations in favour of Students to be entered on Trials,	484
11. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

CONTENTS.

xxiii

PAGE

1714.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Duke of Athol to be recorded,	485
2. The Queen's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto,	486
4. The Assembly's Address to the Queen upon her Majesty's Recovery from her late Indisposition,	487
5. Act for the better Execution of the Laws against Profaneness,	ib.
6. for further Regulating the Trials of Probationers,	488
7. for Discouraging unworthy Bursars,	ib.
8. for Restoring and Preserving Unity in the Church,	489
9. approving the Proceedings of the Commission of the last Assembly,	490
10. appointing the Commission,	ib.
11. for procuring the better Execution of former Acts against Popery, and for preventing the Growth thereof,	ib.
12. Address to the Queen concerning the Growth of Popery, &c.,	491
13. Act and Recommendation in favour of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	492
14. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	495

1715.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	495
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly,	496
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto,	ib.
4. Act appointing the Oath taken by his Majesty for Maintaining the Church of Scotland to be recorded,	498
5. for Encouragement of Preachers to be sent to the North, &c.,	499
6. for Preventing of Division in the Church,	ib.
7. for preferring Students having the Irish language to Bursaries,	500
8. appointing a Committee for preserving the Purity of Doctrine, and for considering the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson,	ib.
9. concerning the Grievances of this Church from Toleration, Patronages, &c.,	501
10. appointing Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Preserving and Maintaining Purity of Doctrine, &c.,	503
11. appointing Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them,	ib.
12. recommending a Public Collection for the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	504
13. against Popery and Profanity,	505
14. discharging Prelatical Preachers, and some who profess to be Presbyterians, and separate from this Church, to exercise Church Discipline,	ib.
15. for prosecuting some, who, professing to be Presbyterians, do separate from this Church; and an appointment concerning Papists and Episcopalian Intruders,	506
16. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1716.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	507
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to the King,	508
4. Act for furthering the pious design of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	509
5. appointing the Commission,	510
6. A Congratulatory Address to the King upon suppressing the Rebellion,	ib.
7. Act renewing Commission and Powers given by the late Assembly to their Committee for Preserving and Maintaining the Purity of Doctrine, and for considering the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson,	511
8. for facilitating the Planting of the Highlands,	512
9. empowering the Commission to send Committees to the Highlands, &c.,	ib.
10. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	513

1717.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	513
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to the King, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Recommendation for the further encouragement of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, &c.,	514
5. appointing the Commission,	515
6. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
7. Act concerning the Trial of Students having Irish, who shall be preferred to Bursaries and Licensed,	517
8. for Suppressing of Popery,	ib.
9. for maintaining the Purity of the Doctrine of this Church, and determining the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson,	518
10. discharging Presbyteries to use any Formula in Licensing Probationers, and Ordaining or Admitting Ministers, but such as is or shall be agreed unto by the General Assembly, with a Reference to the Commission of the Presbytery of Auchterarder's carriage in that matter,	519
11. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1718.

1. Act appointing the King's Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	520
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	ib.
4. Act and Recommendation concerning a Fund for maintaining the Indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission,	521
6. discontinuing the Extraordinary Correspondence with the Synod of Angus and Mearns,	522
7. for the better Dispatching the Business of Assemblies,	ib.
8. concerning the Presbytery of Auchterarder,	ib.
9. regulating Elections of Members of the General Assembly,	523
10. concerning the Larger Overtures for Discipline,	524
11. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1719.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	524
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	525
4. Act for Preventing the Growth of Popery, for Encouragement of Ministers, and the Settlement and Provision of Schools,	526
5. Representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with Act thereupon,	527
6. Act concerning the Qualification of Members of the Commission,	529
7. Recommendation concerning Deacons,	ib.
8. Act for the Right Management of the Church's Public Money,	ib.
9. showing the Sin and Evil of Running Unentered Goods, and of the Perjuries at the Custom-houses in Matters of Trade,	530
10. Recommendation against Abuses at Penny Weddings,	531
11. Act appointing the Commission,	ib.
12. for promoting Religion and Learning in the Universities and Colleges,	532
13. appointing the diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1720.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded,	533
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.

	PAGE
4. Act concerning Commissions to Members of the General Assembly, and Attestations of the same,	533
5. concerning a Book, entitled, "The Marrow of Modern Divinity,"	534
6. appointing the Commission,	537
7. and Reference against Popery,	538
8. for preaching Catechetical Doctrine, with Directions therein,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overtures,	
concerning planting Vacant Churches,	539
concerning Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries,	540

1721.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Rothes to be recorded, (not printed,)	541
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission,	ib.
5. and Resolution about the Overtures concerning Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries, and planting Vacant Churches,	543
6. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1722.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded,	543
2. The King's Letter,	544
3. The Assembly's Answer,	ib.
4. Act for the Better Observance of Fasts and Thanksgivings,	545
5. in favour of the Lithuanian Students,	546
6. Address to his Majesty on the Increase of Popery, &c.,	ib.
7. Act concerning Doctrine, confirming and explaining the Acts 5th and 8th of the General Assembly, 1720,	548
8. appointing the Commission,	556
9. against Profaneness, and concerning the Duty of Elders and Deacons,	559
10. concerning Commissions from Universities to the General Assembly,	560
11. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1723.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Hopetoun to be recorded,	560
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	561
4. Address to the King on the Discovery of the late Popish Conspiracy,	ib.
5. Additional Directions to Visitors of Synod-books,	562
6. Act concerning the Election of a Representative in the Assembly from the University of Edinburgh,	563
7. concerning the Form of Commissions from Burghs and Universities to their Representatives in the General Assembly,	ib.
8. concerning the Church's Public Money,	564
9. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
10. enlarging the time allowed by Act 4th, Assembly, 1718, for Contributing to the Fund for Maintaining the Indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers,	ib.
11. anent the Sermon preached by Mr Gabriel Wilson, Minister at Maxton, before the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale,	565
12. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	566

1724.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Findlater to be recorded, (not printed,)	566
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning Commissions from Universities and Burghs,	567

d

	PAGE
5. Act erecting the Synod of Glenelg, and four Presbyteries therein, . . .	567
6. concerning the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper, . . .	568
7. concerning Vagrant Beggars, Maintenance of the Poor, and Recommenda- tions for Charity,	ib.
8. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	569
9. concerning Commissions to Ruling Elders,	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture concerning the Form of a Licence to Probationers,	ib.
as to Ministers, Probationers, Elders, and Deacons, signing the Formula of 1711,	570
1725.	
1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	570
2. The King's Letter,	571
3. The Assembly's Answer,	ib.
4. Act Appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	573
5. erecting the Presbytery of Cairston, and a Synod in Orkney,	ib.
6. appointing a Commission for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end,	574
7. establishing the Forms of Commissions to Members of the General Assembly, and Attestations thereof,	576
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly.	578
1726.	
1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	578
2. The King's Letter,	579
3. The General Assembly's Answer,	ib.
4. Act erecting the Presbytery of Tongue and Synod of Caithness,	581
5. appointing a Solemn National Fast,	ib.
6. appointing a Commission for Managing the Royal Bounty, &c.,	582
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	584
8. altering the Form of Commissions from Universities,	ib.
9. regulating Transportation of Ministers settled in Highland Congregations,	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	585
1727.	
1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Findlater to be recorded, (not printed,)	585
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	586
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	587
5. appointing a Commission for Managing the Royal Bounty, &c.,	ib.
6. concerning the Printing of Papers in Processes brought before the Judica- tories of this Church,	588
7. concerning the Duties and Qualifications of Ruling Elders,	ib.
8. concerning the admitting of persons to the Lord's Table,	589
9. and Recommendation in favour of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	ib.
10. and Commission for preserving Purity of Doctrine, and concerning Mr John Simson,	591
11. Address to the King, in regard to the Growth of Popery, &c.,	593
12. Act concerning the Licensing of Probationers, &c.,	594
13. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	595
1728.	
1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	595
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	596
4. Address to the King on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne,	598

	PAGE
Address to the King by the late Commission, on the same subject,	599
5. Act renewing the Recommendation of last Assembly in favour of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	600
6. and Recommendation for a voluntary Contribution towards erecting an Infirmary at Edinburgh,	601
7. appointing the Commission,	602
8. appointing Commission for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing the King's Bounty for that end,	603
9. concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity at Glasgow,	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	604

1729.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Buchan to be recorded, (not printed,)	605
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act renewing Recommendation of last Assembly in favour of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,	ib.
5. dividing the Presbytery of Lorn, and erecting a new Presbytery in Mull,	606
6. concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity at Glasgow,	607
7. appointing Commission for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing the King's Bounty for that end,	608
8. appointing the Commission,	609
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	610

1730.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	610
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning the Management of the King's Royal Bounty for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission,	611
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	612
7. discharging the Recording of Reasons of Dissent,	ib.
8. for preventing the Spreading of Error,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	613
Overture in regard to Appeals,	ib.

1731.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Loudoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	613
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Overture concerning the method of Planting Vacant Churches,	614
5. appointing the Commission,	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	615
7. and Recommendation in favour of the Infirmary at Edinburgh,	616
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1732.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	617
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Recommendation for encouraging a Collection towards the further Propagating of Christian Knowledge,	ib.
5. anent Appeals, and for explaining the 10th Paragraph of the 5th Chapter of the Form of Process, agreed to by the Assembly, 1707, anent Appeals,	618

	PAGE
6. Act appointing the Commission,	619
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	620
8. anent the method of Planting Vacant Churches,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	622

1733.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	622
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
5. concerning some of the Ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and for preserving the Subordination of the Judicatories of the Church, and good Order therein,	623
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	624
7. and Sentence concerning Mr Ebenezer Erskine, and some other Ministers ad- hering to his Protest, for their Contempt of the Authority of the General Assembly,	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	626

1734.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	626
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the Marriage of the Princess-Royal,	627
5. Act declaring the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1730, and 8th Act of Assembly, 1732, to be no longer binding Rules in this Church,	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	628
7. appointing the Commission.	ib.
8. concerning Mr Ebenezer Erskine, and other Ministers his adherents; and a Commission and Recommendation to the Synod of Perth and Stirling concerning them,	629
9. concerning Ministerial Freedom in this Church,	630
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Remit to Presbyteries concerning an Overture for Planting Vacant Churches,	ib.

1735.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	630
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	631
4. Act reviving a former Recommendation for raising a Fund in each Synod for Maintaining the Indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers therein,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. and Recommendation concerning Students in Divinity,	ib.
7. and Recommendation for preserving Unity and preventing Error within this Church,	632
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture anent Preaching, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Electing the Members of the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Acts Rescissory, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Lists of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1736.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	633
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.

CONTENTS.

xxix

	PAGE
4. Address to the King on occasion of the Marriage of the Prince of Wales,	633
5. Act about Praying for the Royal Family,	634
6. Report of the Commissioners sent to London to solicit and endeavour the Redress of the Grievance of Patronage,	ib.
7. Act concerning Preaching,	636
8. anent Acts Rescissory,	637
9. appointing Lists of Probationers to be annually presented to the Assembly,	ib.
10. and Recommendation for preserving Purity of Doctrine, and concerning Professor Campbell,	638
11. appointing the Commission,	640
12. anent the manner of Electing the Members of the Commission, and concerning their Powers,	ib.
13. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
14. against Intrusion of Ministers into Vacant Congregations, and recommendation to Presbyteries concerning Settlements,	641
15. against Perjuries in Custom-houses in Scotland,	ib.
16. for better Observation of Acts of Assembly concerning Students in Divinity and Probationers,	ib.
17. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	642
Overture concerning the Election of Members to the Assembly,	ib.

1737.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	642
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	643
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	644
5. relating to the 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1736,	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	645
7. superseding the Obligations upon Synods and Presbyteries to maintain Bur-sars,	ib.
8. concerning the Qualifications of Elders, Members of the General Assembly,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	646

1738.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to be recorded, (not printed,)	646
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning the Ministers Seceding from this Church,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	648
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
7. about the manner of Electing Members of the General Assembly,	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	649

1739.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Hyndford to be recorded, (not printed,)	649
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning the Ministers who have Seceded from the Church,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission,	651
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	652
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	653

1740.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Hyndford to be recorded, (not printed,)	653
---	-----

	PAGE
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	653
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Sentence of Deposition from the office of the Holy Ministry against Eight Ministers, Seceders from the Church,	ib.
5. discharging Presbyteries to consent to the Suppressing of Parish Churches,	655
6. appointing the Commission,	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	659
8. for the Maintenance of Mr Nicodemus Bieniaszeuski, Student in Divinity from Lithuania,	660
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1741.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	661
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Recommendation for the Observation of a Fast within the Bounds of the several Presbyteries of the Church,	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	662
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Congratulatory Address to his Majesty, on occasion of taking the Forts near Carthagea,	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	663
Overture about the manner of Purging Scandals,	ib.
about Members of Inferior Judicatories Judging in Superior Courts,	ib.
for an Act concerning Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1742.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	664
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act disjoining the Presbytery of Long Island, and erecting the same into Two distinct Presbyteries,	ib.
5. for the better Attendance of Members on the Commission,	665
6. and Overture about the manner of Licensing Probationers,	ib.
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	668
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1743.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	669
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	670
4. Act and Overture about the manner of Licensing Probationers,	671
5. disjoining certain Parishes of the Presbyteries of Middlebie, Lochmaben, and Jedburgh, and erecting the same into Two new Presbyteries, to be called the Presbyteries of Annan and Langholm,	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	672
7. Instructions to the Commission,	ib.
8. Act appointing the Places of Meeting of the Synod of Perth and Stirling,	ib.
9. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	673
Overture about the manner of Deciding Causes before the Commission,	ib.

1744.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	673
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing Presbyteries to keep separate Records, for inserting Particulars relating to the Ministers' Widows' Fund,	674
5. and Overture about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
6. about Electing of Members to the General Assemblies, and Attesting their Commissions,	675
7. and Recommendation against the sinful Practice of Smuggling of Goods,	ib.
8. An Address to his Majesty upon occasion of the present critical juncture of Affairs,	ib.
9. Act concerning Mr William Leechman, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow,	676
10. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	677
11. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	678
12. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1745.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	678
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	679
4. Act concerning the Fund for a Provision to the Widows and Children of the Ministers of this Church,	680
5. prohibiting Synods to Disjoin or Annex Parishes from one Presbytery to another,	681
6. and Overture about some pieces of Sacred Poesy,	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	682
8. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. concerning the Character and Behaviour of Ministers and Probationers,	ib.
10. and Overture about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
11. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1746.

1. The Meeting of Assembly,	683
2. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded,	ib.
3. The King's Letter,	ib.
4. The Assembly's Answer,	684
5. Congratulatory Address to his Majesty upon the Victory obtained over the Rebels in this Country,	685
6. Congratulatory Letter to the Duke of Cumberland,	686
7. Act and Overture about the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	687
8. and Recommendation about the Manner of Singing of Psalms,	ib.
9. for Reprinting an Abbreviate of the Laws against Profaneness and Immorality,	ib.
10. about the Office-bearers in this Church, and others concerned in the Rebellion,	ib.
11. and Overture about Processes against Probationers for the Ministry,	688
12. and Recommendation for keeping Registers of the Dead,	ib.
13. against Profaneness and Immorality,	ib.
14. for a Thanksgiving,	689
15. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	690
16. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
17. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture about the Psalmody,	ib.
Letter from the Duke of Cumberland to the Commission,	ib.

1747.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	691
--	-----

	PAGE
2. The King's Letter,	691
3. The Assembly's Answer,	692
4. Act concerning the Fund for a Provision to Ministers' Widows, &c.,	693
5. for Preventing the Growth of Popery,	694
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
about Processes against Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
about the Psalmody,	ib.
about the Calling of Ministers to Vacant Parishes, (not printed,)	695

1748.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	695
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act concerning the Qualifications of Persons claiming to Vote in the Calling of Ministers to Vacant Parishes,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	696
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture about Processes against Probationers,	ib.
about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	697
and Recommendation about Sermons on the Principles of the Reformation and Revolution, (not printed,)	ib.
about the Psalmody,	ib.
Proposals about Voters in Elections of Ministers,	ib.

1749.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	698
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Recommendation for Preaching on the Principles of the Reformation and Revolution,	ib.
5. appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	699
6. appointing Presbyteries to hold Visitations for Settling Parochial Schools,	ib.
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Congratulatory Address to his Majesty upon occasion of the General Peace,	700
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	701
Overture about the Psalmody,	ib.
about the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper, (not printed,)	ib.
about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1750.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	701
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	702
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Resolution concerning an application to Parliament for an Augmentation to Ministers' Stipends,	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Congratulatory Address to his Majesty on the late increase of the Royal Family, by the Birth of a Prince,	703
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture about the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper, (not printed,)	ib.
about the Psalmody,	704
about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Over- tures transmitted to them by the Assembly, (not printed,)	704
anent Processes against Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1751.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	704
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act and Resolution concerning Lawyers who are Members of the Court appear- ing as Procurators, to plead in Causes at the Bar of the Assembly or Com- mission,	705
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. anent the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper,	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture about the Psalmody,	706
about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Over- tures transmitted to them by the Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Processes against Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1752.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	706
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	707
4. Act deposing Mr Thomas Gillespie, Minister at Carnock, from the office of the Holy Ministry within this Church, and appointing the Presbytery of Dunfermline to admit Mr Andrew Richardson as Minister of the Parish of Inverkeithing,	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	711
6. appointing the Commission,	ib.
7. concerning Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on Overtures transmitted to them,	715
8. regulating the Meetings of Synods in respect of the late Act of Parlia- ment changing the Calendar,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture for regulating the effect of Dissents from Judgments of Inferior Courts,	ib.

1753.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	716
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act discharging Presbyteries to elect Missionary Ministers or Preachers as their Commissioners to the General Assemblies,	ib.
5. against Simoniackal Practices,	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	717
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Presbyteries required to send up to next Assembly their Opinions on the Over- tures about the Psalmody, about Licensing Probationers, anent Pro- cesses against Probationers, and for regulating the effect of Dissents from Judgments of Inferior Courts,	ib.
Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Over- tures transmitted to them by the Assembly,	718

1754.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Hopetoun to be recorded, (not printed,)	718
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act anent Licensing Probationers, and settling Ministers in consequence of a Presentation,	719
5. appointing Ministers, ordained or admitted to Parishes, to be Members of the Presbytery and Synod in whose bounds the Parish lies,	ib.
6. extending the 12th Act of Assembly, 1736, to Sentences passed by the General Assembly, and not obeyed by Presbyteries,	ib.
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	720
Overture anent Ministers Ordained in England, or in Foreign Parts,	ib.
anent Members of Inferior Courts Judging in Causes Appealed from them to the Superior Courts,	ib.

1755.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	721
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act against Infidelity and Immorality,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	722
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overtures of last and preceding Assemblies re-transmitted,	ib.

1756.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	722
2. The King's Letter,	723
3. The Assembly's Answer,	ib.
4. The Assembly's Address on the occasion of the King's Declaration of War against France,	724
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	725
6. appointing a Solemn National Fast,	ib.
7. and Recommendation of the Assembly respecting Irish Bursaries,	727
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture anent Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors concerning the extent of their Stipends, (not printed,)	ib.
anent the more speedily Supplying of Vacancies, (not printed,)	728

1757.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	728
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act anent the Method of Keeping the Separate Registers,	ib.
5. Recommendation to Presbyteries to take care that none of the Ministers of this Church attend the Theatre,	729
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.

CONTENTS.

xxxv

	PAGE
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	731
Overtures of last year re-transmitted,	ib.
Act and Overture against Simoniacal Practices,	ib.

1758.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	731
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	732
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act declaring Mr Thomas Boston, late Minister at Oxnam, incapable of receiving or accepting a Presentation or Call to any Parish in this Church, without the special allowance of the General Assembly,	ib.
5. anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on Overtures transmitted to them,	733
6. anent Parochial Schools,	ib.
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	734
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overtures of last Assembly re-transmitted,	ib.

1759.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	735
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Synod of Ross to meet once in the year, and that on the Second Tuesday of May yearly,	ib.
5. appointing the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale to meet on the First Tuesday of May yearly,	736
6. against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors with respect to obtaining a Decreet of Modification and Locality for their Stipends,	ib.
7. anent the Supplying of Vacancies,	ib.
8. anent Simoniacal Practices, containing an Explication of the 5th Act of Assembly, 1753,	737
9. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
10. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
11. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	738
Overture for an Addition to be made to the 6th Act of this Assembly, against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors,	ib.
of an Act and Rules concerning the Election and Qualifications of Members of Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.

1760.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	738
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	739
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. The Assembly's Address to the King, on account of the signal Successes of his Arms since the last General Assembly,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	740
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture of an Act and Rules concerning the Election and Qualifications of Members of Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
for an Addition to be made to the 6th Act of Assembly, 1759, against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors,	ib.

1761

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	741
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	742
4. The Assembly's Address to the King on his Accession to the Throne of these Realms,	743
5. Act respecting the Public Money,	745
6. anent taking a Blind Man upon Trials,	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
8. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Meetings of the Synod of Ross,	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture for preventing Dilapidation of Stipends, (not printed,)	746
anent sending up Opinions on Overtures transmitted by the Assembly,	ib.

1762.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	746
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	747
4. Act appointing the Act of Parliament against Murdering of Children to be read from the Pulpits,	748
5. The Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the King on the happy event of his Marriage,	ib.
6. The Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the Queen on the happy event of her Marriage,	749
7. The Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the Princess of Wales on the happy event of the King's Marriage,	750
8. Act against the Dilapidation of Stipends, and for ascertaining the extent of Glebes,	ib.
9. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	751
10. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
11. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture for repealing that part of the Form of Process anent Exculpations, anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them, (not printed,)	752
anent sending up Opinions on Overtures transmitted by the Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.

1763.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	752
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer to the King,	753
4. Congratulatory Address to the King on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, and the re-establishment of Peace,	754
5. Congratulatory Address to the Queen on the Birth of the Prince of Wales,	755
6. Act anent Applications for a Share of the Public Money,	756
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures,	757

1764.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	757
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.

	PAGE
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	757
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	758
Overture anent the Transmission of all the former Overtures, (not printed,)	ib.

1765.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	758
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	759
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	760
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. The Assembly's Address to the King, anent the New Erections in the Highlands,	ib.
7. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	762
Overture anent the Transmission of all the former Overtures, (not printed,)	ib.

1766.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	762
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. declaring Mr James Bain, late Minister at Paisley, incapable of receiving or accepting a Presentation or Call to any Parish in this Church, without the special allowance of the General Assembly,	763
7. anent the Form of Commissions,	765
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures,	766

1767.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	766
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Recommendation anent the Orphan Children of Soldiers,	ib.
5. Act supplying certain Defects in the Forms of Commissions and Attestations thereof,	767
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	768
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Former Overtures again transmitted,	ib.
Overture of an Act concerning Students in Divinity, and the Licensing of Probationers,	ib.

1768.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	772
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act anent the Form of Commissions, with various Forms,	773
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	777
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Former Overtures again transmitted,	ib.

1769.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	777
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	778
4. Address to his Majesty,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	779
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Former Overtures again transmitted,	ib.
Act of Assembly, 1732, anent the method of Planting Vacant Churches, transmitted as an Overture to Presbyteries, (not printed,)	ib.

1770.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	779
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	780
4. Address to his Majesty on the Birth of a Princess,	ib.
5. Act appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. anent the Introduction of Commissions to certain Universities,	781
8. anent the bringing in of Overtures,	ib.
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Former Overtures again transmitted,	ib.
Act of 1732, anent the method of Planting Vacant Churches, transmitted as an Overture to Presbyteries, (not printed,)	ib.

1771.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	782
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. concerning persons guilty of Uncleaness, where they should make satisfaction,	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	783
Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the Electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them, (not printed,)	ib.

1772.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be recorded, (not printed,)	783
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	784
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Recommendation respecting the Electing and Ordaining of Elders,	ib.
Overture anent Probationers being Licensed without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and Electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod, (not printed,)	ib.

	PAGE
Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them, (not printed,)	784

1773.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	785
2. The King's Letter to the Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer thereto, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Congratulatory Address on the Birth of a Prince, (not printed,)	ib.
5. Act appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. anent the neglect of Kirk-Sessions to purchase the Acts of Assembly,	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	786

Overture anent Probationers being licensed without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the Electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them,	ib.

1774.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	786
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Congratulatory Address to the King on the Birth of a Prince,	787
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	788

Overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh anent Probationers being licensed without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
anent the Age of Ruling Elders, &c., (not printed,)	ib.

1775.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	788
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address of Condolence to his Majesty on the Death of the late Queen of Denmark,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	789
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

Overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh anent Probationers being licensed without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
anent the Age of Ruling Elders, &c., (not printed,)	ib.

1776.

1. Act appointing the [Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart to be recorded, (not printed,)	790
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Affairs,	ib.
5. Address to his Majesty on the Birth of another Princess,	791
6. Act appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. disjoining the Parish of Nenthorn from the Presbytery of Lauder, and annexing the same to the Presbytery of Kelso,	792
9. reponing Mr Robert Dalrymple to the office of the Holy Ministry,	ib.
10. altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Fife,	ib.

	PAGE
11. Act changing the Place of Meeting of the Synod of Galloway,	793
12. anent the Age of Ruling Elders,	ib.
13. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Overture anent Persons going to be Licensed and Ordained without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1777.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	794
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Affairs in North America,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	795
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture and Interim Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed or Ordained without the Bounds of this Church, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act anent the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Fife,	ib.
9. Renewal of the Appointment of Assembly, 1763, respecting Collections,	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	796
11. Overture anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.

1778.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	796
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	797
4. Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Affairs,	798
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	799
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture and Interim Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed or Ordained without the Bounds of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
8. anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1779.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	800
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the King on the Birth of another Prince, and on the present Situation of Affairs,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	801
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. and Resolution anent Popery,	ib.
8. Regulations respecting the Chapel of Ease in Dunfermline,	802
9. Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed or Ordained without the Bounds of this Church,	803
10. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
11. anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
12. Order respecting the Acts of Assembly, and transmitting the same to Synods, Presbyteries, and Universities,	ib.
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	804

1780.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	804
---	-----

CONTENTS.

xli

	PAGE
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	804
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	805
6. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
7. anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1781.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	805
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	806
4. Address to his Majesty on the Birth of another Prince, and on the present situation of Public Affairs,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	807
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Interim Act anent Licensing Probationers,	ib.
8. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. anent Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	808

1782.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to be recorded, (not printed,)	808
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Public Affairs,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	809
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	811
7. Declaratory concerning Moderation of Calls,	ib.
8. respecting the Licensing of Probationers,	ib.
9. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	814
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1783.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	815
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	816
4. Address to his Majesty on the Peace,	817
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	818
7. Resolution relating to a Fast,	ib.
8. Act and Resolution concerning Lawyers and Agents, who are Members of the Court, appearing as Procurators or Agents at the Bar of the Assembly or Commission,	ib.
9. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Forms of Commissions, &c., (not printed,)	819
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1784.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	819
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the King on occasion of the Birth of a Princess,	ib.

f

	PAGE
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	820
6. appointing the Commission,	ib.
7. Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants,	821
8. Resolution concerning Marriages,	ib.
9. Recommendation respecting Ordination to the Office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge,	ib.
10. A new Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders,	822
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1785.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	822
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	823
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Recommendation respecting Ordination to the Office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge, (not printed,)	ib.
8. A new Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Overture from the Synod of Fife, respecting the Second Paragraph of the Act passed in 1782, concerning the Licensing of Probationers, ordered by the Assembly to be transmitted, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1786.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	824
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Recommendation respecting the Ordination to the office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. relative to Students having the Gaelic Language,	825
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1787.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	825
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	826
6. Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture concerning the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. anent Certificates of the Ordination of Elders to the General Assembly,	ib.
9. Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1788.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	827
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the King on the proposed Commemoration of the Revolution,	ib.

CONTENTS.

xliii

	PAGE
5. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	828
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act concerning the Attestation of Kirk-sessions to Commissions for Burghs,	ib.
10. Act appointing a National Thanksgiving in Commemoration of the Revolution of 1688,	829
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1789.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	830
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the King on his Recovery from Sickness,	ib.
5. to the Queen on the Recovery of his Majesty,	831
6. Act anent keeping the Doors of the Assembly-House shut during the time of calling the Roll,	832
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	833
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1790.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	833
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	834
6. Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Proposals for the Melioration of Glebes,	ib.

1791.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	835
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
7. respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	836

1792.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	836
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	837
4. Address to the King on the Marriage of the Duke of York with the Princess-Royal of Prussia,	838
5. Act appointing the Commission,	839
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Recommendation and Injunction anent the sending up of Synod-books to the Assembly,	ib.
8. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers,	ib.

	PAGE
9. Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes,	840
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1793.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	840
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	841
4. Address to the King on the subject of the present War,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	842
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1794.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	843
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	844
4. Address to his Majesty on the subject of the present War,	845
5. Act appointing the Commission,	846
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act and Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Resolution respecting the Religious Education of Youth,	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	847

1795.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	847
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	848
4. Address to the King on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales with Caroline, Princess of Brunswick,	ib.
5. Address to the Prince of Wales on his Marriage,	ib.
6. Act enjoining Prayer for the Princess of Wales,	849
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty, (not printed,)	ib.
9. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	850

1796.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven to be recorded, (not printed,)	850
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address on his Majesty's late Preservation,	ib.
5. to his Majesty on the Birth of a Princess, the Daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales,	851
6. Regulations and Overture respecting the Erection of Chapels of Ease, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Act, appointing the Commission,	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	855
9. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act, appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

CONTENTS.

xlv

PAGE

1797.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven and Melville to be recorded, (not printed,)	856
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the King on the Marriage of the Princess-Royal with the Hereditary Prince of Wirtemberg,	ib.
5. Regulations and Overture respecting the Erections of Chapels of Ease, (not printed,)	857
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	858
9. Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall,	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1798.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven and Melville to be recorded, (not printed,)	858
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	859
4. Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Public Affairs,	860
5. Act and Regulations respecting the Erection of Chapels of Ease,	861
6. Overture respecting the course of University Education to be observed by Students, previous to their entering the Divinity Hall,	862
7. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	863
10. Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall, (not printed,)	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.
Regulations adopted by the General Assembly, 1798, for a new Gaelic Chapel in the City of Glasgow,	ib.

1799.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven and Melville to be recorded, (not printed,)	865
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	866
4. Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Public Affairs,	867
5. Declaratory Act respecting Unqualified Ministers and Preachers,	868
6. Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall, (not printed,)	870
7. respecting the Course of University Education to be observed by Students previous to their entering the Divinity Hall, (not printed,)	ib.
8. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
10. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
11. Pastoral Admonition by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to all the People under their charge,	ib.
12. Report concerning Vagrant Teachers and Sunday Schools,	873
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	874

1800.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven and Melville to be recorded, (not printed,)	875
2. The King's Letter,	ib.

	PAGE
3. Address to the King on his late Providential Escape from Assassination,	876
4. The Assembly's Answer to the King's Letter,	877
5. Address to the King on the situation of Public Affairs,	878
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	879
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall, (not printed,)	880
9. respecting the Course of University Education to be observed by Students previous to their entering the Divinity Hall, (not printed,)	ib.
10. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
11. Order and Injunction of the Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters,	ib.
12. Recommendation by the Assembly, for promoting a Subscription towards defraying the Expense of the Appeal in the Cause relating to the Schoolmaster of Bothwell; and Order for Printing the Appeal Case prepared by the Procurator,	881
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1801.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven and Melville to be recorded, (not printed,)	882
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	883
4. Address to the King on the situation of Public Affairs,	884
5. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	886
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Order and Injunction of the Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters,	ib.
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	887

1802.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	887
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. Act respecting the Arrangement of the Assembly-House for the proper Accommodation of the Members,	888
4. The Assembly's Answer to the King's Letter,	ib.
5. Address to the King on the situation of Public Affairs,	889
6. Order and Injunction of the Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters, renewed,	890
7. Declaration and Instruction of the Assembly in favour of the Parochial Schoolmasters in Scotland,	891
8. Act concerning the Extent and Marches of Glebes,	ib.
9. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	892
10. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
11. Overture and Recommendation respecting the Promoting of Theological Learning,	ib.
12. New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	893

1803.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	893
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
5. Recommendation respecting the Promoting of Theological Learning, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Address to his Majesty, on the Providential Discovery and Defeat of a most Atrocious and Daring Conspiracy,	894

CONTENTS.

xlvi

	PAGE
7. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	895
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1804.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	895
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	896
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	897
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	898
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Recommendation respecting the promoting of Theological Learning, (not printed,)	899
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1805.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	899
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	901
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1806.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	901
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	902
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	903
5. Overture anent Ordained Assistants and Successors,	905
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	ib.
8. Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	906

1807.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	906
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	907
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	908
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	909
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	910
7. Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act anent Printing Commissions,	ib.
9. Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders,	911
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1808.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	911
--	-----

	PAGE
2. The King's Letter,	911
3. The Assembly's Answer,	912
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	913
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	914
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Order and Injunction of the Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters,	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	915

1809.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	915
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the present arduous situation of Public Affairs,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	916
6. and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Schoolmasters and Teachers,	917
9. Act appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
10. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1810.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	917
2. The King's Letter,	918
3. The Assembly's Answer,	919
4. Address to his Majesty upon the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Majesty's Accession to the Throne,	921
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	922
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture about Licensing Probationers, (not printed,)	923
8. anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Injunction respecting the Visitation of Schools,	ib.
10. Preamble to the Subscription Paper in Aid of the Funds of the Church,	924
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1811.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	924
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	925
4. Address to the Prince Regent,	927
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	928
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. anent the Meetings of the Synod of Glenelg,	ib.
8. Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	929

1812.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	929
2. The Prince Regent's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.

CONTENTS.

xlix

	PAGE
4 Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	929
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	930
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	931
7. Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Recommendation anent the Public Reading of the Scriptures,	ib.
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1813.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	932
2 The Prince Regent's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3 The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4 Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	ib.
5. Petition to both Houses of Parliament respecting the Political Privileges of Roman Catholics,	933
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	934
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. respecting the Licensing of Probationers,	ib.
9. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	937
10. Recommendation, Injunction, and Queries, respecting Schools,	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	938

1814.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	933
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	939
3. The Assembly's Answer,	940
4. Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	941
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	943
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1815.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	943
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	944
3. The Assembly's Answer,	945
4. Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	946
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	947
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	948
7. Overture anent the Ordination of Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1816.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Napier to be recorded, (not printed,)	948
2. The Prince Regent's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to the Prince Regent,	949
5. Overture and Interim Act anent the Union of Offices, (not printed,)	950
6. Resolution of Assembly respecting the Gaelic Translation of the Scriptures,	ib.
7. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	951
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Deliverance of the Assembly on the Communication from the Synod of Ulster in Ireland,	ib.
10. Act anent the Ordination of Elders,	952
11. Recommendation to Presbyteries in Aid of the Funds of the Church,	ib.

	PAGE
12. Recommendation concerning Parochial Registers,	953
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	954

1817.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Errol to be recorded, (not printed,)	954
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	956
4. Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	957
5. Judgment of the Assembly respecting the Examination of the Schools of Montrose,	958
6. Act anent the Union of Offices,	959
7. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	960
9. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1818.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Errol to be recorded, (not printed,)	960
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	962
4. Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	964
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	965
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing of Simony,	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	966

1819.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	966
2. The Prince Regent's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	967
4. Address of the Assembly to the Prince Regent,	969
5. Act for the better dispatching the Business of Assemblies reprinted,	970
6. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	971
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Order and Injunction concerning the Examination of Schools,	ib.
9. Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony, (not printed,)	972
10. Recommendation in respect to Subscriptions and Contributions for the Monumental Church,	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly.	973

1820.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	973
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	974
4. Address of the Assembly to the King,	975
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	976
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Report of the Committee appointed to class the Returns from Presbyteries of the Examination of Schools,	ib.
8. Report of the Committee on the Reference from the Presbytery of Fordoun,	978
9. Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony, (not printed,)	979
10. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1821.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	980
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address of the Assembly to the King,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	981
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	982
7. Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1822.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	982
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	983
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	984
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	985

1823.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	985
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address of the Assembly to the King,	ib.
5. Address of the Assembly to the King, on the Abolition of Negro Slavery in the West Indies,	986
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	987
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity,	ib.
9. Abstract Report of the Committee on the Examination of Schools,	ib.
10. Opinion of the late Lord President Blair, as to the Profanation of the Sabbath,	988
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1824.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Earl of Morton to be recorded, (not printed,)	989
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	990

1825.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	990
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	991
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	992
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Report as to Schools,	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	994

1826.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	994
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	995
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act authorising the use of the Quarto Edition of the Gaelic Bible,	ib.
5. appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Report as to Schools,	ib.
8. Act as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity,	996
9. Overture as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity, (not printed,)	997
10. Regulations to be observed in Framing Constitutions for Chapels of Ease,	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	998

1827.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	999
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address to his Majesty on the Death of the Duke of York,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	1000
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity,	ib.
8. Report concerning Schools,	1001
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1002

1828.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	1003
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
7. Report of the Committee of Assembly on the Returns of Presbyteries as to Schools,	ib.
8. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1005

1829.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	1005
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	1006
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Report and Injunction concerning Schools,	ib.
7. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	1008
8. Overtures and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1830.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Forbes to be recorded, (not printed,)	1008
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	1009
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
7. and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew, (not printed,)	ib.
8. Act appointing the Presbyteries of Lerwick and Burra-voe, and Synod of Shetland,	ib.
9. Report concerning Schools,	1010
10. Overture as to printing Extracts from the Records of the Inferior Church Courts,	1011
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1012

1831.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1012
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	1013
4. The Assembly's Address to the King on his Accession to the Throne,	1014
5. The Assembly's Address to the Queen on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne,	1015
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	1016
8. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
9. and Interim Act relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Class of Hebrew, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Report concerning Schools,	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1018

1832.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1018
2. The King's Letter,	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer,	1019
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	1020
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. Standing Orders to be observed as to Procedure in the Assembly,	ib.
7. Overture on the Form of Process, (not printed,)	ib.
8. and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity,	1021
9. Overtures and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew, (not printed,)	ib.
10. Report of the Committee appointed by the Assembly for Classing Returns as to Schools,	ib.
11. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1022

1833.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1022
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	1023
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.

	PAGE
4. The Assembly's Loyal and Dutiful Address to the King,	1023
5. Declaratory Enactment and Recommendation as to Colonial Churches,	ib.
6. Enactment as to Parliamentary Churches,	1024
7. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	1025
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
9. Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew,	ib.
10. Overture on the Form of Process, (not printed,)	ib.
11. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
12. Report of the Committee appointed by the Assembly for Classing Returns relative to Schools,	ib.
13. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1027

1834.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1028
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	1029
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. The Assembly's Address of Thanks to the King,	ib.
5. The Assembly's Address to the King on the Abolition of Slavery,	ib.
6. Act appointing the Commission,	1030
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	1034
8. disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Paisley, and from the Presbytery of Irvine, and forming them into the Presbytery of Greenock,	1035
9. Declaratory Enactment as to Chapels of Ease,	ib.
10. Standing Orders appointed by the Assembly to be observed in future,	1036
11. Overture on the Form of Process, (not printed,)	1037
12. Overtures and Interim Acts on the Calling of Ministers,	ib.
13. Report of the Committee appointed by the Assembly for Classing Returns relative to Schools,	1040
14. Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity, (not printed,)	1042
15. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1835.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1042
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	1043
4. The Assembly's Address of Thanks to the King,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. and Order as to Synod Books,	1044
8. in favour of the India Missions,	ib.
9. on the Calling of Ministers,	ib.
10. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly on the Calling of Ministers,	1045
11. Act on the Form of Process,	1049
12. Overture on the Form of Process,	ib.
13. Standing Orders to be observed as to the Business of the Assembly,	1051
14. Act for altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Glenelg, and of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale in May,	ib.
15. on the Examination of Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity,	1052
16. Overture anent a Hebrew Exercise, (not printed,)	ib.
17. Overtures anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
18. Overture for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
19. Declaratory Act for Explaining the Acts relative to the number of Commissioners sent from Presbyteries,	ib.

	PAGE
20. Overture on New Churches,	1053
21. Act appointing a Day of Humiliation, with Pastoral Address thereanent,	1054
22. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1057

1836.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1057
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Kintyre, and forming them into the Presbytery of Islay and Jura,	1058
7. disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and forming them into the Presbytery of Weem,	ib.
8. in favour of India Missions,	ib.
9. in favour of Colonial Churches,	1059
10. anent a Hebrew Exercise,	ib.
11. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers,	1060
12. anent the Qualification of Representative Elders,	1063
13. on the Form of Process, (not printed,)	1064
14. anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity, (not printed,)	ib.
15. for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church, (not printed,)	ib.
16. Act for Altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Sutherland and Caithness,	ib.
17. Overture on New Churches, (not printed,)	ib.
18. on the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology, (not printed,)	ib.
19. Pastoral Letter on Family Worship,	ib.
20. Act recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the Assembly,	1067
21. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1068

1837.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1068
2. The King's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	1069
6. in favour of India Missions,	ib.
7. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers,	ib.
8. Act anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity,	1073
9. for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church,	ib.
10. Overture on New Churches, (not printed,)	1074
11. Overture on the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology, (not printed,)	ib.
12. Act requiring Synod Clerks to send up their Books,	ib.
13. recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the Assembly,	ib.
14. Overture, &c., (not printed,)	1075
15. Act annexing the new Church of Fullarton, Half-way Irvine, to the Presbytery of Irvine,	ib.
16. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1838.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1076
2. The Queen's Letter,	ib.

	PAGE
3. The Assembly's Answer,	1076
4. The Assembly's Address to the Queen on her Accession to the Throne,	1077
5. The Assembly's Address to the Queen Dowager on the Death of his late Majesty,	1079
6. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
7. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. on the Conversion of the Jews,	1080
9. in favour of India Missions,	ib.
10. recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the Assembly,	1081
11. anent the Election of Commissioners to the Assembly from the Presbyteries of the Northern and Western Islands of Scotland,	ib.
12. anent the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology,	1082
13. anent the Standing Orders of the Church,	ib.
14. Resolution anent the Independent Jurisdiction of the Church,	1085
15. Overture anent Re-union with Seceders, (not printed,)	1086
16. anent the Importance of Establishing and Endowing a Professorship of Biblical Criticism, (not printed,)	ib.
17. anent the Qualification of Representative Elders, (not printed,)	ib.
18. and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers,	ib.
19. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1089
Pastoral Letter issued by the Commission,	1090

1839.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1092
2. The Queen's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	1093
4. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
5. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. in favour of India Missions,	ib.
7. anent the Representation of Presbyteries,	ib.
8. anent Re-union with Seceders,	1094
9. anent the Establishment and Endowment of a Professorship of Biblical Criticism,	1095
10. recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the Assembly,	1096
11. on the Conversion of the Jews,	ib.
12. anent the Qualification of Representative Elders,	1097
13. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers, (not printed,)	ib.
14. Injunction to Synods for visiting Presbytery Books,	ib.
15. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1098

1840.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1098
2. Her Majesty's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the Queen on her Majesty's Marriage,	ib.
5. The General Assembly's Address to his Royal Highness Prince Albert,	1099
6. The General Assembly's Address to her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent,	1100
7. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
8. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	1101
9. on the Conversion of the Jews,	ib.
10. in favour of India Missions,	ib.
11. recommending Collections for the Five Schemes of the General Assembly,	1102
12. appointing a Special Commission to co-operate with the Presbytery of Strathbogie in providing for the Preaching of the Gospel, &c., in the Parishes of the Seven Suspended Ministers of that Presbytery,	ib.

	PAGE
13. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers, (not printed,)	1103
14. Act appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	ib.

1841.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to Lord Belhaven to be recorded, (not printed,)	1104
2. The Queen's Letter, (not printed,)	ib.
3. The Assembly's Answer, (not printed,)	ib.
4. Address of Congratulation to the Queen on the Birth of the Princess-Royal,	ib.
5. Act appointing the Commission, (not printed,)	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission, (not printed,)	1105
7. on the Conversion of the Jews,	ib.
8. Overture anent Attendance on the Latin Class,	ib.
9. Act appointing a Day of Humiliation, and Pastoral Address relative thereto,	ib.
10. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers, (not printed,)	1110
11. Standing Order on the Forms of Commissions,	ib.
12. Standing Order anent the Visiting of Synod-Books,	1111
13. Act recommending Collections for the Five Schemes of the General Assembly, (not printed,)	ib.
14. Overture on the Eldership, (not printed,)	ib.
15. Act appointing a Special Commission to co-operate with the Presbyteries within whose bounds certain Vacant Parishes are situated, in settling and superintending the same, and for other purposes therein mentioned,	ib.
16. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1112

1842.

1. Act appointing the Royal Commission to the Marquis of Bute to be recorded,	1112
2. The Queen's Letter,	1113
3. The Assembly's Answer,	1114
4. The Assembly's Address of Congratulation to the Queen on the Birth of a Royal Prince,	1115
5. Act appointing the Commission,	ib.
6. appointing the Royal Bounty Commission,	1122
7. on the Conversion of the Jews,	1124
8. Standing Order as to Dissents,	1125
9. Act rescinding the Act, 1799, anent Ministerial Communion,	ib.
10. anent the Election of Elders,	ib.
11. Overture anent the Attendance on the Latin Class, (not printed,)	1126
12. Resolution as to Patronage,	ib.
13. Act on India Missions,	1127
14. for Parochial Collections throughout the Church,	ib.
15. Order as to the Titles of New Churches,	1128
16. Act amending the First Article of the Standing Orders passed in the year 1838,	ib.
17. Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers,	ib.
18. Act on Home Missions,	1129
19. Claim, Declaration, and Protest, anent the Encroachments of the Court of Session,	1130
20. Address to the Queen on the subject of the foregoing Claim of Right,	1141
21. Declaration as to Declaratory Act of 1834, anent the Ministers of <i>quoad sacra</i> Parishes,	ib.
22. Act appointing Meeting of Synod of Orkney,	1142
23. appointing the Meeting of the Synod of Argyle,	ib.
24. appointing a Special Commission, with reference to the present Difficulties of the Church,	ib.
25. Overture anent Processes against Ministers,	1143
26. Standing Order on the Form of Process,	1144
27. Proposed Standing Order,	ib.
28. Declaratory Act as to Special Objections to Presentees,	1145

29. Overture anent Union of Offices,	PAGE 1145
30. Act appointing a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, with Pastoral Address,	ib.
31. appointing the Diet of next Assembly,	1149

APPENDIX.

1. Three Acts of the Assembly, for promoting the Knowledge of the Grounds of Salvation, and observing the Rules of Discipline,	1151
2. Admonition and Information respecting the Profanation of the Lord's Day,	1154
3. Warning and Admonition to the People of Scotland, by the Commission of the Assembly, met at Edinburgh, March 1, 1798,	1158
4. Report of the Committee of the Assembly anent the Gaelic Bible,	1161
5. Pastoral Admonition on the Sanctification of the Sabbath,	1163

THE
ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE SOLEMNE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND, INDICTED BY THE KING'S MAJESTIE,
AND CONVEENED AT GLASGOW, THE 21 OF NOVEMBER, 1638.

TO THE READER.

It were long, neither do we now intend, to represent, what, in the beginning, by the mercies of our God and the ministerie of his faithfull servants, was the Reformation of this Kirk; what purity of doctrine and worship; what order, what authority, and what unity continued for many years, by the prayers and labours of Ministers and Professours; what novations and corruptions have been introduced upon us of late, in the time of our division and defection, by such as have ever been enemies to the crosse of Christ, and who have minded earthly things; how manyfold and how comfortable experience we have at this time of the care and compassions of our Lord and Saviour, preventing the utter ruine of religion, and the horrible vastation of this Kirk, by looking upon the afflictions of his people, by hearing their grones, mocked by the world; and by moving the heart of our gracious and dread Sovereigne, the King's Majestie, to convene a free nationall Assemblie, for redressing the wrongs done to religion, and what undeniable testimonies and notable manifestations of the divine presence and assistance of Christ, have accompanied this meeting and whole work. "Whoso is wise, and observeth these things, will see the loving-kindnesse of the Lord."

For the present, it seemed necessarie that such of the Acts and Constitutions of the Assemblie as are of most generall concernement should be published in print; the correct writing of so manie copies as were called for not beeing possible to be expd in due time, and the Kirk having resolved upon this course in former times, which, had it been kepted, our defection, through the almost invincible ignorance of the proceedings of this Kirk, had not proven so dangerous and deplorable.

In these Acts and Constitutions speciall regard was had to our nationall Confession of Faith, as it was at first and diverse times after professed, and is now of late sworn and subscribed, that all men's mindes, who delight not to cavill, might rest satisfied in the true meaning thereof, found out by the diligent search of the ecclesiastick registers. Our care was also rather at this time to revive and bring to light former laudable acts, then to make anie new acts, reflecting as little as might be upon the Reformation of other Kirks,

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and choosing to receive our directions from our own Reformation, approved by the ample testimonie of so manie forein Divines ; according to the example of the venerable Assemblie at Dort, where speciall caution was, that the 30 and 31 article of the Confession of the Belgick Kirks, touching ecclesiastick order, should not be examined by strangers, there being a difference touching that point amongst reformed Kirks. So manie as were present can beare witness that all the members of the Assemblie were manie times called on, and required to propone their doubts, and to give their judgements of everie article, before it was inacted, that everie one might receive satisfaction, and from the full persuasion of his minde, might give his voice ; wherein the unanimitie and harmonie was the more admirable, that manie parting from their pre-conceived opinions, which had possessed their mindes, did most willinglie receive the light, which did now unexpectedly appear from the records of the Kirk.

That this extract shall stop the mouthes of the malicious is more than we can promise, or should be expected. We know there be some incendiaries, who would, with great joy and content of minde, seek their lost penny in the ashes of this poore Kirk and kingdome ; and we have already found, that our labours, and the grounds whereupon we have proceeded, before they be seen, are misconstrued by so many as findes their hopes blasted, and are come short of their earthly projects ; but our comfort is, that we have walked in the truth of our hearts, as in the sight of God. That the adversaries of the Kirk have not transformed themselves into angels of light, nor can say they are doing God service, but are seen in their colours, and do seek themselves, and that so many as have erred before, not knowing the order and constitutions of this Kirk, will, as obedient children to their mother, speaking plainly and powerfully of old, and now, after long silence, opening her mouth again, and uttering her minde in a free Assembly, hear her voice, and with that reverence that becometh under the supreme Majestie of Christ, obey her directions, that being all of one minde, peace may be upon us, and upon the Kirk of God ; and the God of peace and love may be with us.

ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Act Sess. 6, Glasgow, November 27, 1638. Act for trying the Registers.

The testimonie of the committie, for tryall of the Registers, subscribed with their hands, being produced, with some reasons thereof in another paper, and publickly read, my Lord Commissioner professed that it had resolved him of sundry doubts, but desired a time to be more fully resolved.

The Moderatour desired that if any of the Assembly had any thing to say against the said testimonie for the books, that they would declare it, and finding none to oppose, yet he appointed the day following, to any to object any thing they could say ; and if then none could object, the Assembly would hold the Registers as sufficiently approved.

Act Sess. 7, November 28. Act approving the Registers.

Anent the report of the Assemblie's judgement of the authority of the books of Assembly, the Moderatour having desired that if any of the Assembly had any thing to say, they would now declare it, otherwise they would hold all approved by the Assembly.

The Commissioner his Grace protested that the Assemblie's approving these books, or any thing contained in them, be no wayes prejudiciall to his Majestie, nor to the Archbishops and Bishops of this kingdome, or any of their adherents, because he had some exceptions against these books. My Lord Rothes desired these exceptions to be condescended on, and they should be presently cleared, and protested that these books should be esteemed authentick and obligatorie hereafter.

The whole Assemblie all in one voice approved these books, and ordained the same to make faith in judgement, and outwith in all time comming, as the true and authentick Registers of the Kirk of Scotland, conform to the testimonie subscribed by the Committie, to be insert with the reasons thereof in the books of Assembly : Whereof the tenour followeth :—

We, under-subscribers, having power and commission from the General Assembly

now presently conveyed and sitting at Glasgow, to peruse, examine, and cognosce, upon the validity, faith, and strength of the books and registers of the Assembly under-written, to wit: A register beginning at the Assembly holden the twentieth day of December, 1560, and ending at the fourth Session of the Assembly holden the twenty-eight of December, 1566.

Item, another register beginning at the General Assembly holden the second day of June, 1567, and ending at the fourth Session of the Assembly holden at Perth the ninth day of August, 1572, which register is imperfect and mutilate in the end, and containeth no leaf nor page after that page which containeth the said inscription of the said fourth Session, which two registers bears to be subscribed by John Gray, scribe.

Item, a register of the Assembly holden at Edinburgh the seventh day of August, 1574, and ending with the twelfth Session, being the last Session of the Assembly, 1579.

Item, another register beginning at the Assembly holden at Edinburgh the tenth of May, 1586, and ending in the seventeenth Session of the Assembly holden in March, 1589.

Item, another register, being the fifth book and greatest volume, beginning at the Assembly holden in anno 1560, and ending in the year 1590.

Having carefully viewed, perused, and considered the saids registers, and every one of them, and being deeply and maturely advised as in a matter of greatest weight and consequence, do attest before God, and upon our conscience declare to the world and this present Assembly, that the saids foure registers above expressed, and every one of them, are famous, authentick, and good registers, which ought to be so reputed and have publick faith in judgement and outwith, as valid and true records in all things, and that the said fifth and greatest book, beginning at the Assembly 1560, and ending 1590, being margined by the hand-writs of the Clerk and reviser of the registers, cognosced and tryed, and agreeable to the other foure registers, in what is extant in them, ought also to be free of all prejudice and suspicion, and received with credit. And in testimonie of our solemne affirmation, we have subscribed these presents with our hands.

Sic subscribitur, Master Andrew Ramsay. Master John Adamson.
Master John Row. Master Robert Murray. Master Alexander Gibson.
Master James Boner. Master Alexander Peerson. Master Alexander Wedderburn.

Reasons proving the Five Books and Registers produced before the Assembly to be authentick.

The books now exhibited unto us under-subscribers, which we have revised and perused by commission from the Generall Assembly, are true registers of the Kirk: to wit, five volumes, whereof the first two contain the Acts of the Assembly from the year of God 1560 to the year 1572, all subscribed by John Gray, clerk. The third from the year of God 1574 to the year 1579. The fourth from the year of God 1586 to the year 1589, at which time Master James Richie was clerk, who hath frequently written upon the margine of the saids two last books, and subscribed the said margine with his hand-writing. And the fifth book, being the greatest volume, containing the Acts of the Generall Assembly from the year of God 1560 to the year 1590, which agreeth with the foresaid other foure books and registers, in so far as is extant in them, and further recordeth what is wanting by them, passing by what is mutilate in them, and which, with the two volumes produced by Master Thomas Sandilands, from the year 1590 to this present, maketh up a perfect register.

I. For the first two volumes subscribed by John Gray, albeit it be not necessar in such antiquitie to prove that he was clerk, seeing he designes himself so by his subscription, yet the same is manifest by an act mentioned in the third book, in the time of Master James Richie, who succeeded him in the said office, and his hand-writ was acknowledged by sundry old men in the ministry.

II. The uniformitie of his subscriptions through both volumes, evident by ocular inspection, above the ordinarie custome of most famous notars, delivers the same from all suspicion, *in facto tam antiquo*.

III. There be many coppies, specially of general acts, yet extant, which do not debord from the saids registers, but are altogether agreeable thereto.

IV. It is constant by the universal custome of this kingdome, that all registers are transmitted from one keeper to his successour, and so comming by progresse and succession from the first incumbent to the last possessour, are never doubted to be the registers of that judicatorie whereof the last haver was clerk; and, therefore, it is evident that these books, comming successively from John Gray, Master James Richie, and Master Thomas Nicolson, who were all clerks to the Assembly, into the hands of Master Robert Winrame, who was constitute clerk-depute by the said Master Thomas Nicolson, (as his deputation, here present to show, will testifie,) are the undoubted registers of the Assembly; likeas Alexander Blair succeeded the said Master Robert in his place of clerkship to the assignations and modifications of ministers' stipends; and during Master Robert his lifetime was his actual servant, and so had the said books by progresse from him, which the said Alexander is readie presently to testifie.

V. The two registers of Master James Richie, albeit not under his own hand, yet are frequently margined with his own hand-writ, and the same marginal additions subscribed by him, which hand-writ is seen and cognosced by famous men, who knoweth the same, and is evident, being compared with his several writings and subscriptions yet extant.

VI. The said registers are more perfect, lesse vitiated, scored, and interlined, than any other authentic and famous registers of the most prime judicatories within this kingdome.

VII. Master Thomas Sandilands, in name of his father, who was late clerk, by dimission of Master Thomas Nicolson, hath produced a volume, which proveth the saids two registers of Master James Richie to be sufficient records; because that same volume is begun by that same hand, whereby the said Master James Richie his registers are written, and is subscribed once in the margine by Master James Richie his hand, and is followed forth, and continued in the same book by Master Thomas Nicolson, who succeeded him in the place, and was known by most men here present to be of such approven worth and credit, that he would never have accomplished a register which had not been famous and true; and whereof the hand-write had not then been known to him sufficiently.

VIII. That register produced by Mr Thomas Sandilands, and prosecuted by Master Thomas Nicolson, proves the first part of that register to be true and famous, and that first part being by ocular inspection of the same hand-writ with Master James Richie's registers, and subscribed in the margine with the same hand-writ, proveth Richie's two books to be good records, and Richie's registers doth approve Gray's books, by the Act of Assembly before written; specially considering the same hath come by progresse and succession of clerks in the hands of Alexander Blair, now living, and here present.

IX. The compts anent the thirds of benefices between the Regent for the time and the Assembly, in the second volume, p. 147, are subscribed by the Lord Regent's own hand, as appeareth; for it is a royall-like subscription, and there is no hand-writ in all the book like unto it, and beareth not *sic subscribitur*, which undoubtedly it would do, if it were a coppie.

X. Master James Carmichell was commanded by the Generall Assembly 1595, Sess. 9, in the book produced by Master Thomas Sandilands, to extract the generall acts forth of their books; and it is evident that these books are the same which he perused for that effect, because he hath marked therein the generall acts with a crosse, and hath designed the act by some short expression upon the margine, which is cognosced and known to be his hand-writ by famous and worthy persons; which is also manifest by the said Master James his band and subscription, written with his own hand, in the last leafe of the said books; as also acknowledged in the said book, produced by Mr Thomas Sandilands, wherein the said Master James Carmichell granteth the receipt of these, with some other books of the Assemblies.

XI. The registers produced are the registers of the Assembly, because, in anno 1586, the Assembly complaineth that their registers are mutilate; which hath rela-

tion to Richie's third book, which is lacerat and mutilate in divers places, without any interveining of blank paper, or any mention of *hic deest*.

XII. If these were not principall registers, the enemies of the puritie of God's worship would never have laboured to destroy the same; which notwithstanding they have done, as appeareth by the affixing and battering of a piece of paper upon the margine, anent a condition of the commission not to exceed the established discipline of this Kirk, subscribed by the clerk, book 3, p. 147. And the blotting out the certification of the excommunication against Bishop Adamson, book 4, p. 30, who, in his recantation, generally acknowledgeth the same; but which, without that recantation, cannot be presupposed to have been done, but by corrupt men of intention to corrupt the books, which were not necessary, if they were not principall registers.

XIII. In the Assembly 1586, the Church complained upon the Chancelour his retention of their registers, and desired they might be delivered to their clerk, which accordingly was done; as a memorandum before the beginning of the first book, bearing the redeliverie of these foure books to Master James Richie, clerk, proportioneth, which clearly evinceth that these foure books are the registers of the Assembly.

XIV. The said fifth book and greatest volume is also marked on the margine with the hand-writ of the said Mr James Carmichell, (which is cognosced,) who was appointed to peruse the books of the Assembly, as said is, and would not have margined the same by vertue of that command, nor extracted the generall acts out of it, if it were not an approbation thereof as an authentick and famous book.

XV. The said fifth volume doth agree with the other foure books in all which is extant in them, and marketh the blanks, which are lacerate and riven out of the same; and compleateth all what is lacking in them.

XVI. In the Book of Discipline pertaining to Master James Carmichell, subscribed by himself and Master James Richie, there are sundry acts and passages quotted out of the said fifth great volume, saying, It is written in such a page of the book of Assembly, which agreeth in subject and quottations with the said fifth book, and cannot agree with any other; so that Master James Carmichell, reviser of the Assembly books, by their command, would not alledge that book, nor denominate the same a book of the Assembly, if it were not an authentick famous book.

XVII. Though the corrupt nature of man hath been tempted to falsifie particular evidents, yet it hath never been heard that any whole register hath ever been counterfeited; neither can it bee presupposed that any will attempt that high wickednesse, seeing the inducements answerable to that crime can hardly be presupposed.

XVIII. It is certain, and notour to all these who are intrusted with the keeping of the publick records of the kingdome, that the same are never subscribed by the clerk, but only written and filled up by servants, and most frequently by unknown hands, yet they and the extracts thereof make publick faith, and the same are uncontrovertedly authentick registers; and when the most publick registers of the kingdome shall be seen, and compared with these registers of the Assembly, it shall be found that these other registers of the most souveraine judicatories ever unsubscribed, are more incorrect, oftner margined, scored, and interlined, made up by greater diversitie of unknown hand-writs, than these books of the Assembly, which, by speciall Providence, are preserved so entire, that, in the judgement of any man acquainted with registers, they will manifestly appear at the very sight to be true, famous, and authentick.

XIX. The fame and credit of ancient registers in this kingdome is so much revered, that if any extract be different or disconforme from the register, that extract, albeit subscribed by the person who, for the time, had been of greatest eminence in the trust of registers, will be rectified conforme to the register, and have no force, so far as it debordeth therefrom; although the registers be written with an obscure, unknown hand, and unsubscribed.

Act Sess. 12, December 4. The six late pretended Assemblies condemned.

Anent the report of the committie for trying the six last pretended Assemblies,

they produced in writ sundrie reasons clearing the unlawfulness and nullitie of these Assemblies, which were confirmed by the registers of the Assembly, the books of Presbyteries, the King's Majestie's own letters, and by the testimonie of divers old reverend ministers standing up in the Assembly, and verifying the truth thereof. The Assembly, with the universall consent of all, after the serious examination of the reasons against every one of these six pretended Assemblies apart, being often urged by the Moderatour to informe themselves throughly, that without doubting, and with a full perswasion of minde, they might give their voices, declared all these six Assemblies of Linlithgow, 1606 and 1608, Glasgow, 1610, Aberdeen, 1616, St Andrews, 1617, Perth, 1618; and every one of them, to have been from the beginning unfree, unlawfull, and null Assemblies, and never to have had, nor hereafter to have, any Ecclesiasticall authoritie, and their conclusions to have been and to bee of no force, vigour, nor efficacie; prohibited all defence and observance of them, and ordained the reasons of their nullitie to be insert in the books of the Assembly; whereof the tennour followeth:

Reasons annulling the pretended Assembly holden at Linlithgow, 1606.

I. From the indiction of it. It was indicted the 3d of December, to bee kept the 10th of December, and so there was no time given to the Presbyteries far distant, neither for election of Commissioners, nor for preparation to those who were to be sent in Commission. The shortnesse of the time of the indiction is proved by the Presbyterie books of Edinburgh, Perth, and Hadingtoun, &c.

II. From the want of a lawfull calling, to these who went to that meeting, seeing they were not at all elected by their Presbyteries, but were enjoined to come by the King's letters. This also is proved by the foresaids books of the Presbyteries, and by his Majestie's letters.

III. From the nature of that meeting, which was only a private meeting or convention for consultation to be taken by some persons of sundry estates written for, as the King's letters and the Presbyterie books do acknowledge.

IV. From the power of these ministers who were present, their Presbyteries did limitate them, First, That they should give no suffrages in that meeting as a Generall Assembly. Secondly, That they agree to nothing that may any wayes be prejudicial to the acts of the Generall Assemblies, or to the established discipline of the Kirk. Thirdly, That they should not agree to resolve or conclude any question, article, or mater whatsoever, the decision whereof is pertinent and proper to a free Generall Assembly. Fourthly, If any thing be concluded contrary thereunto, that they protest against it. These limitations are clear by the Presbyterie books.

V. The acts of this meeting were not insert in the book of Assemblie, as is evident by the register.

VI. The next pretended Assembly at Linlithgow, 1608, doth acknowledge the Assembly, whereof Master Patrick Galloway was Moderatour, to have been the last immediate Assembly preceeding it selfe, and that Assembly whereof he was Moderatour was the Assembly holden at Haly-rood-house, 1602; so they did not acknowledge that meeting at Linlithgow, 1606, for any Assembly at all. This is clear by the registers of the Assembly, 1608, in the entrie thereof.

Reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly at Linlithgow, 1608.

I. Manie of the voters in that pretended Assembly had no lawfull commission from the Kirk, to wit, forty-two noble men, officers of estate, counsellours, and barrons, also the bishops, contrare to the act of Dundie, 1597, and one of their caveats. The noble men were as commissioners from the King, the bishops had no commission at all from the Presbyteries, for every Presbyterie out of which they came had their full number of commissioners besides them, as the register of the Assemblie beareth.

II. In a lawfull Assembly there should be none but Commissioners from Presbyteries, Burghs, and Universities, and but three ministers at most, with one elder, Commissioners from every Presbyterie, according to the act made at Dundie, 1597. But in that pretended Assembly there were foure ministers from the severall Presby-

teries of Edinburgh and Cowper, five from the Presbyterie of Arbroth, as the roll of the said pretended Assembly beareth; whereas there were no ruling elders sent from Presbyteries, according to the Book of Policie and act of Dundie.

Reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly at Glasgow, 1610.

I. The Commission of the pretended Commissioners to that meeting was null. 1. Because the election of them was not free, seeing they were nominate by the King's Letters, as the Presbyterie books of Edinburgh, Perth, and Hadingtoun, declare. And the Bishop of St Andrews, in his letter to some Presbyteries, required them to send such Commissioners as the King had nominate, assuring them that none other would be accepted. This the Bishop's letter, registrat in the Presbyterie books of Hadingtoun, doth cleare. 2. And whereas there were no ruling elders sent from the Presbyteries to that pretended Assembly, as the roll of Commissioners sheweth, yet there were moe ministers from sundrie severall Presbyteries then three, as five from Brechen, five from Arbroth, five from Kirkcubright, seven from the Presbytery of Argyl, foure from the Presbyterie of Cowper, foure from Linlithgow, foure from Pasley, foure from Hammiltoun, foure from Drumfreis, foure from Dunkell, as the register of that Assembly beareth.

II. There were thirtie voters of noblemen and barrons, beside the pretended Bishops, who had no commission from any Presbyterie. In the fourth Session of this pretended Assembly, it is plainly said, That the noble men and barrons came to it by the King's direction.

III. The voting of the commissioners was not free; for, by the King's letter to the Assembly, they were threatned, and it was declared that their consent was not needfull to any act to be made there: The King might doe it by his own power, yet they were allured to vote by a promise that their good service in so doing should be remembred and rewarded thereafter.

IV. The principall acts which were made were set down *verbatim* in the privie conference, which chiefly consisted of the King's Commissioners and pretended Bishops, and only read to be ratified in the Assembly.

V. Sundrie ministers then present doe now declare, that they knew the ministers who voted the wrong way to have received their present reward, and that money was largely dealt unto them.

Reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly at Aberdene, 1616.

I. There was no election of a Moderatour; but that place usurped by the pretended Bishop of Saint Andrews, as the register beareth.

II. The indiction of that pretended Assembly was but twentie dayes before the holding of it; so that the Presbyteries and Burghes could not be prepared for sending their commissioners; which caused the absence of many Presbyteries and fourtie-foure Burghes.

III. There were twentie-five noblemen and gentlemen voters without commission from the Kirk. Mr William Struthers voted for the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, yet had no commission therefrom: The commission being given by that Presbyterie to other three, as the said commission, registrat in the books of the Presbytery, beareth; and whereas there should be but one commissioner from every burgh, except Edinburgh, to the Assembly, at this pretended Assembly there were two commissioners from Glasgow, two from Cowper, two from St Andrews; whereas there were no ruling elders having commission from their Presbyteries at that Assembly.

IV. When the acts of that pretended Assembly were written, the Bishop of St Andrews, with his own hand, did interline, adde, change, vitiate, direct to be extracted or not extracted as he pleased, as the scrolls themselves seen doe show; wherefore the clerk did not registrat the acts of that Assembly in the books of Assemblies, as may be easily seen by the blank in the register left for them remaining unfilled.

The nullitie of the pretended Assembly at Saint Andrews, 1617.

I. There is no mention of it in the register of the Assemblies, and so no warrand for their Commissions, their Moderatour, or Clerk.

II. The indiction of it was so unformall, that, as the scroll declareth, a great part of the Commissioners from Synods, Burrows, and gentlemen, would not be present.

III. The King's Majestie, in his Letter to Perth's Assembly, acknowledgeth it was but a meeting wherein disgrace was offered to his Majestie.

IV. The former corruptions of the foure preceeding Assemblies had their confluence in this and the subsequent Assembly.

Reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly holden at Perth, 1618.

I. The Assembly was indicted but twentie dayes before the holding of it; and all parties requisit received not advertisement, as appeareth by their absence. The untimous indicting of it is cleared by Presbyterie books.

II. There was no election of the Moderatour, as was accustomed to be in lawfull Assemblies: The Register cleareth this.

III. No formall election of their new clerk.

IV. There were five whole dyocies absent, viz., Orkney, Cathnes, Rosse, Argyll, and Isles, and many Presbyteries had no commissioners there, as the Register of that pretended Assembly beareth.

V. There were nineteen noblemen and barrons, eleven bishops, that had no commission from the Kirk. Whereas the act for constitution of Assemblies ordaineth every burgh to have but one commissioner, except Edinburgh, which may have two, (Act at Dundie, 1597;) yet in that pretended Assemblie, Perth had three commissioners, Dundie had two, Glasgow had two, and St Andrews had two: Of the burghes there were thirtie-six absent, and for ruling elders, there were none at all with commission from their Presbyteries. All these things are cleared by the records of that pretended Assemblie.

VI. The commissioners from some Presbyteries exceeded their number prescribed in the Act at Dundie, 1597; for the Presbyterie of Arbroth were foure commissioners, and foure for the Presbyterie of Aughterdour, besides these that were heard to vot having no commission at all, and some who had commission were rejected, and were not enrolled, but others put in their place without commission.

VII. The pretended Bishops did practise some of the articles to be concluded there before the pretended Assembly in Edinburgh, St Andrews, and other cathedrall churches, by keeping festivall dayes, kneeling at the communion. Thus their voices were prejudged by their practise of these articles before condemned by the Kirk, and therefore they should have been secluded from voicing.

VIII. In all lawfull Assemblies the voicing should be free, but in this pretended Assembly there were no free voicing; for the voicers were threatned to voice *affirmative*, under no lesse pain nor the wrath of authoritie, imprisonment, banishment, deprivation of ministers, and utter subversion of the state: Yea, it was plainly professed, that neither reasoning nor the number of voices should carie the matter away, which is qualified by the declaration of many honest, old, reverend brethren of the ministry now present.

IX. In all lawfull Assemblies, the grounds of proceeding were, and used to be, the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and acts of former Generall Assemblies. But in this pretended Assembly, the ground of their proceeding in voicing was the King's commandment only, for so the question was stated: "Whether the five articles, in respect of his Majestie's commandement, should passe in act or not," as the records of that pretended Assembly beareth. Where it is declared, that for the reverence and respect which they bear unto his Majestie's royall commandements, they did agree to the foresaids articles.

X. Many other reasons, verifying the nullitie of all these Assemblies, were shown and proven before the Assembly, which needeth not here to be insert.

Act Sess. 13, December 5, 1638. Against the unlawful Oathes of Intrants exacted by the Prelates.

The six Assemblies immediately preceeding, for most just and weightie reasons above specified, being found to be unlawfull and null from the beginning, the Assembly declareth the oathes and subscriptions exacted by the prelates of intrants in the ministerie all this time bypast (as without any pretext of warrand from the Kirk, so

for obedience of the acts of these null Assemblies, and contrare to the ancient and laudable constitutions of this Kirk, which never have been nor can be lawfully repealed, but must stand in force) to be unlawfull, and no way obligatorie. And in like manner declareth, that the power of Presbyteries, and of Provinciaall and Generall Assemblies, have been unjustly suppressed, but never lawfully abrogate. And, therefore, that it hath been most lawfull unto them, notwithstanding any point unjustly objected by the Prelats to the contrare, to admit, suspend, or deprive ministers *respectively* within their bounds, upon relevant complaints sufficiently proven; to choose their own Moderatours, and to execute all the parts of ecclesiasticall jurisdiction, according to their own limits appointed them by the Kirk.

Act Sess. 14, December 6, 1638. Condemning the Service Book, Book of Canons, Book of Ordination, and the High Commission.

I. The Assembly having diligently considered the Book of Common Prayer, lately obtruded upon the reformed Kirk within this realme, both in respect of the manner of the introduction thereof, and in respect of the matter which it containeth, findeth that it hath been devised and brought in by the pretended prelats without direction from the Kirk, and pressed upon ministers without warrand from the Kirk, to be universally received as the only forme of divine service, under all highest paines, both civill and ecclesiasticall; and the book it self, beside the popish frame and forms in divine worship, to containe many popish errours and ceremonies, and the seeds of manifold and grosse superstition and idolatrie. The Assembly, therefore, all in one voice, hath rejected and condemned, and by these presents doth reject and condemne the said book, not only as illegally introduced, but also as repugnant to the doctrine, discipline, and order of this reformed Kirk, to the Confession of Faith, constitutions of Generall Assemblies, and acts of Parliament establishing the true religion; and doth prohibite the use and practice thereof, and ordaines Presbyteries to proceed with the censure of the Kirk against all such as shall transgresse.

II. The Assembly also taking to their consideration the book of Cannons, and the manner how it hath been introduced, findeth that it hath been devised by the pretended prelats without warrand or direction from the Generall Assembly, and to establish a tyrannicall power in the persons of the pretended bishops over the worship of God, men's consciences, liberties, and goods; and to overthrow the whole discipline and government of the Generall and Synodall Assemblies, Presbyteries, and Sessions formerly established in our Kirk.

Therefore, the Assembly, all in one voice, hath rejected and condemned, and by these presents doth reject and condemne, the said book, as contrare to the Confession of our Faith, and repugnant to the established government, the Book of Discipline, and the acts and constitutions of our Kirk, prohibits the use and practise of the same; and ordains Presbyteries to proceed with the censure of the Kirk against all such as shall transgresse.

III. The Assembly, having considered the book of consecration and ordination, findeth it to have been framed by the prelats, to have been introduced and practised without warrand of authority, either civill or ecclesiasticall; and that it establisheth offices in God's house which are not warranded by the Word of God, and are repugnant to the discipline and constitutions of our Kirk; that it is an impediment to the entrie of fit and worthie men to the ministry, and to the discharge of their dutie after their entrie, conforme to the discipline of our Kirk. Therefore, the Assembly, all in one voice, hath rejected and condemned, and by these presents doe reject and condemne, the said book, and prohibits the use and practise of the same, and ordaines Presbyteries to proceed with the censure of the Kirk against all such as shall transgresse.

IV. The Generall Assembly, after due tryall, having found that the Court of High Commission hath been erected without the consent or procurement of the Kirk, or consent of the estates in Parliament, that it subverteth the jurisdiction and ordinarie judicatories and Assemblies of the Kirk, Sessions, Presbyteries, Provinciaall and Nationall Assemblies; that it is not regulate by lawes civill or ecclesiasticall, but at the discretion and arbitrement of the commissioners; that it giveth to ecclesiasticall

persons the power of both the swords, and to persons meerly civil the power of the keys and Kirk censures. Therefore, the Assembly, all in one voice, hath disallowed and condemned, and by these presents doth disallow and condemne, the said court, as unlawfull in it selfe, and prejudiciall to the liberties of Christ's Kirk and kingdome, the King's honour in maintaining the established lawes and judicatories of the Kirk; and prohibits the use and practise of the same, and ordaines Presbyteries to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against all such as shall transgresse.

After the serious discussing of the severall processes in many Sessions, from Sess. 14, (which are in the Clerk's hands, and needeth not here to be insert,) the following sentences were solemnly pronounced, after sermon by the Moderatour, in the Assembly of Glasgow, Sess. 20, December 13, 1638.

Sentence of Deposition and Excommunication against Mr John Spottiswood, pretended Archbishop of St Andrews; Mr Patrick Lindsay, pretended Archbishop of Glasgow; Mr David Lindsay, pretended Bishop of Edinburgh; Mr Thomas Sidserfe, pretended Bishop of Galloway; Mr John Maxwell, pretended Bishop of Rosse; Mr Walter Whytfoord, pretended Bishop of Brechen.

The Generall Assembly having heard the lybels and complaints given in against the foresaids pretended bishops to the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, and sundry other Presbyteries within their pretended dyocies, and by the saids Presbyteries referred to the Assembly to be tryed; the saids pretended bishops being lawfully cited, oftentimes called, and their procuratour, Doctour Robert Hammiltoun, and not compearing, but declining and protesting against this Assembly, as is evident by their declinatour and protestation given in by the said Doctour Robert Hammiltoun, minister at Glasfoord; which, by the acts of Assembly, is censurable with summar excommunication; entered in consideration of the said declinatour, and finding the same not to be relevant, but, on the contrare, to be a displayed banner against the settled order and government of this Kirk; to be fraughted with insolent and disdainfull speeches, lies, and calumnies, against the lawfull members of this Assembly; proceeded to the cognition of the saids complaints and lybels against them; and, finding them guiltie of the breach of the cautions agreed upon in the Assembly holden at Montrose anno 1600, for restricting of the minister voter in Parliament from inroaching upon the liberties and jurisdiction of this Kirk, which was set down with certification of deposition, infamie, and excommunication, specially for receiving of consecration to the office of Episcopacie, condemned by the Confession of Faith, and acts of this Kirk, as having no warrand nor fundament in the Word of God; and by vertue of this usurped power, and power of the high commission, pressing the Kirk with novations in the worship of God, and for sundrie other haynous offences and enormities, at length expressed and clearly proven in their processe, and for their refusall to underly the tryall of the reigning slander of sundrie other grosse transgressions and crymes laid to their charge: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with zeal to the glorie of God and purging of his Kirk, hath ordained the saids pretended bishops to be deposed, and by these presents doth depose them, not only of the office of Commissionarie to vote in Parliament, Councill, or Convention, in name of the Kirk, but also of all functions, whether of pretended Episcopall or ministeriall calling, declareth them infamous: And likewise ordaineth the saids pretended bishops to be excommunicate, and declared to be of these whom Christ commandeth to be holden by all and every one of the faithful as ethnicks and publicanes; and the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced by Mr Alexander Henderson, Moderatour, in face of the Assembly, in the High Kirk of Glasgow; and the execution of the sentence to bee intimat in all the Kirks of Scotland, by the pastours of every particular congregation, as they will be answerable to their Presbyteries and Synods, or the next Generall Assembly, in case of the negligence of Presbyteries and Synods.

Sentence of Deposition and Excommunication against Mr Adam Ballantyne, pretended Bishop of Aberdeen, and Mr James Wedderburn, pretended Bishop of Dumblane.

The Generall Assembly, having heard the lybels and complaints given in against

the foresaids pretended Bishops of Aberdeen and Dumblane, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and sundry Presbyteries within their pretended dyocies, and by the saids Presbyteries referred to this Assembly to be tryed: The saids pretended Bishops being lawfully cited, often-times called, and not compearing, proceeded to the cognition of the complaints and lybels against them, and finding them guiltie of the breach of the cautions agreed upon in the Assembly holden at Montrose, *anno* 1600, for restricting the minister voter in Parliament from encroaching upon the liberties and jurisdictions of this Kirk, which was set down with certification of deposition, infamie, and excommunication, specially for receiving consecration to the office of Episcopacie, condemned by the Confession of Faith, and acts of this Kirk, as having no warrand nor fundament in the Word of God; and by vertue of this usurped power, and power of the high commission, pressing the Kirk with novations in the worship of God, and for sundry other haynous offences and enormities, at length expressed, and clearly proven in their processe, and for their refusall to underly the tryall of the reigning slander of sundry other grosse transgressions and offences laid to their charge: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with zeal to the glorie of God and purging of the Kirk, hath ordained the saids pretended Bishops to be deposed, and by these presents doth depose them, not only of the office of Commissionary to vot in Parliament, Councell, or Convention, in name of the Kirk, but also of all functions, whether of pretended Episcopall or ministeriall calling, declareth them infamous: And likewise ordains the saids pretended Bishops to be excommunicate, and declared to be of these whom Christ commanded to be holden by all and every one of the faithfull as ethnicks and publicans, and the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced by Mr Alexander Henderson, Moderatour, in face of the Assembly, after sermon, in the High Kirk of Glasgow; and that the execution of the sentence be intimat in all the Kirks within this realme, by the pastours of every particular congregation, as they will be answerable to their Presbyteries and Synods, or the next Generall Assembly, in case of the negligence of Presbyteries and Synods.

Sentence of Deposition against Master John Guthry, pretended Bishop of Murray; Mr John Grahame, pretended Bishop of Orkney; Mr James Fairlie, pretended Bishop of Lismoir; Mr Neil Cambell, pretended Bishop of Isles.

The Generall Assembly having heard the lybels and complaints given in against the foresaids pretended Bishops, to the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, and sundry Presbyteries within their dyocies, and by the saids Presbyteries referred to this Assembly to be tryed: The saids pretended Bishops being lawfully cited, often-times called, and not compearing, proceeded to the cognition of the complaints and lybels against them; and finding them guiltie of the breach of the cautions agreed upon in the Assembly at Montrose, *anno* 1600, for restricting of the minister voter in Parliament from incroaching upon the liberties and jurisdictions of this Kirk, which was set down with certification of deposition, infamie, and excommunication; and especially for receiving consecration to the office of Episcopacie condemned by the Confession of Faith, and acts of this Kirk, as having no warrand nor fundament in the Word of God, and by vertue of this usurped power, and power of the high commission, pressing the Kirk with novations in the worship of God; and for their refusall to underly the tryall of the reigning slander of sundrie other grosse transgressions and offences laid to their charge: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with zeal to the glorie of God and purging of this Kirk, ordaines the saids pretended Bishops to be deposed, and by these presents doth depose them, not only of the office of Commissionarie to vote in Parliament, Councel, or Convention, in name of the Kirk, but also of all functions, whether of pretended Episcopall or ministeriall calling: And likewise, in case they acknowledge not this Assembly, reverence not the constitutions thereof, and obey not the sentence, and make not their repentance, conforme to the order prescribed by this Assembly, ordaines them to be excommunicated, and declared to bee of these whom Christ commandeth to be holden by all and every one of the faithfull as ethnicks and publicanes; and the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced upon their refusall, in the Kirks appointed, by any of these who are particularly named, to have the charge of trying their repentance or impenitencie, and that the execution

of this sentence be intimate in all the Kirks within this realme, by the pastours of every particular congregation, as they will be answerable to their Presbyteries and Synods, or the next Generall Assembly, in case of negligence of the Presbyteries and Synods.

Sentence of Deposition against Maister Alexander Lindsay, pretended Bishop of Dunkell.

The Generall Assembly having heard the complaint and lybel given in against Mr Alexander Lindsay, pretended Bishop of Dunkell, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and sundry Presbyteries of his pretended dyocie, and by the Presbyteries referred to this Assembly to be tryed, the said pretended Bishop being lawfully cited, often-times called, and not compearing, but by a letter of excuse submitting himself to the Assembly, proceeded to the cognition of the complaint and lybell it selfe against him, and finding him guiltie of the breach of the cautions agreed upon in the Assembly holden at Montrose, *anno* 1600, for restricting the minister voter in Parliament from encroaching upon the liberties and jurisdictions of this Kirk, which was set down with certification of deposition, infamie, and excommunication, especially for receiving consecration to the office of Episcopacie, condemned by the Confession of Faith and acts of this Kirk, as having no warrand nor fundament in the Word of God, and by vertue of this usurped power, and power of the high commission, pressing the Kirk with novations in the worship of God: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with zeal to the glory of God and purging of this Kirk, hath ordained the said Mr Alexander to bee deposed, and by these presents deposeth him, from the pretended Episcopall function, and from the office of Commissionarie to vote in Parliament, Councell, or Convention, in name of the Kirk, and doth suspend him from all ministeriall function: And providing he acknowledge this Assembly, reverence the constitutions of it, and obey this sentence, and make his repentance conforme to the order prescribed, continueth him in the ministerie of St Madoze: And, likewise, if he acknowledge not this Assembly, reverence not the constitutions of it, and obey not the sentence, and make his repentance conforme to the order prescribed by this Assembly, ordains him to be excommunicat, and declared to bee one of those whom Christ commandeth to bee holden by all and every one of the faithfull as an ethnack and publicane; and the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced, upon his refusall, in the kirks appointed, by one of these who are particularly named to have the charge of trying his repentance or impenitencie; and that the execution of this sentence be intimate in all the kirks within this realme by the pastours of every particular congregation, as they will be answerable to their Presbyteries and Synods, or the next Generall Assembly, in case of the negligence of Presbyteries and Synods.

Sentence of Deposition against Master John Abernethie, pretended Bishop of Cathnes.

The Generall Assembly having heard the lybell and complaint given in against Mr John Abernethie, pretended Bishop of Cathnes, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and sundry Presbyteries within his dyocie, and by the saids Presbyteries referred to this Assembly to be tryed, the said pretended Bishop being lawfully cited, often-times called, and not compearing, but by his letter of excuse upon his sicknesse, proceeded to the cognition of the complaint and lybell it selfe against him, and finding him guiltie of the breach of the cautions agreed upon in the Assembly holden at Montrose, *anno* 1600, for restricting the minister voter in Parliament from encroaching upon the liberties and jurisdictions of this Kirk, which was set down with certification of deposition, infamie, and excommunication, specially for receiving consecration to the office of Episcopacie, condemned by the Confession of Faith and acts of this Kirk, as having no warrand nor fundament in the Word of God, and by vertue of his usurped power, and power of the high commission, pressing the Kirk with novations in the worship of God: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with zeal to the glorie of God and purging of this Kirk, hath ordained the said Mr John to be deposed, and by these presents deposeth him, from the pretended Episcopall function, and from the office of Commissionary to vote in Parliament, Councel, or Convention, in name of the Kirk, and doth suspend him from the ministeriall function: And providing he acknowledge this Assembly, reverence the constitutions of it, and obey the sentence, and make his

repentance conforme to the order prescribed by this Assembly, will admit him to the ministerie of a particular flock : And, likewise, in case he acknowledge not this Assembly, reverence not the constitutions of it, and make his repentance conforme to the order prescribed by this Assembly, ordains him to be excommunicate, and declared to be one of these whom Christ commandeth to bee holden by all and every one of the faithfull as an ethnack and publicane ; and the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced, upon his refusall, in the kirks appointed, by one of these who are particularly named to have this charge of trying his repentance or impenitencie ; and that the execution of this sentence be intimat in all the kirks within this realme, by the pastours of every particular congregation, as they will be answerable to their Presbyteries and Synods, or the next Generall Assembly, in case of the negligence of Presbyteries and Synods.

Act of the Assembly at Glasgow, Sess. 16, December 8, 1638, declaring Episcopacie to have been abjured by the Confession of Faith, 1580, and to be removed out of this Kirk.

The Assembly, taking to their most grave and serious consideration, first, The unspeakable goodnesse and great mercy of God, manifested to this nation, in that so necessarie, so difficult, and so excellent and divine work of reformation, which was at last brought to such perfection that this Kirk was reformed, not only in doctrine and worship, but also, after many conferences and publick reasonings, in divers nationall Assemblies, joyned with solemne humiliations and prayers to God, the discipline and government of the Kirk, as the hedge and guard of the doctrine and worship, was prescribed according to the rule of God's Word, in the Book of Policie and Discipline, agreed upon in the Assembly 1578, and insert in the register 1581, established by the acts of Assemblies, by the Confession of Faith, sworn and subscribed, at the direction of the Assembly, and by continuall practise of this Kirk. Secondly, That by men's seeking their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ, divers novations have been introduced, to the great disturbance of this Kirk, so firmly once compacted, and to the endangering of religion, and many grosse evils obtruded, to the utter undoing of the work of reformation, and change of the whole forme of worship and face of this Kirk. Thirdly, That all his Majestie's subjects, both ecclesiasticall and civil, being, without consent of the Kirk, commanded to receive with reverence a new Book of Common Prayer, as the only forme to be used in God's publick worship, and the contraveeners to be condignely censured and punished, and after many supplications and complaints, knowing no other way for the preservation of religion, were moved by God, and drawne by necessitie, to renew the Nationall Covenant of this Kirk and kingdome, which the Lord since hath blessed from heaven, and to subscribe the Confession of Faith, with an application thereof, abjuring the great evils wherewith they were now pressed, and suspending the practise of all novations formerly introduced, till they should bee tried in a free Generall Assembly. Lastly, That some of his Majestie's subjects, of sundrie ranks, have, by his Majestie's commandement, subscribed and renewed the Confession of Faith, without the former application, and that both the one and the other subscribers have subscribed the said Confession of Faith in this year, as it was professed, and according to the meaning that it had in this kingdome when it was first subscribed, 1581, and afterward ; the Assembly, therefore, both by the subscription of his Majestie's High Commissioner, and of the Lords of Secret Council, September 22, 1638, and by the acts of Council, of the date foresaid, bearing that they subscribed the said Confession, and ordaining all his Majestie's liedges to subscribe the same, according to the foresaid date and tennour, and as it was then professed within this kingdome ; as likewise, by the protestation of some of the Senatours of the Colledge of Justice, when they were required to subscribe, and by the many doubtings of his Majestie's good subjects, especially because the subscribers of the Confession, in February 1638, are bound to suspend the approbation of the corruptions of the government of the Kirk till they be tried in a free Generall Assembly ; finding it proper for them, and most necessary and incumbent to them, to give out the true meaning thereof, as it was at first professed, that all his Majestie's subjects, in a matter so

important as is the publick Confession of Faith, so solemnly sworn and subscribed, may be of one minde and one heart, and have full satisfaction to all their doubts, and that the posteritie afterward may be fully perswaded of the true meaning thereof, after earnest calling upon the name of God, so religiously attested in the said Confession, have entered into a diligent search of the registers of the Kirk, and books of the Generall Assembly, which the greatest part of the Assembly had not seen before, and which, by the speciall providence of God, were preserved, brought to their hands, and publickly acknowledged to bee authentick, and have found that in the latter Confession of the Kirk of Scotland: We professe, that we deteste all traditions brought into the Kirk without or against the Word of God, and doctrine of this reformed Kirk. Next, we abhorre and deteste all contrarie religion and doctrine, but chiefly all kinde of Papistry, in generall and particular heads, as they were then damned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland, when the said Confession was sworn and subscribed, *anno* 1580 and 1581, 1590 and 1591. Thirdly, That we deteste the Roman Antichrist his worldly monarchie and wicked hierarchie. Fourthly, That we joyn ourselves to this reformed Kirk in doctrine, faith, religion, and discipline, promising and swearing, by the great name of God, that we shall continue in the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, and defend the same, according to our vocation and power, all the dayes of our life.

But so it is that Episcopall government is abhorred and detested, and the government by ministers and elders, in Assemblies, Generall and Provinciaill, and Presbyteries, was sworn to and subscribed in subscribing that Confession, and ought to be holden by us, if we adhere to the meaning of the Kirk when that Confession was framed, sworn to, and subscribed; unto which we are obliged by the nationall oath and subscription of this Kirk, as is evident by the acts of Generall Assemblies, agreed upon both before, at, and after the swearing and subscribing of the said Confession, in the years above mentioned, and the Book of Policie, agreed upon in the Assembly which was holden at Edinburgh, the twentie-foure of April and twentie-foure of October, *anno* 1578, insert in the register of the Kirk, by ordinance of the Assembly holden at Glasgow, 1581, and to be subscribed by all ministers that then did bear, or thereafter were to bear, office in this Kirk, by ordinance of the Assembly, holden the fourth of August at Edinburgh, 1590, and at Edinburgh, the second of July, 1591, but specially in the 2d, 3d, 4th, 6th, 7th, and 11th chapters of the said book.

The bishops being tollerat from the year 1572 till the Assembly holden in August 1575, and all this time the Assembly being wearied with complaints made against them, did enter in search of the office itselfe, and did agree in this, that the name of a bishop is common to every one of them that hath a particular flock, over which he hath a particular charge, as well to preach the word as to minister the sacraments.

At the next Assembly, which was holden in April 1576, such bishops were censured as had not taken them to a particular flock. In the Generall Assembly convened in April, the year of God 1578, Sess. 4, intimation was made as followeth:—

“For so much as the heads of the policie being concluded and agreed upon in the last Assembly, by the most part of the brethren, certain of the brethren had some difficulty in the head *de Diaconatu*, whereupon farther reasoning was reserved to this Assembly; it is therefore required, if any of the brethren have any reasonable doubt or argument to propone, that he be ready the morrow, and then shall be heard and resolved.” In the 6th Sess. April 26, according to the ordinance made the day before, all persons that had any doubt or argument to propone were required to propone the same; but none offered to propone any argument on the contrare.

In the Assembly holden at Edinburgh in October 1578, it was shoven by the Moderatour thereof to the noblemen who were present, viz., my Lord Chancelour, the Earle of Montrose, my Lord Seaton, and my Lord Lindsay, “what care and study the Assembly had taken to entertain and keep the puritie of the sincere Word of God, unmixed with the inventions of their own heads, and to preserve it to the posteritie hereafter; and seeing that the true religion is not able to continue nor endure long, without a good discipline and policie, in that part also have they

employed their wit and studie, and drawn forth, out of the pure fountain of God's Word, such a discipline as is meet to remain in the Kirk."

In the same Assembly, the speciall corruptions were set down, which they craved such of the bishops as would submit themselves to the Assembly to remove, with promise, that if the Generall Assembly shall finde farther corruptions in the said estate than hitherto are expressed, that they be content to be reformed by the said Assembly, according to the Word of God, when they shall be required thereto. "First, That they be content to bee pastors and ministers of one flock; that they usurpe no criminall jurisdiction; that they vote not in Parliament in name of the Kirk, without commission from the Kirk; that they take not up, for the maintenance of their ambition and riotousnesse, the emoluments of the Kirk, which may sustain many pastours, the schools, and the poore, but be content with reasonable livings according to their office; that they claim not to themselves the titles of lords temporall, neither usurpe temporall jurisdictions, whereby they are abstracted from their office; that they empyre not above the particular elderships, but be subject to the same; that they usurpe not the power of the Presbyteries."

The question being proponed by the Synod of Louthian, in the Assembly holden in July 1579, anent a generall order to be taken for erecting of Presbyteries in places where publick exercise is used, untill the time the policie of the Kirk be established by a law, it is answered, "The exercise may be judged to be a Presbyterie." In the Assembly holden at Dundie, in July 1580, Sess. 4, the office of a bishop was abolished by a particular act, as appeareth by the tennour of the act following:—

"For so much as the office of a bishop, as it is now used and commonly taken within this realme, hath no sure warrand, authoritie, nor good ground in the Scriptures, but is brought in by the foly and corruptions of man's inventions, to the great overthrow of the Kirk of God, the whole Assembly of the Kirk, in one voice, after libertie given to all men to reason in the matter, none opponing himself in defending the said pretended office, findeth and declareth the said pretended office, used and termed as is above said, unlawfull in the selfe, as having neither fundament, ground, nor warrand, in the Word of God, and ordaineth that all such persons as brook, or shall brook hereafter, the said office, shall be charged simply to dimit, quite, and leave off the same, as an office whereunto they are not called of God; and such like, to desist and cease from all preaching, ministration of the sacraments, or using any way the office of pastours, while they receive *de novo* admission from the Generall Assembly, under the pain of excommunication, to be used against them, wherein if they be found disobedient, or contradict this act in any point, the sentence of excommunication, after due admonition, to be execute against them."

In the same Assembly, holden *anno* 1580, Sess. 10, this article was appointed to be proponed to the King and Councel, that the Book of Policie might be established by an act of Privie Councel, while a Parliament be holden, at which it might be confirmed by a law.

The extent of the act made at Dundie was interpreted and explained in the Assembly holden at Glasgow, in April 1581, Sess. 6, as followeth:—

"Anent the act made in the Assembly holden at Dundie, against bishops, because some difficultie appeared to some brethren to arise out of the word [office] contained in the said act, what should be meant thereby, the Assembly, consisting, for the most part, of such as voted, and were present in the Assembly at Dundie, to take away the said difficultie, resolving upon the true meaning and understanding of the said act, declare that they meant wholly to condemne the whole estate of bishops, as they are now in Scotland, and that the same was the determination and conclusion of the Assembly at this time, because some brethren doubted whether the former act was to be understood of the spirituall function only, and others alledged that the whole office of a bishop, as it was used, was damnable, and that by the said act the bishops should be charged to dimit the same; this Assembly declareth that they meant wholly to condemne the whole estate of bishops, as they were then in Scotland, and that this was the meaning of the Assembly at that time."

The King's Commissioner presented to this Assembly the Confession of Faith, subscribed by the King and his household not long before, together with a plot of the Presbyteries to be erected, which is registrate in the books of the Assembly, with a letter to be directed from his Majestie to the noblemen and gentlemen of the countrey, for the erection of Presbyteries, consisting of pastours and elders, and dissolution of prelacies, with an offer to set forward the policie untill it were established by Parliament. The King's letter, subscribed by his hand, to the noblemen and gentlemen, was read in open audience of the whole Assembly.

This Assembly ordained the Book of Policie to be insert in the register, by the act following:—

“For as much as travels have been taken in the framing of the Policie of the Kirk, and diverse suits have been made to the magistrat for the approbation thereof, which yet have not taken the happie effect which good men would wish, yet that the posteritie may judge well of the present age, and of the meaning of the Kirk, the Assembly hath concluded, that the Book of Policie, agreed to in diverse Assemblies before, should be registrat in the acts of the Kirk, and remaine therein *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*; and the coppies thereof to be taken to every Presbytery; of which book the tennour followeth,” &c.

Immediatly after the inserting of the Book of Policie, called there the Book of Discipline, the Assembly ordained that the Confession of Faith be subscribed, as followeth:—

“Anent the Confession of Faith lately set forth by the King's Majestie, and subscribed by his highnesse, the Assembly, in one voice, acknowledgeth the said Confession to be a true, christian, and faithfull Confession, to bee agreed unto by such as truly professe Christ, and have a care of religion; and the tennour thereof to be followed out efoldly as the samine is laid out in the said proclamation,” wherein that discipline is sworn to.

In the Generall Assembly, holden at Edinburgh in October, 1581, Sess. 10, Mr Robert Montgomery is accused for teaching that discipline is a thing indifferent. Sess. 23, the Assembly gave commission to the Presbyterie of Stirling to charge Mr Robert Montgomerie to continue in the ministerie of Stirling, and not to meddle with any other office or function of the Kirk; namely, in aspyring to the Bishoprick of Glasgow, against the Word of God and acts of the Kirk, under the pain of excommunication.

In the same Assembly, it is acknowledged that the estate of bishops is condemned by the Kirk; commission for erection of moe Presbyteries was renewed; and a new ordinance made for subscribing the Confession of Faith, and to proceed against whatsoever persons that would not acknowledge and subscribe the same.

In the Assembly, holden in April, 1582, there was a new commission for erection of Presbyteries where none was as yet erected. Mr Robert Montgomerie, pretending to be Bishop of Glasgow, was ordained to be deposed and excommunicat, except hee gave evident tokens of repentance, and promise to superseed; which he did not; and therefore he was excommunicat shortly after, according to the ordinance of this Assembly.

In the Generall Assembly, holden at Edinburgh, 1582, the Generall Assembly gave commission to some Presbyteries to try and censure such as were called bishops, for the great slander arising by their impunitie. Commission was given at this Assembly to present some articles to the council and estates, for approving and establishing, by their authoritie, the Presbyteries, the Synodall and Generall Assemblies. In the 19th Sess. the Assembly declared that no bishop may sit upon the councill in name of the Kirk.

In the Assembly, holden *anno* 1586, these two articles were agreed upon:—First, “It is found that all such as the Scripture appointeth governours of the Kirk, to wit, pastours, doctours, and elders, may convene to the Generall Assemblies, and vote in ecclesiasticall matters. Secondly, There are foure office-bearers set down to us by the Scriptures; to wit, pastours, doctours, elders, and deacons; and the name of bishop ought not to be taken as it hath been in time of Papistrie, but is common to all pastours and ministers.”

In the Assembly holden *anno* 1587, Sess. 8, It was ordained that the admission of Mr Robert Montgomerie by the Presbyterie of Glasgow, suppose to the temporalitie of the bishoprick only, be undone and annulled with all possible diligence, to the effect slander might be removed from the Kirk. In Sess. 15, Mr Robert Pont shewed the King's presentation to the Bishoprick of Cathnes, and desired the judgement of the Assembly. The Assembly, in their letter to the King's Majestie, declared that they judged the said Mr Robert to be a bishop already, according to the doctrine of St Paul: But as to that corrupt estate or office of these who have been termed bishops heretofore, they found it not agreeable to the Word of God, and that it hath been damned in diverse Assemblies before.

In the instructions given to such as were appointed to wait upon the Parliament, it was ordained in the same Assembly, Sess. 17, That they be careful that nothing be admitted prejudicial to the liberties of this Kirk, as it was concluded according to the Word of God in the Generall Assemblies preceeding the year 1584, but precisely to seek the same to be ratified in the Assembly holden in March 1589, where the articles were made for subscribing the Confession of Faith with the generall band, it was ordained as followeth:—

“For so much as the neighbour Kirk in England is understood to be heavily troubled, for maintaining of the true discipline and government; whose grieves ought to move us: Therefore the Presbytery of Edinburgh was ordained to comfort the said Kirk in the said matter.”

In the Assembly holden 1590, when the Confession of Faith was subscribed universally *de novo*, a ratification of the liberties of the Kirk, in her jurisdiction, discipline, Presbyteries, Synods, and Generall Assemblies, and an abrogation of all things contrarie thereunto, was ordained to be sought both of the Councel and Parliament. In the next session it was ordained that the Book of Discipline, specially the controverted heads, should be subscribed by all Ministers that bear, or hereafter was to bear, office in this Kirk, and that they be charged by the Presbyteries, under the pain of excommunication: Seeing the Word of God cannot be kept in sincerity, unlesse the holy discipline be preserved. The Presbyteries were ordained to get a coppie under the clerk's hand; there were sundrie coppies subscribed by the Ministers in the Presbyteries yet extant, as Hadingtoun, Dumfermling, &c., produced before the Assembly.

In the Assembly 1591, Sess. 4, the former act anent the subscription to the Book of Policie is renewed, and a penaltie imposed upon the Moderatour, in case it be not put in execution.

In the Assembly, 22d May 1592, Sess. 2, these articles were drawn up:—“That the acts of parliament made 1584, against the discipline, libertie, and authoritie of the Kirk, be annulled, and the samine discipline, whereof the Kirk hath been in practise, precisely ratified. That abbots, pryors, and other prelates pretending the title of the Kirk, be not suffered in time coming.” In the 11 Session the number of the presbyteries were given up, and insert in the Parliament immediatly following. The 5th of June 1592, The libertie, discipline, and jurisdiction of the true Kirk, in her Sessions, Presbyteries, Synodall and Generall Assemblies, is largely ratified, as the samine was used and exercised within this realme, and all the acts contrary thereto abrogat: The King's prerogative declared not to be prejudicial to the same priviledges grounded upon the Word of God, the former commissions to bishops, 1584, rescinded, and all ecclesiastical matters subjected to presbyteries, according to the discipline of this Kirk. *Anno* 1595, The Book of Policie, with other acts, is ratified, and ordained to be printed.

It was also cleared that Episcopacie was condemned in these words of the Confession, HIS WICKED HIERARCHIE. For the Popish Hierarchie doth consist of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, that is, baptizing and preaching Deacons; for so it is determined in the Councel of Trent, in the 4 chapter, *De sacramento ordinis*, cant. 6.* *Si quis dixerit in ecclesia Catholica non esse hierarchiam divina ordinatione institutam, quæ constat ex episcopis presbyteris et ministris, anathema sit.* Bellarmine, likewise, in his book

* *Censura propositionum quarundam ex Hibernia delatarum per sacram facultatem theologiæ Parisiensis facta.*

De Clericis, cap. 11, saith, That there are three Hierarchies in the militant Kirk: The first of Bishops, the second of Priests, the third of Deacons, and that the deacons are also princes, if they be compared with the people. This proposition following, *Hierarchia ecclesiastica constat ex pontifice, cardinalibus, archiepiscopis, episcopis, et regularibus*, was censured by the Facultie of Theologie in the University at Paris as followeth, *In ista prima propositione enumeratio membrorum hierarchiæ ecclesiasticæ seu sacri principatus, divina ordinatione instituti est manca et redundans atque, inducens in errorem contrarium determinationi sacre Synodi Tridentinæ*: The proposition was defective, because it pretermitted the presbyters and deacons; it was censured as redundant, because it made the hierarchie to consist of the Pope, Cardinals, Archbishops, and Regulars; the Pope is not within the hierarchie; primats, metropolitans, and archbishops, but as they are bishops. Furthermore, this hierarchie is distinguished in the Confession from the Pope's monarchie. And howbeit this hierarchie be called the Antichrist's Hierarchie, yet it is not to distinguish betwixt the hierarchie in the Popish Kirk and any other as lawfull: But the hierarchie, wheresoever it is, is called his, as the rest of the Popish corruptions are called his: To wit, Invocation of Saints, Canonization of Saints, Dedication of Altars, &c., are called his, not that there is another lawfull canonization, invocation, or dedication of altars; whatsoever corruption was in the Kirk, either in doctrine, worship, or government, since the mystery of iniquitie began to work, and is retained and maintained by the Pope, and obtruded upon the Kirk by his authority, are his. A passage also out of the history of the Councell of Trent was alledged, where it is related that the Councell would not define the hierarchie by the seven orders: We have in our Confession of Faith the manifold orders set apart and distinguished from the hierarchie, but as it is set down in the canon above cited: We have in the Book of Policie, or Second Booke of Discipline, in the end of the second chapter, this conclusion agreed upon. Therefore, all the ambitious titles invented in the kingdom of Antichrist, and in his usurped HIERARCHIE, which are not of one of these foure sorts, to wit, Pastours, Doctours, Elders, and Deacons, together with the offices depending thereupon, in one word ought to be rejected.

All which and many other warrands being publickly read, and particularly at great length examined, and all objections answered in face of the Assembly, all the members of the Assembly being many times desired and required to propone their doubts and scruples, and every one being heard to the full, and, after much agitation, as fully satisfied, the Moderatour at last exhorting every one to declare his minde, did put the matter to voicing in these termes: Whether, according to the Confession of Faith, as it was professed in the year 1580, 1581, and 1590, there be any other Bishop but a pastour of a particular flock, having no preheminence nor power over his brethren, and whether by that Confession, as it was then professed, all other Episcopacie is abjured, and ought to bee removed out of this Kirk. The whole Assembly most unanimously, without contradiction of any one, (and with the hesitation of one allanerly,) professing full perswasion of minde, did voice that all Episcopacie different from that of a pastour over a particular flock, was abjured in this Kirk, and to be removed out of it. And therefore prohibites, under ecclesiastical censure, any to usurpe, accept, defend, or obey the pretended authoritie thereof in time comming.

Act Sess. 17, December 10, 1638. The Assembly at Glasgow declaring the Five Articles of Perth to have been abjured, and to bee removed.

The Assembly remembering the uniformity of worship which was in this Kirk before the Articles of Perth, the great rent which entered at that time, and hath continued since, with the lamentable effects that it hath produced, both against pastours and professours, the unlawfulness and nullitie of Perth Assembly already declared by this Assembly, and that in the necessarie renewing of the Confession of Faith in February 1638, the practise of novations introduced in the worship of God was suspended till they should be determined in a free Generall Assembly; and that in the same year, at his Majestie's command, some had subscribed the Confession of Faith as it was professed when it was first subscribed: For these causes, the Assembly entered into a diligent tryall of the foresaid articles, whether they be contrare to the Confession of Faith as it was meant and professed in the year 1580, 1581, 1590, and 1591.

And findeth that first in generall, in the Confession of Faith we professe, “ We willingly agree in our consciences to the forme of religion, of a long time openly professed by the King’s Majestie and whole body of this realme, in all points, as unto God’s undoubted truth and verity, grounded only upon his written Word, and therefore abhor and deteste all contrary religion and doctrine, but chiefly all kinde of papistrie in generall and particular heads, even as they were then damned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland, and in speciall, the Romane Antichrist, his five bastard sacraments, with all rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine, added to the ministration of the true sacraments without the Word of God, his cruel judgement against infants departing without the sacrament, his absolute necessitie of baptisme ; and, finally, we deteste all his vain allegories, rites, signes, and traditions brought into the Kirk, without or against the Word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed Kirk, to the which we joyne ourselves willingly in doctrine, faith, religion, discipline, and use of the holy sacraments, as lively members of the same in Christ our Head, promising and swearing,” &c. And that these five articles are contrarie to the religion then professed, were confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland, or are rites and ceremonies added to the ministration of the true sacraments, without the Word of God, or nourish the Popish judgement against infants departing without the sacrament, or absolute necessitie of baptisme, or rites, signes, and traditions brought into the Kirk, without or against the Word of God, and doctrine of this true reformed Kirk.

And next, in particular, concerning festivall dayes, findeth that, in the explication of the first head of the First Book of Discipline, it was thought good that the feasts of Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphanie, with the feasts of the Apostles, Martyres, and Virgine Mary, bee utterly abolished, because they are neither commanded nor warranted by Scripture, and that such as observe them be punished by civill magistrats. Here utter abolition is craved, and not reformation of abuses only ; and that because the observation of such feasts hath no warrand from the Word of God. In the Generall Assembly, holden at Edinburgh, *anno* 1566, the large Confession of Helvetia was approved, but with speciall exception against the same five dayes, which are now urged upon us. It was not then the popish observation only, with the popish opinion of worship and merit, which was disallowed, (for so the reformed Kirk in Helvetia did not observe them,) but *simpliciter* all observation. For this end was read a letter in Latine, sent at that time by some of our divines to certaine divines in these parts to this purpose. In the Assembly holden 1575, in August, complaint was made against the ministers and readers beside Aberdene, because they assembled the people to preaching and prayers upon certane festivall dayes, so that preaching and prayers upon festivall dayes was judged rebukable. It was ordained likewise, that complaint bee made to the Regent upon the town of Drumfreis, for urging and conveying a reader to the Kirk, with tabret and whistle, to read prayers, all the holy dayes of Christmas, upon the refusall of their own reader. Among the articles directed by this Assembly to the Regent, it was craved that all holy dayes heretofore kepted holy, beside the Lord’s day, such as Yoole day and saints’ dayes, and such others, may bee abolished, and a certain penaltie appointed for banqueting, playing, feasting upon these dayes. In the Assembly holden in April, *anno* 1577, it was ordained that the visitors, with the advice of the Synodall Assembly, should admonish ministers preaching or ministrating the Communion at Easter, or Christmas, or other like superstitious times, or readers reading, to desist under the paine of deprivation. In the ninth head of the First Book of Discipline, the reason is set down against Easter Communion. “ Your honours are not ignorant how superstitiously the people run to that action at Pascheven ; as if the time gave vertue to the sacrament, and how the rest of the whole year they are carelesse and negligent, as if it appertained not to them, but at that time only.” And for this reason, other times were appointed by that book for that holy action. In the Assembly holden 1596, begun in March 1595, at which time the covenant was renewed, superstition and idolatrie breaking forth in observing festivall dayes, setting out of bone-fires, singing carols, are reaked amongst the corruptions which were to be amended ; and the pulpits did sound from time to time against all shew of observing any festivall day whatsoever, except the Lord’s day.

Concerning kneeling at the Communion, findeth that in the Confession of Faith

prefixed before the Psalmes, and approved by our Kirk in the very beginning of the Reformation, we have these words—"Neither in the ministration of the Sacraments must we follow men, but as Christ himself hath ordained, so must they be ministered." In the large Confession of Faith, chap. 23, it is required as necessary, for the right ministration of the Sacraments, that they be ministered in such elements, and in such sort as God hath appointed, and that men have adulterate the Sacraments with their own inventions, so that no part of Christ's action abideth in the originall puritie. The judgement of our reformers, who drew up the large Confession, was by cleare evidents shewed to be contrary to this gesture in the act of receiving the Sacrament. In the order of celebrating the Lord's Supper, prefixed before the Psalmes in meeter, "sitting and distributing by the communicants" are joined; as likewise by the second head of the First Book of Discipline, as nearest to Christ's own action, and to his perfect practise, and most convenient to that holy action, and all inventions devised by man are condemned, as alterations and accusations of Christ's perfect ordinance. Ministers were enjoined by act of Assembly, in December 1562, to observe the order of Geneva, that is, the English Kirk at Geneva, (where Master Knox had been sometime minister,) in the ministration of the Sacraments. This act was renewed in the Assembly holden in December 1564, where ministers are referred to the order set down before the Psalmes for ministration of the Sacraments; which is all one with the former, for that was the order of the English Kirk at Geneva.

In the Parliament holden *anno* 1567, it was declared that whosoever did not participate of the Sacraments, as they were then publickly administrat in this reformed Kirk, ought not to be reputed members of this Kirk. The act for the King's oath at his coronation, to maintain the due administration of the Sacraments, as they were then ministered, *anno* 1567, was ratified *anno* 1581; at which time the short Confession, adhering to the use of the Sacraments in the Kirk of Scotland, was subscribed, as also, *anno* 1592, after the second subscription to the Confession of Faith. In the Parliament 1572, an act was made against such as did not participat of the Sacraments as they were then rightly ministered; but the gesture of kneeling in the act of receiving putteth the ministration of the Sacrament used in this Kirk out of frame, whereby it is clear that whatsoever gesture or rite cannot stand with the administration of the Sacraments as they were then ministered, and were ministered ever since the reformation till the year 1618, must be condemned by our Kirk, as a rite added to the true ministration of the Sacraments without the Word of God, and as a rite or tradition brought in without or against the Word of God, or doctrine of this reformed Kirk.

Concerning Confirmation, the Assembly findeth it to be comprehended in the clause of the Confession, where the five bastard sacraments are condemned. And seeing Episcopacie is condemned, imposition of hands by Bishops falleth to the ground. And in all the acts for catechising or examination before admission to the communion, no inking of imposition of hands.

Concerning the administration of the Sacraments in private places, or private baptisme and private communion, findeth that, in the Book of Common Order set down before the Psalmes, it is said, "that the Sacraments are not ordained of God to be used in private corners, as charmers and sorcerers use to doe, but left to the congregation." In the Assembly holden at Edinburgh in October, *anno* 1581, the same year and Assembly that the Confession of Faith was subscribed, it was ordained, "that the Sacraments be not administred in private houses, but solemnly according to good order hitherto observed." The Minister of Tranent was suspended at that time, for baptizing an infant in a private house; but confessing his offence, he was ordained to make his publick repentance in the Kirk of Tranent before he be released. Another minister was to be tried and censured for baptizing privately, and celebrating the Communion upon Pasch-day, at the Assembly holden in October 1580. Which acts and censures make manifest that our Kirk abhorred whatsoever fostered the opinion of the necessity of Baptisme, and giving of the Sacrament as a *viaticum*.

All which, and many other acts, grounds, and reasons, being at length agitated, and, with much mature deliberation, pondered, and libertie granted to every man to speak his minde, what could be said further for the full satisfaction of all men.

The matter was put to voicing in these words, "Whether the Five Articles of Perth, by the Confession of Faith, as it was meant and professed in the year 1580, 1581,

1590, 1591, ought to be removed out of this Kirk?" The whole Assembly all in one consent, one onely excepted, did voice that the Five Articles above specified were abjured by this Kirk in that Confession, and so ought to be removed out of it; and, therefore, prohibiteth and dischargeth all disputing for them, or observing of them, or any of them, in all time comming, and ordains Presbyteries to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against all transgressours.

Act Sess. 21, December 17, 1638. Restoring the Judicatories of the Kirk.

Concerning Kirk Sessions, Provinciall and Nationall Assemblies, the Generall Assembly considering the great defection of this Kirk, and decay of religion, by the usurpation of the Prelates, and their suppressing of ordinarie judicatories of the Kirk, and clearly perceiving the benefit which will redound to the religion by the restitution of the said judicatories; remembring also that they stand obliged, by their solemne oath and covenant with God, to return to the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, as it was profest 1580, 1581, 1590, 1591, which in the Book of Policie, registrat in the books of the Assembly, 1581, and ordained to bee subscribed, 1590, 1591, is particularly exprest, both touching the constitution of the Assemblies, of their members, ministers, and elders, and touching the number, power, and authority of these members in all matters ecclesiasticall.

The Assembly findeth it necessar to restore, and, by these presents, restoreth all these Assemblies unto their full integritie in their members, priviledges, liberties, powers, and jurisdictions, as they were constitute by the foresaid Book of Policie.

Act Sess. 23, 24, December 17, 18. Reviving and ratifying severall former Acts, &c.

Anent the report of the committie appointed for considering what constitutions were to be revived or made of new, they proponed the overtures following, which were read and allowed by the whole Assembly, or by them referred to the consideration of the severall Presbyteries.

I. Anent Presbyteries which have been erected since the year 1586, it seemeth needfull that they bee ratified by an act of this Generall Assembly, and that other Presbyteries shall be erected where they shall be found needfull, and especially now in the Synod of Lismore, according to the particular note given thereanent.

The Assembly ratifieth these Presbyteries since 1586, and erecteth those in Lismore, conforme to the note registrat in the books of Assembly.

II. Anent the keeping of Presbyteriall meetings, it is thought fit that they be weekly, both in sommer and winter, except in places farre distant, who, during the winter season, (that is, between the first of October and the first of April,) shall be dispensed with for meeting once in the fourteen dayes, and that all absents be censured, especially those who should exercise and adde, according to the act of Assembly 1582, at St Andrews, April 24, Sess. 12, and that some controverted head of doctrine bee handled in the Presbyterie publickly, and disputed among the brethren every first Presbyterie of the moneth, according to the act of Assembly holden at Dundie, 1598, Sess. 12.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

III. Anent the visitation of particular Kirks within Presbyteries, it is thought expedient that it be once every year, wherein a care is to be had, among other things necessary, that it bee tryed how domestick exercises of religion be exercised in particular families, and to see what means there is in every parish in landward for catechising and instructing the youth.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

IV. Anent the visitation of Kirks, Schooles, and Colledges, it is thought meet that the act of Assembly, holden at Edinburgh the 25 of June 1565, Sess. 2, be put in execution, that the Minister of the Parochin, the Principall, Regents, and Professours within Colledges, and Masters and Doctors of Schooles, be tryed concerning the soundnesse of their judgement in matters of religion, their abilitie for discharge of their calling, and the honesty of their conversation, as the act of Assembly at Edinburgh, June 21, 1567, Sess. 3, and the act of Assembly holden at Montrose, 1595, Sess. 9, do import; and this visitation of colledges to be by way of commission from the Generall Assembly.

The Generall Assembly alloweth this article.

V. Anent None-residents ; it is thought necessary that every Minister be obliged to reside in his own parochin at his ordinarie manse, for the better attending of the duties of his calling, conforme to the acts of Assemblies, viz., act of Assembly at Edinburgh, March 24, 1595, Sess. 7 ; as also act at Edinburgh, December 25, 1563, Sess. 5 ; and Assembly at Edinburgh, December 25, 1565, Sess. 4 ; Assembly at Edinburgh, March 6, 1572, Sess. 3.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

VI. Anent the planting of Schools in Landward, the want whereof doth greatly prejudice the growth of the Gospel, and procure the decay of religion. The Assembly giveth direction to severall Presbyteries for the setting of schooles in every landward parochin, and providing of men able for the charge of teaching of the youth, publick reading and precenting of the psalme, and catechising of the common people, and that means be provided for their intertainment in the most convenient manner that may be had, according to the abilitie of the parochin.

The Assembly alloweth and referreth the particular course unto the severall Presbyteries.

VII. Anent the late admission of Ministers by Presbyteries, and the choise of Moderatours, according to the ancient power of the said Presbyteries, the Assembly declareth they had power to doe the same, and ratifieth that what hath been done of late of that kinde upon warrantable grounds, that hereafter it be not called in question.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

VIII. Anent the competencie of Presbyteries and parochins, that some proportion may be kept both anent the number and distance of place, it would seem expedient that this Generall Assembly should appoint a Commission for every shyre where there is such necessitie, that the particular parochins and presbyteries within the bounds bee duely considered, and overtures be these of the same commission given in to the Provinciaall Synods, and by them to the Generall Assembly, that there they may be advised and ratified.

The Assembly referreth this to the care of the particular Presbyteries.

IX. Anent the entrie and conversation of Ministers, it is expedient that the act of Assembly holden at Edinburgh, March 24, 1595,* Sess. 7, be ratified, and put in execution in every Presbyterie, and to that end that they get a coppie thereof under the clerk's hand, whereof the tennour followeth.

*Act Sess. 7, March 26, of the Assembly at Edinburgh, 1596.**

“ Concerning the defections in the ministerie, the same being at length read out, reasoned, and considered, the brethren concluded the same, agreeing therewith ; and in respect that, by God's grace, they intend reformation, and to see the Kirk and ministry purged, to the effect the worke may have better successe, they think it necessary that this Assembly be humbled, for wanting such care as became in such points, as is set down ; and some zealous and godly brethren in doctrine, lay them out for their better humiliation ; and that they make solemne promise before the Majestie of God, and make new covenant with him for a more carefull and reverent discharge of their ministerie. To the which effect was chosen Mr John Davidson ; and Tuesday next, at nine houres in the morning, appointed, in the new Kirk, for that effect, whereunto none is to resort but the ministrie : the forme to be advised the morne in privie conference.

THE TENNOUR OF THE ADVISE OF THE BRETHREN, DEPUTE FOR PENNING THE ENORMITIES AND CORRUPTIONS IN THE MINISTERIE, AND REMEAD THEREOF, ALLOWED BY THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY HERE CONVEENED, 1596.

Corruptions in the Office.

“ Forasmuch as, by the too sudden admission and light tryall of persons to the mi-

* The apparent discrepancy in the dates is explained by the fact, that the year then commenced on 25th March. The Assembly began its sittings 24th March 1595, the above quoted was passed 26th March 1596.—ED. 1843.

nistrie, it cometh to passe that many scandals fall out in the persons of ministers, it would bee ordained in time comming, that more diligent inquisition and triall be used of all such persons as shall enter into the ministrie.

“As specially these points: That the intrant shall be posed upon his conscience, before the great God, (and that in most grave manner,) what moveth him to accept the office and charge of the ministrie upon him.

“That it be inquired, if any, by solistation, or moyen, directly or indirectly, prease to enter in the said office; and if it be found that the solister be repelled, and that the Presbyterie repell all such of their number from voting in the election or admission as shall bee found moyeners for the soliciter, and posed upon their conscience to declare the truth to that effect.

“Thirdly, Because by presentations, many forcibly are thrust into the ministry, and upon congregations, that utter thereafter that they were not called by God: It would be provided that none seeke presentations to benefices without advice of the Presbyterie within the bounds whereof the benefice is; and if any doe in the contrarie, they to be repelled as *rei ambitus*.

“That the tryall of persons to be admitted to the ministrie hereafter consist not only in their learning and abilitie to preach, but also in conscience, and feeling, and spirituall wisdom, and namely in the knowledge of the bounds of their calling, in doctrine, discipline, and wisdom, to behave himselfe accordingly with the diverse ranks of persons within his flock, as namely with Atheists, rebellious weak consciences, and such other, wherein the pastorall charge is most kythed, and that he be meet to stop the mouthes of the adversaries; and such as are not qualified in these points to be delayed to further tryall, and whill they be found qualified. And because men may be found meet for some places who are not meet for other, it would be considered, that the principall places of the realme be provided by men of most worthie gifts, wisdom, and experience, and that none take the charge of greater number of people nor they are able to discharge: And the Assembly to take order herewith, and the act of the provinciall of Louthian, made at Linlithgow, to be urged.

“That such as shall bee found not given to their book and studie of Scriptures, not carefull to have books, not given to sanctification and prayer, that studie not to bee powerfull and spirituall, not applying the doctrine to corruptions, which is the pastorall gift, obscure and too scholastick before the people, cold, and wanting of spirituall zeal, negligent in visiting of the sick and caring for the poore; or indiscreet in choosing of parts of the word not meetest for the flock, flatterers and dissembling at publick sins, and specially of great personages in their congregations, for flattery, or for fear, that all such persons bee censured, according to the degree of their faults, and continuing therein, bee deprived.

“That such as be slothfull in the ministration of the Sacraments and irreverent, as prophaners receiving the cleane and uncleane, ignorants and senselesse prophane, and making no conscience of their profession in their calling and families, omitting due tryall or using none, or light tryall, having respect in their tryall to persons, wherein there is manifest corruption; that all such be sharply rebuked, and if they continue therein, that they be deposed.

“And if any bee found a seller of the Sacraments, that hee bee deposed *simpliciter*: And such as collude with slanderous persons in dispensing and overseeing them for money, incur the like punishment. That every Minister be charged to have a Session established of the meetest men in his congregation, and that Discipline strike not only upon grosse sins, as whoredome, bloodshed, &c., but upon sins repugnant to the Word of God, as blasphemie of God, banning, profaning of the Sabbath, disobedient to parents, idle, unruly ones, without calling, drunkards, and such like deboshed men, as make not conscience of their life and ruling of their families, and specially of education of their children, lying, slandering, and backbiting, and breaking of promises; and this to be an universall order throughout the realme, &c., and such like as are negligent herein, and continue therein after admonition, be deposed.

“That none falling in publick slanders be received in the fellowship of the Kirk, except his minister have some appearance and warrand in conscience that hee hath both a feeling of sin, and apprehension of mercie, and for this effect, that the mini-

ster travell with him by doctrine, and private instruction, to bring him hereto, and specially in the doctrine of repentance, which being neglected, the publick place of repentance is turned in a mocking.

“ Dilapidation of benefices, dimitting of them for favour or money, that they become laick patronages, without advise of the Kirk, and such like interchanging of benefices, by transaction and transporting of themselves by that occasion, without the knowledge of the Kirk, precisely to be punished: Such like, that setting of takes without the consent of the Assembly, be punished according to the acts; and that the dimitters in favours for money, or otherwise, to the effect above written, bee punished as the *dilapidators*.

Corruptions in their Persons and Lives.

“ That such as are light and wanton in their behaviour, as in gorgeous and light apparell, in speech, in using light and prophane companie, unlawfull gaming, as dancing, carding, dycing, and such like, not beseeming the gravitie of a pastour, bee sharply and gravely reprov'd by the Presbyterie, according to the degree thereof: and continuing therein after due admonition, that hee bee deprieved, as slanderous to the Gospel.

“ That Ministers being found swearers, or banners, prophaners of the Sabbath, drunkards, fighters, guiltie of all these, or any of them, be deposed *simpliciter*; and such like, lyars, detractors, flatterers, breakers of promise, brawlers, and quarrellers, after admonition continuing therein, incur the same punishment.

“ That Ministers given to unlawfull and incompetent trades and occupations for filthie gain, as holders of ostleries, taking of ocker beside conscience and good lawes, and bearing worldly offices in noblemen's and gentlemen's houses, merchandise, and such like, buying of victuals, and keeping to the dearth, and all such worldly occupations, as may distract them from their charge, and may be slanderous to the pastorall calling, be admonished and brought to the acknowledging of their sins, and if they continue therein, to be deposed.

“ That Ministers not resident at their flocks be deposed, according to the acts of the Generall Assembly, and lawes of the realme; otherwise the burthen to be laid on the Presbyteries, and they to be censured therefore.

“ That the Assembly command all their members, that none of them await on the court and affairs thereof, without the advice and allowance of their Presbyterie. *Item*, That they intend no action civill without the said advice, except in small matters: and for remedying of the necessitie, that some Ministers hath to enter in plea of law, that remedie bee craved, that short processe bee devised, to bee used in Ministers' actions.

“ That Ministers take speciall care in using godly exercises in their families, in teaching of their wives, children, and servants, in using ordinarie prayers, and reading of Scriptures, in removing of offensive persons out of their families, and such like other points of godly conversation, and good example, and that they, at the visitation of their Kirks, try the Ministers' families in these points foresaid, and such as are found negligent in these points, after due admonition, shall be adjudged unmeet to govern the house of God, according to the rule of the Apostle.

“ That Ministers in all companies strive to be spirituall and profitable, and to talke of things pertaining to godlinesse, as namely of such as may strengthen us in Christ, instruct us in our calling, of the means how to have Christ's Kingdome better established in our congregations, and to know how the Gospel flourisheth in our flocks, and such like others the hinderances and the remeeds that we finde, &c., wherein there is manifold corruptions, both in our companying with ourselves and with others; and that the contraveeners thereof be tryed, and sharply be rebuked.

“ That no Minister be found to countenance, procure, or assist a publick offender challenged by his own Minister, for his publick offence, or to bear with him as though his Minister were too severe upon him, under the pain of admonition and rebuking.

Anent Generall Assemblies.

“ To urge the keeping of the Acts anent the keeping of the Assembly, that it may have the own reverence and majestie.

“ The Assembly having heard the whole act read, most unanimously alloweth and approveth this article.”

X. Anent the defraying of the expenses of the commissioners to the Generall Assembly, referreth and recommendeth the same unto the particular presbyteries, and especially to the ruling elders therein, that they may take such courses whereby, according to reason and former acts of Assemblies, the commissioners' expenses to this Assembly, and to the subsequent, may be born by the particular parochins of every presbyterie, who sendeth them in their name and to their behalf, and for that effect, that all sort of persons able in land or moneys proportionally may bear a part of the burthen, as they reap the benefit of their paines.

The Assembly referreth this unto the care of the particular Presbyteries.

XI. Anent the repressing of Poperie and superstition. It seemeth expedient that the number and names of all the Papists in this kingdome be taken up at this Assembly, if it may be conveniently done, and if not, that it be remitted to the next Provinciaall Assemblies, that it may appear what growth Poperie hath had and now hath through this kingdome, what Popish priests and Jesuits there are in the land ; and that all persons of whatsoever state and condition be obliged to swear and subscribe the Confession of Faith, as it is now condescended upon by this Generall Assembly ; that they frequent the Word and Sacraments in the ordinar dyets and places ; otherwise to proceed against them with the censures of the Kirk, and that children be not sent out of the countrey without licence of the Presbyteries or Provinciaall Synods of the bounds where they dwell.

The Assembly referreth this article to the severall Presbyteries.

XII. Anent order to be taken that the Lord's Supper be more frequently administrat both in burgh and landward then it hath been in these years bygone. It were expedient that the act at Edinburgh, December 25, 1562, Sess. 5, be renewed, and some course be taken for furnishing of the elements, where the minister of the parish hath allowance only for once in the year.

The Assembly referreth this to the consideration of Presbyteries, and declareth that the charges be rather payed out of that dayes collection, then that the congregation want the more frequent use of the sacrament.

XIII. Anent the entrie of ministers to the ministrie ; the Assembly thinks expedient that the act holden at St Andrews, April 24, 1582, Sess. 7, touching the age of twenty-five years, be renewed, and none to be admitted before that time, except such as for rare and singular qualities shall be judged by the Generall or Provinciaall Assembly to be meet and worthie thereof.

The Assembly approveth this article.

XIV. Anent mercats on Monday and Saturday within burghs, causing intollerable profanation of the Lord's day, by carying of loads, bearing of burthens, and other work of that kinde ; it were expedient for the redresse thereof, that the care for restraining of this abuse be recommended by the Assembly unto the severall burghs, and they to be earnestly entreated to finde out some way for the repressing of this evil, and changing of the day ; and to report their diligence thereanent to the next Generall Assembly.

The Assembly referreth this article to the consideration of the burrows.

XV. Anent the profanation of the Sabbath-day in landward, especially for want of divine service in the afternoone ; the Assembly ordaineth the act of Assembly holden at Dundie, July 12, 1580, Sess. 10, for keeping both dyets, to be put in execution.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XVI. Anent frequenting with excommunicat persons ; the Assembly ordaineth that the act at Edinburgh, March 5, 1569, Sess. 10, to wit, “ that these who will not forbear the companie of excommunicat persons after due admonition, be excommunicat themselves, except they forbear,” to be put in execution.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XVII. Whereas the Confession of the Faith of this Kirk, concerning both doctrine and discipline, so often called in question by the corrupt judgement and tyrannous authoritie of the pretended prelates, is now clearly explained, and by this whole Kirk

represented by this Generall Assembly concluded, ordained also to bee subscribed by all sorts of persons within the said Kirk and kingdome ; the Assembly constitutes and ordaines, that from henceforth, no sort of person, of whatsoever quality and degree, be permitted to speak or write against the said Confession, this Assembly, or any act of this Assembly, and that under the paine of incurring the censures of this Kirk.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XVIII. Anent voicing in kirk-sessions ; it is thought expedient that no minister moderating his session shall usurpe a negative voice over the members of his session, and where there is two or moe ministers in one congregation, that they have equal power in voicing, that one of them hinder not the reasoning or voicing of any thing whereunto the other minister or ministers, with a great part of the session, inclineth, being agreeable to the acts and practise of the Kirk, and that one of the ministers, without advice of his colleague, appoint not dyets of communion nor examination, neither hinder his colleague from catechising and using other religious exercises as oft as he pleaseth.

The Assembly referreth this article to the care of the Presbyteries.

XIX. Since the office of a diocesane or lordly bishop is alluterly abjured, and removed out of this Kirk, it is thought fit that all titles of dignitie, savouring more of Poperie than of Christian libertie, as chapters, with their elections and consecrations, abbots, priors, deans, arch-deacons, preaching deacons, chanters, sub-chanters, and others having the like title, flowing from the Pope and Canon law only, as testifieth the Second Book of Discipline, bee also banished out of this Reformed Kirk, and not to bee usurped or used hereafter under ecclesiasticall censure.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XX. Anent the presenting either of pastours or readers, and schoolmasters to particular congregations ; that there be a respect had to the congregation, and that no person be intruded in any office of the Kirke contrare to the will of the congregation to which they are appointed.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XXI. Anent mariage without proclamation of bans, which being in use these years bygone, hath produced many dangerous effects ; the Assembly would discharge the same, conforme to the former acts, except the Presbyterie in some necessarie exigents dispense therewith.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XXII. Anent the Buriall in Kirks ; the Assembly would be pleased to consider anent the act of Assembly at Edinburgh, 1588, Sess. 5, if it shall be put in execution, and to discharge funerall sermons as savouring of superstition.

The Assembly referreth the former part of this article anent buriall in kirks to the care of Presbyteries, and dischargeth all funerall sermons.

XXIII. Anent the tryall of expectants before their entrie to the ministrie ; it being notour that they have subscribed the Confession of Faith now declared in this Assembly, and that they have exercised often privatly and publickly, with approbation of the Presbyterie, they shall first adde and make the exercise publickly, and make a discourse of some common head in Latine, and give propositions thereupon for dispute, and thereafter be questioned by the Presbyterie upon questions of controversie and chronologie, anent particular texts of Scripture, how they may be interpreted according to the analogie of faith, and reconciled, and that they be examined upon their skill of the Greek and Hebrew, and that they bring a testificat of their life and conversation from either colledge or presbyterie where they reside.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

XXIV. The Assembly having considered the order of the Provinciaall Assemblies given in by the most ancient of the ministrie within every province, as the ancient plateforme thereof, ordained the same to be observed conforme to the roll, registrat in the books of Assembly, whereof the tennour followeth.

THE ORDER OF THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES IN SCOTLAND,
ACCORDING TO THE PRESBYTERIES THEREIN CONTAINED.

I. THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF MERS AND TIVIDAILL.

Presbyteries.

Bounds.

Dunce.	Mers.	To meet the first time at
Chirnside.	Tividail.	Jedburgh, the third Tues-
Kelso.	The Forrest.	day of April.
Erstiltoun.	Lauderdaill.	
Jedburgh.		
Melros.		

II. THE PROVINCIAL OF LOUTHIAN.

Dumbar.	East Louthian.	To meet the first time at
Hadingtoun.	West Louthian.	Edinburgh, the third Tues-
Dalkeith.	Tweeddaill.	day of April.
Edinburgh.		
Peebles.		
Linlithgow.		

III. THE PROVINCIAL OF PERTH.

Perth.	The shyrefdome of Perth,	To meet the first time at
Dunkell.	and of Striviling shyre.	Perth, the second Tues-
Aughterauld.		day of April.
Striviling.		
Dumblane.		

IV. THE PROVINCE OF DRUMFREES.

Dumfrees.	Niddisdail, Annandaill.	To meet the first time at
Penpont.	Ewsdaill, Eskdaill.	Drumfrees, the second
Lochmabane.	Wachopdaill, and a part	Tuesday of April.
Middilbee.	of Galloway.	

V. THE PROVINCIAL OF GALLOWAY.

Wigtoun.	The shyrefdome of Wig-	To meet the first time at
Kirkubright.	toun and Stewartie of	Wigtoun, third Tuesday
Stranraer.	Kirkubright.	of April.

The Provinciall Synod of Aire or Irwing.

Aire.	The shyrefdome of Aire.	To meet with the Provin-
Irwing.		ciall Synod of Glasgow
		<i>pro hac vice</i> , the first
		Tuesday of April.

VI. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF GLASGOW.

Pasley.	The shyre. of Lennox, the	To meet with the Provin-
Dumbartane.	Barrony of Renfrow, the	ciall Synod of Aire and
Glasgow.	shyre of Clydsdail, Over	Irwing at Glasgow, <i>pro</i>
Hammiltoun.	and Nether.	<i>hac vice</i> .
Lanerik.		

VII. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF ARGYL DESIRED TO BEE ERECTED IN SEVERALL PRESBYTERIES,
ACCORDING TO THE NOTE GIVEN IN.

Presbyteries.
Dunnune.
Kinloch.
Inneraray.
Kilmoir.
Skye.

Bounds.
The shyridomes of Argil To meet the first time at
and Boot, with a part of Inneraray, the fourth Tues-
Lochaber. day of April.

VIII. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF FIFE.

St Andrews.
Cowper.
Kirkadie.
Dunfermling.

The shyrefdome of Fife. To meet the first time at
Cowper in Fife, the first
Tuesdays of April.

IX. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF ANGUS AND MERNIS.

Meegle.
Dundie.
Arbroth.
Forfair.
Brechen.
Merns.

The shyrefdomes of Forfair, To meet the first time at
and Merns. Dundie, the third Tuesday
of April.

X. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF ABERDENE.

Aberdene.
Kincairdin.
All-foord.
Garioch.
Ellan.
Deer.
Turreffe.
Fordyce.

The shyrefdomes of Aber- To meet the first time at
dene and Bamfe. New Aberdene, the third
Tuesdays of April.

XI. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF MURRAY.

Innernes.
Forresse.
Elgin.
Strabogie.
Abernethie.
Aberlower.

The shyrefdomes of Inner- To meet the first time at
nes in part, Nairn in part, Forresse, the last Tuesday
Murray, Bamf in part, of April.
Aberden in part.

XII. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF ROSSE.

Chanrie.
Taine.
Dingwall.

The shyrefdome of Inner- To meet the first time at
nes in part. Chanrie, the second Tues-
day of April.

XIII. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF CATHNES.

Dornoch.
Weeke or Thurso.

Cathnes, Sutherland. To meet the first time at
Dornoch, the third Tues-
day of April.

XIV. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF ORKNEY AND ZETLAND.

Kirkwall.
Scalloway.

The shrefdome of Orkney To meet the first time at
and Zetland. Kirkwall, the second Tues-
day of April.

IV. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OF THE ISLES.

All the Kirks of the North-West Isles, viz., Sky, Lewes, and the rest of the Isles, which were lyable to the Diocie of the Isles, except the South-West Isles, which are joined to the Presbyteries of Argyll—to meet the first time at Skye, the second Twesday of May.

That the Minister of the place where the Synodall Assembly meets shall preach the first day of their meeting, and give timouse advertisement to the rest of the Presbyteries.

It is remembred, that of old, the Synodall Assemblies that were nearest to others had correspondence among themselves, by sending one or two commissioners mutually from one to another, which course is thought fit to be kept in time coming; viz. the Provincials of Louthian, and Mers, &c.; the Provincials of Drumfreis, Gal-loway, Glasgow, and Argyll; the Provincials of Perth, Fyfe, and Angus, &c.; the Provincials of Aberdeen and Murray; the Provincials of Rosse, Caithnes, and Ork-nay. The commissioners for correspondence amongst the Synodals to be a minister and a ruling elder.

The Assembly recommendeth to the severall Presbyteries the execution of the old acts of Assemblies, against the break of the Sabbath-day, by the going of milles, salt-pans, salmond-fishing, or any such like labour, and to this end revives and renews the act of the Assembly, holden at Halyrudehouse, 1602, Sess. 5, whereof the tenor followeth:—

“The Assembly, considering that the conventions of the people, specially on the Sabbath-day, are verie rare in many places, by distraction of labour, not only in harvest and seed-time, but also every Sabbath, by fishing, both of whyte fish and salmond-fishing, and in going of milles: Therefore, the Assemblie dischargeth and inhibiteth all such labour of fishing, as well whyte fish as salmond fish, and going of milles of all sorts upon the Sabbath-day, under the paine of incurring the censures of the Kirk. And ordains the commissioners of this Assemblie to meane the same to his Majestie, and to desire that a pecuniall paine may be injoynd upon the contraveiners of this present act.”

Act Sess. 24, December 18, 1638. Against Ministers who acquiesce not in the Sentence of Deposition.

The Assembly, considering the great necessity of purging this land from bygone corruptions, and of preserving her from the like in time coming, ordaineth the Presbyteries to proceed with the censures of the Kirk, to excommunication, against those Ministers, who, being deposed by this Assembly, acquiesces not to their sentences, but exercise some part of their Ministeriall function, refuseth themselves, and withdraw others from the obedience of the Acts of the Assembly.

Act Sess. 25, December 19, 1638. Against the civill Places and Power of Kirkmen.

The Generall Assembly, remembering that among other clauses of the application of the Confession of Faith to the present time, which was subscribed in Februarie 1638, the clause touching the civill places and power of Kirkmen was referred unto the tryall of this Assembly, entered into a serious search thereof, especially of their sitting on the bench, as Justices of Peace, their sitting in Session and Councell, their ryding and voting in Parliament; and considering how this vote in Parliament was not at first sought nor requyred by this Kirke, or worthy men of the ministerie, but being obtruded upon them, was disallowed, for such reasons as could not well be answered, (as appeareth by the conference, holden at Halyrudehouse, 1599, which, with the reasons therein contained, was read in the face of the Assembly,) and by plurality of voices not being able to resist that enforced favour, they foreseeing the dangerous consequences thereof, in the Assembly at Montrose, did limitate the same by many necessare cautions; considering also the protestation made in the Parliament, 1606, by commissioners from Presbyteries, and Provinciall Assemblies, against this resitution of Bishops to vote in Parliament, and against all civill offices in the persons of pastors, separate unto the Gospell, as incompatible with their spirituall function,

with the manifold reasons of that protestation from the Word of God, ancient Councils, ancient and moderne divines, from the doctrine, discipline, and Confession of Faith of the Kirk of Scotland, which are extant in print, and were read in the audience of the Assembly: Considering also, from their own experience, the bad fruits and great evils which have been the inseparable consequents of these offices, and that power in the persons of pastors separate to the Gospell, to the great prejudice of the freedom and libertie of the Kirk, the jurisdiction of her Assemblies, and the powerfull fruits of their spirituall ministrie; the Assembly most unanimously in one voice, with the hesitation of two allanerly, declared, that as, on the one part, the Kirk and the ministers thereof are oblidged to give their advise and good counsell in matters concerning the Kirk, or the conscience of any whatsoever, to his Majestie, to the Parliament, to the Councell, or to any member thereof, for their resolutions from the Word of God; so, on the other part, that it is both inexpedient and unlawful in this Kirk for pastors separate unto the Gospell to brook civil places and offices, as to be Justices of Peace, sit and decerne in Councell, Session, or Exchequer, to ryde or vote in Parliament, to be judges or assessors in any civill judicatorie: And, therefore, rescinds and annuls all contrarie Acts of Assembly, namely, of the Assembly holden at Montrose, 1600; which being prest by authority, did rather for an *interim* tolerat the same, and that limitate by many cautions, for the breach whereof the prelates have been justly censured, then in freedome of judgement allow thereof, and ordaineth the Presbyteries to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against such as shall transgresse herein in time comming.

Act Sess. 26, December 20, 1638. Against printing any thing relative to the Kirk of Scotland without warrand.

The Assembly, considering the great prejudice which God's Kirk in this land hath sustained these years bypast, by the unwarranted printing of lybels, pamphlets, and polemicks, to the disgrace of religion, slander of the gospell, infecting and disquyeting the mindes of God's people, and disturbance of the peace of the Kirk; and remembering the former acts and custome of this Kirk, as of all other Kirks, made for restraining these and the like abuses, and that nothing be printed concerning the Kirk and religion except it be allowed by these whom the Kirk intrusts with that charge; the Assembly unanimously, by vertue of their ecclesiasticall authority, dischargeth and inhibiteth all printers within this kingdome to print any act of the former Assemblies, any of the acts or proceedings of this Assembly, any Confession of Faith, any protestations, any reasons *pro* or *contra* anent the present divisions and contraversies of this time, or any other treatise whatsoever which may concerne the Kirk of Scotland, or God's cause in hand, without warrand subscribed by Mr Archbald Johnston, as clerk to the Assembly and advocate for the Kirk; or to reprint, without his warrand, any acts or treatises foresaids, which he hath caused any other to print, under the paine of ecclesiasticall censures, to be execute against the transgressours by the severall Presbyteries, and in case of their refusall, by the severall Commissions from this Assembly; whereunto also we are confident the honourable judges of this land will contribute their civill authority; and this to be intimat publickly in pulpit with the other generall acts of this Assembly.

Act Sess. 26, December 20, 1638. Against such as acknowledge not this Assembly.

The Generall Assembly ordaineth all Presbyteries and Provinciaill Assemblies to convene before them such as are scandalous and malicious, and will not acknowledge this Assembly, nor acquiesce unto the acts thereof; and to censure them according to their malice and contempt, and acts of this Kirk; and where Presbyteries are refractarie, granteth power unto the severall Commissions to summond them to compare before the next Generall Assembly to be holden at Edinburgh, the third Wednes-day of Julie, to abide their tryall and censure.

Act Sess. 26, December 20, 1638. Appointing Presbyteries, Burghs, Universities, as also Kirk Sessions, to have a Copy of the Acts of the Assembly.

The Assembly, considering the acts and practise of this Kirke in her purest times, that the Commissioners of every Presbyterie, Burgh, and Universitie, were both

ordained to take, and really did take, from the clerk, the whole general acts of the Assembly subscribed by the clerk, whereby they might rule and conforme their judicatorie themselves, and all persons within their jurisdictions, unto the obedience thereof; considering the great prejudices we have lately felt out of ignorance of the acts of Assembly; considering also the great necessity in this time of reformation, beyond any other ordinarie time, to have an extract thereof, the Assembly ordaineth be this present act, that all Commissioners from Presbyteries, Burghes, and Universities, presently get under the clerk's hand an index of the acts, till the acts themselves be extracted, and thereafter to get the full extract of the whole generall acts, to be insert in their Presbyterie books, whereby all their proceedings may be regulate in time coming. Likeas the Assembly recommendeth unto every Kirk Session, for the preservation of their particular paroch from the re-entrie of the corruptions now discharged, and for their continuance in the Covenant, anent doctrine, worship, and discipline now declared, to obtain an extract of these acts, especially if they be printed, seeing their pryce will no wayes then be considerable, as the benefite both of the particular parish and the interest of the whole Kirk, in the preservation thereof from defection, is undenyable, seeing Presbyteries are composed of sundry parochins, and so must be affected or infected as they are, as Provinciaill and Generall Assemblies are composed of Presbyteries, and so must be disposed as they are.

Act Sess. 26, December 20. In the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638, concerning the Confession of Faith renewed in Februar 1638.

The Assembly, considering that for the purging and preservation of religion for the King's Majestie's honour, and for the publick peace of the Kirk and kingdome, the renewing of that nationall Covenant and oath of this Kirk and kingdome, in Februar 1638, was most necessare, likeas the Lord hath blessed the same from heaven with a wonderfull successe for the good of religion, that the said Covenant suspendeth the practise of novations already introduced, and the approbation of the corruptions of the present governement of the Kirk, with the civill places and power of kirkmen, till they be tryed in a free Generall Assembly; and that now, after long and serious examination, it is found that by the Confession of Faith the Five Articles of Perth and Episcopall governement are abjured, and to be removed out of this Kirk, and the civill places and power of kirkmen are declared to be unlawfull: The Assembly alloweth and approveth the same in all the heads and articles thereof, and ordaineth that all Ministers, Masters of Universities, Colledges, and Schooles, and all others who have not already subscribed the said Confession and Covenant, shall subscribe the same, with these words prefixed to the subscription, viz., The article of this Covenant, which was at the first subscription referred to the determination of the Generall Assembly, being now determined at Glasgow, in December 1638, and thereby the Five Articles of Perth, and the governement of the Kirk by Bishops, being declared to be abjured and removed, the civill places and power of kirkmen declared to be unlawfull, we subscribe according to the determination of the said free and lawfull Generall Assembly holden at Glasgow; and ordaineth, *ad perpetuum rei memoriam*, the said Covenant, with this declaration, to be insert in the registers of the Assemblies of this Kirk, Generall, Provinciaill, and Presbyteriall.

Act Sess. 26, December 20, 1638. Concerning the subscribing the Confession of Faith lately subscribed by his Majestie's Commissioner, and urged to be subscribed by others.

Seeing the Generall Assembly, to whom belongeth properly the publick and judiciall interpretation of the Confession of Faith, hath now, after accurat tryall, and mature deliberation, clearly found that the Five Articles of Perth, and the governement of the Kirk by Bishops, are abjured by the Confession of Faith, as the same was professed in the year 1580, and was renewed in this instant year, 1638; and that the Marques of Hammiltoun, his Majestie's Commissioner, hath caused print a declaration, bearing that his Majestie's intention and his own, in causing subscribe the Confession of Faith, is no wayes to abjure but to defend Episcopall governement; and that by the oath and explanation set down in the act of Councell, it neither was nor possibly could be abjured, requyring that none take the said oath, or any other

oath, in any sense which may not consist with Episcopall government; which is directly repugnant to the genuine and true meaning of the foresaid Confession, as it was professed in the year 1580, as is clearly now found and declared by the Generall Assembly: Therefore, the Generall Assembly doth humbly supplicate that his Majestie may be graciously pleased to acknowledge and approve the foresaid true interpretation and meaning of the Generall Assembly, by his royall warrand to his Majestie's Commissioner, Councill, and subjects, to be put in record for that effect, whereof we are confident, after his Majestie hath received due information from this Kirk, honoured with his Majestie's birth and baptisme, which will be a royall testimonie of his Majestie's piety and justice, and a powerfull meane to procure the heartie affection and obedience of all his Majestie's loyall subjects; and in the meantime, least any should fall under the danger of a contradictorie oath, and bring the wrath of God upon themselves and the land, for the abuse of his name and covenant, The Assembly, by their ecclesiasticall authority, prohibiteth and dischargeth, that no member of this Kirk swear or subscribe the said Confession, so far wreasted to a contrare meaning, under paine of all ecclesiasticall censure, but that they subscribe the Confession of Faith renewed in Februar, with the declaration of the Assembly set down in the former act.

Act Sess. 26, December 20, 1638. Concerning yearly Generall Assemblies.

The Assembly, having considered the reasons lately printed for holding of Generall Assemblies, which are taken from the light of nature, the promise of Jesus Christ, the practise of the holy Apostles, the doctrine and custome of other reformed Kirks, and the liberty of this nationall Kirk, as it is expressed in the Book of Policie, and acknowledged in the act of Parliament 1592, and from recent and present experience, comparing the lamentable prejudices done to religion through the former want of free and lawfull Assemblies, and the great benefite arysing to the Kirk from this one free and lawfull Assembly, finde it necessary to declare, and hereby declares, that by divine, ecclesiasticall, and civill warrands, this nationall Kirk hath power and liberty to assemble and convene in her yearly Generall Assemblies, and oftener, *pro re nata*, as occasion and necessity shall require: Appointeth the next Generall Assembly to sit at Edinburgh the third Weddinsday of Julie 1639; and warneth all Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghes, to send their commissioners for keeping the same; giving power also to the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, *pro re nata*, and upon any urgent and extraordinarie necessity, (if any shall happen before the diet appointed in Julie,) to give advertisement to all the presbyteries, universities, and burghes, to send their commissioners for holding an occasionall Assembly. And if, in the meantime, it shall please the King's Majestie to indict a Generall Assembly, ordaineth all presbyteries, universities, and burghes, to send their commissioners for keeping the time and place which shall be appointed by his Majestie's proclamation.

Act Sess. 26, December 20. Ordaining an humble Supplication to be sent to the King's Majestie.

The Assembly, from the sense of his Majestie's pietie and justice, manifested in the publick indiction of their solemne meeting for the purging and preservation of religion, in so great an exigent of the extreame danger of both, from their fears arising out of experience of the craftie and malicious dealing of their adversaries in giving sinister informations against the most religious and loyall designes and doings of his Majestie's good subjects, and from their earnest desire to have his Majestie truely informed of their intentions and proceedings from themselves, who know them best, (which they are confident will be better beleaved, and finde more credite with his Majestie, then any secret surmise or private suggestion to the contrarie,) that they may gaine his Majestie's princely approbation and ratification in the ensuing Parliament to their constitutions, hath thought meet and ordaineth, that an humble supplication be directed to his Majestie, testifying their most heartie thankfulness for so royall a favour as at this time hath refreshed the whole Kirk and kingdome, stopping the way of calumnie, and humbly supplicating for the approbation and ratification foresaid: That truth and peace may dwell together in this land, to the increase of his Majestie's glorie, and the comfort and quietnesse of his Majestie's good people: This

the Assembly hath committed, according to the articles forsaide, to be subscribed by their moderatour and clerk in their name. The tennour whereof followeth :—

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTIE,
THE HUMBLE SUPPLICATION OF
THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY OF THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND,
CONVEENED AT GLASGOW, NOVEMBER 21, 1638.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVERAIGNE,

We, your Majestie's most humble and loyall subjects, the commissioners from all the parts of this your Majestie's ancient and native kingdome, and members of the Nationall Assembly, convened at Glasgow by your Majestie's speciall indiction, considering the great happinesse which ariseth both to Kirk and commonwealth by the mutuall embracements of religion and justice, of truth and peace, when it pleaseth the Supream Providence so to dispose that princely power and ecclesiasticall authoritie joyne in one, do, with all thankfulness of heart, acknowledge, with our mouthes doe confesse, and not only with our pennes, but with all our power are readie to witness unto the world, to your Majestie's never dying glorie, how much the whole kingdome is affected, and not only refreshed but revived, with the comfortable sense of your Majestie's pietie, justice, and goodnesse, in hearing our humble supplications for a full and free Generall Assembly: and remembring that for the present a more true and reall testimonie of our unfained acknowledgement could not proceed from us, your Majestie's duetifull subjects, then to walke worthie of so royall a favour, it hath been our greatest care and most serious endeavour, next unto the will of Jesus Christ, the great King of his Kirk, redeemed by his own blood, in all our proceedings, joynd with our hearty prayers to God for a blessing from heaven upon your Majestie's person and government, from the first houre of our meeting, to carie ourselves in such moderation, order, and loyaltie, as beseemed the subjects of so just and gracious a King, lacking nothing so much as your Majestie's personall presence; with which had we been honoured and made happie, we were confident to have gained your Majestie's royall approbation to our ecclesiastick constitutions and conclusions, knowing that a truly Christian minde and royall heart inclined from above to religion and piety, will at the first discern, and discerning be deeply possessed with the love of the ravishing beautie and heavenly order of the house of God—they both proceeding from the same Spirit. But as the joy was unspeakable, and the hopes lively, which from the fountaines of your Majestie's favour did fill our hearts, so were we not a little troubled when wee did perceive that your Majestie's Commissioner, as before our meeting he did endeavour a prelimitation of the Assembly in the necessarie members thereof, and the matters to bee treated therein, contrarie to the intention of your Majestie's proclamation indicting a free Assembly, according to the order of this Kirk and laws of the kingdome, so, from the first beginnings of our sitting, (as if his Lordship had come rather to crosse nor to countenance our lawfull proceedings, or as we had intended any prejudice to the good of religion or to your Majestie's honour—which God knoweth was far from our thoughts,) did suffer nothing, although most necessarie, most ordinarie, and most undenyable, to passe without some censure, contradiction, or protestation: And after some dayes' debating of this kinde, farre against our expectation, and to our great grieve, did arise himself, commanded us, who had laboured in every thing to approve ourselves to God, and to his Lordship, as representing your Majestie's person, to arise also, and prohibited our further meeting by such a proclamation, as will bee found to have proceeded, rather from an unwillingnesse that we should any longer sit, then from any ground or reason, which may endure the tryall either of your Majestie's Parliament or of your own royall judgement, unto which if (being convened by indiction from your Majestie, and sitting now in a constitute Assembly) we should have given place, the Kirk and kingdome, contrarie to your Majestie's most laudable intentions, manifested in former proclamations, and contrarie to the desires and expectation of all your Majestie's good people, had been in an in-

stant precipitate in such a world of confusions and such depths of miserie as afterward could not easily have been cured. In this extremitie we made choise rather of that course which was most agreeable to your Majestie's will, revealed unto us after so many fervent supplications, and did most conduce for the good of religion, your Majestie's honour, and the weill of your Majestie's kingdome, then to give way to any sudden motion tending to the ruine of all; wherein wee are so far from fearing the light, least our deeds should be reproved, that the more accurately that we are tryed, and the more impartially our using of that power which God Almighty and your sacred Majestie, his vicegerent, had put in our hands for so good and necessarie ends, is examined, we have the greater confidence of your Majestie's allowance and ratihabition; and so much the rather, that being in a manner inhibited to proceed in so good a work, we doubled our diligence, and endeavoured more carefully then before, when your Majestie's Commissioner was present, in every point falling under our consideration, to walke circumspectly, and without offence, as in the sight of God, and as if your Majestie's eyes had been looking upon us, labouring to proceed according to the Word of God, our Confession of Faith and Nationall Oath, and the laudable constitutions of the lawfull Assemblies of this Kirk; and studying rather to renew and revive old acts made for the reformation of religion in the time of your Majestie's father, of happie memorie, and extant in the records of the Kirk, which Divine Providence hath preserved, and at this time brought to our hands, then either to allow of such novations, as the avarice and ambition of men, abusing authoritie for their own ends, had without order introduced; or to appoint any new order which had not been formerly received and sworn to be retained in this Kirk. In all which the members of the Assembly found so clear and convincing light to their full satisfaction, against all their doubts and difficulties, that the harmonic and unanimitie was rare and wonderfull, that we could not have agreed upon other constitutions except wee would have been found fighting against God. Your Majestie's wise and princely minde knoweth that nothing is more ordinary then for men when they doe well to be evil spoken of, and that the best actions of men are many times misconstrued and misreported. Balaam, although a false prophet, was wronged; for, in place of that which hee said, "The Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you," the princes of Moab reported unto Balak that Balaam refused to go with them. But our comfort is, that Truth is the daughter of Time, and although calummie often starteth first and runneth before, yet veritie followeth her at the heels, and possesseth herself in noble and royall hearts, where base calummie cannot long finde place. And our confidence is, that your Majestie, with that worthe king, will keep one eare shut against all the obloquies of men; and with that more wise king, who, when he gave a prooffe that the wisdom of God was in him to doe judgement, would have both parties to stand before him at once, that hearing them equally, they might speed best, and go out most chearfullie from his Majestie's face, who had the best cause. When your Majestie's wisdom hath searched all the secrets of this Assembly, let us be reputed the worst of all men, according to the aspersions which partialitie would put upon us; let us be the most miserable of all men, to the full satisfaction of the vindictive malice of our adversaries; let us by the whole world be judged of all men the most unworthie to breath any more in this your Majestie's kingdome, if the cause that we maintaine and have been prosecuting shall be found any other but that we desire that the majestie of God, who is our fear and our dread, be served, and his house ruled according to his owne will; if we have not caried along with us in all the sessions of our Assemblie a most humble and loyall respect to your Majestie's honour, which next unto the honour of the living God lyeth nearest our hearts; if we have not kepted ourselves within the limits of our reformation without debording or reflecting upon the constitution of other reformed Kirks, unto which wee heartily wish all truth and peace, and by whose sound judgement and Christian affection we certainly look to be approven; if we have not failed rather by lenitie then by rigour in censuring of delinquents, never exceeding the rules and lines prescribed and observed by this Kirk, and if (whatsoever men minding themselves suggest to the contrary) the government and discipline of this Kirk, subscribed and sworn before, and now acknowledged by the unanimous consent of this Assembly, shall not be found to serve for the advancement of the kingdome of Christ, for procuring all due-

tifull obedience to your Majestie in this your kingdome, and great riches and glorie to your crown, for peace to us, your Majestie's loyall subjects, and for terrour to all the enemies of your Majestie's honour and our happinesse; and if any act hath proceeded from us, so farre as our understanding could reach, and humane infirmities would suffer, which being duely examined according to the grounds laid by your Majestie's father, of everlasting memory, and our religious progenitours, and which religion did forbid us to infringe, shall merit the anger and indignation wherewith wee are so often threatned. But on the contrare, having sincerely sought the glorie of God, the good of religion, your Majestie's honour, the censure of impietie, and of men who had sold themselves to wickednesse, and the re-establishment of the right constitution and government of this Kirk, farre from the smallest appearance of wronging any other reformed Kirk, we humbly beg, and certainly expect, that from the bright beames of your Majestie's countenance shining on this your Majestie's own kingdome and people, all our stormes shall bee changed in a comfortable calme and sweet sunshine, and that your Majestie's ratification in the ensuing Parliament, graciously indicted by your Majestie's proclamation to bee kepted in May, shall settle us in such a firmnesse and stabilitie in our religion as shall adde a further lustre unto your Majestie's glorious diademe, and make us a blessed people under your Majestie's long and prosperous reigne; which we beseech Him who hath directed us in our affaires, and by whom kings reigne, to grant unto your Majestie, to the admiration of all the world, the astonishment of your enemies, and comfort of the godly.

Collected, visied, and extracted forth from the Register of the Acts of the Assembly, by me, Mr A. Jhonston, clerk thereto, under my signe and subscription manuall.

(S. S.)

A. JHONSTON, *Cls. Eccl.*

Edinburgh, the 12th of January 1639.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY,
HOLDEN AT EDINBURGH, 1639.

Sess. 8, August 17, 1639.—Master George Grahame his renouncing and abjuring of Episcopacie.

The which day there was given in to the Assembly, direct from Mr George Grahame, sometimes pretended Bishop of Orknay, an abjuration of Episcopacie, subscribed with his hand, which was publickly read in audience of the Assembly; and thereafter they ordained the same to be registrat in the Assembly Books, *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, wherof the tenor follows:—

To all and sundry whom it effeirs, to whose knowledge these presents shall come, specially to the reverend and honourable members of the future Assembly to be holden at Edinburgh, the twelfth day of August 1639 years, Me, Master George Graham, some time pretended Bishop of Orknay, being sorry and grieved at my heart that I should ever for any worldly respect have embraced the order of Episcopacie, the same having no warrant from the Word of God, and being such an order as hath had sensibly many fearfull and evill consequences in many parts of Christendome, and particularly within the Kirk of Scotland, as by dolefull and deplorable experience this day is manifest, to have disclaimed, like as I, by the tenor hereof, doe altogether disclaime and abjure all episcopall power and jurisdiction, with the whole corruptions thereof,

condemned by lawfull Assemblies within the said Kirk of Scotland, in regard the same is such an order as is also abjured within the said Kirk, by vertue of that Nationall Oath which was made in the years 1580 and 1581, promising and swearing by the great name of the Lord our God, that I shall never whiles I live, directly or indirectly, exerce any such power within the Kirk, neither yet shall I ever approve or allow the same, not so much as in my private or publicke discourse; but, on the contrary, shall stand and adhere to all the acts and constitutions of the late Assembly holden at Glasgow, the 21 of November 1638 last bypast, and shall concur to the uttermost of my power, sincerely and faithfully, as occasion shall offer, in executing the said acts, and in advancing the work of reformation within this land, to the glory of God, the peace of the country, and the comfort and contentment of all good Christians, as God shall be my help. In testimony of the which premisses, I have subscribed thir presents with my hand at Brecknes in Stronnes, the eleventh day of February, the year of God 1639 years, before thir witnesses, Master Walter Stuart, Minister at Southronnaldsay, Master James Heynd, Minister at Kirkwall, Master Robert Peirson, Minister at Firth, and Master Patrick Grahame, Minister at Holme, my son.

Sess. 8, Aug. 17, 1639.—Act containing the Causes and Remedie of the bygone Evils of this Kirk.

The King's Majestic having graciously declared, that it is his royall will and pleasure that all questions about religion and matters ecclesiasticall be determined by Assemblies of the Kirk; having also by publicke proclamation indicted this free Nationall Assembly, for settling the present distraction of this Kirk, and for establishing a perfect peace against such divisions and disorders as have been sore displeasing to his Majestic, and grievous to all his good subjects; and now his Majestic's Commissioner, John Earle of Traquair, intrusted and authorized with a full commission, being present, and sitting in this Assembly, now fully convened and orderly constitute in all the members thereof, according to the order of this Kirk, having at large declared his Majestic's zeal to the reformed religion, and his royall care and tender affection to this Kirk, where his Majestic had both his birth and baptisme, his great displeasure at the manifold distractions and divisions of this Kirk and kingdome, and his desires to have all our wounds perfectly cured with a fair and fatherly hand; and although in the way approven by this Kirk, tryall hath been taken in former Assemblies before from the Kirk registers, to our full satisfaction, yet the Commissioner's Grace making particular inquiry from the members of the Assembly, now solemnly convened, concerning the reall and true causes of so many and great evils as this time past had so sore troubled the peace of this Kirk and kingdome, it was represented to his Majestic's Commissioner by this Assembly, that beside many other, the maine and most materiall causes were, first, The pressing of this Kirk by the Prelates with a Service Book, or Book of Common Prayer, without warrand or direction from the Kirk, and containing, beside the Popish frame thereof, divers Popish errors and ceremonies, and the seeds of manifold grosse superstitions and idolatry; with a book of canons, without warrand or direction from the Generall Assembly, establishing a tyrannicall power over the Kirk in the person of Bishops, and overthrowing the whole discipline and government of the Kirk by Assemblies; with a book of consecration and ordination, without warrand of authoritie, civill or ecclesiasticall, appointing offices in the house of God, which are not warranted by the Word of God, and repugnant to the discipline and acts of our Kirk; and with the High Commission erected without the consent of the Kirk, subverting the jurisdiction and ordinary judicatories of this Kirk, and giving to persons meerly ecclesiasticall the power of both swords, and to persons meerly civill the power of the keys and Kirk censures. A second cause was the Articles of Perth, viz., the observation of festivall dayes, kneeling at the communion, confirmation, administration of the sacraments in private places, which are brought in by a null Assembly, and are contrary to the Confession of Faith, as it was meant and subscribed *anno* 1580, and divers times since, and to the order and constitutions of this Kirk. Thirdly, The changing of the government of the Kirk

from the Assemblies of the Kirk to the persons of some kirkmen, usurping prioritie and power over their brethren, by the way, and under the name of Episcopall government, against the Confession of Faith, 1580, against the order set downe in the Book of Policy, and against the intention and constitution of this Kirk from the beginning. Fourthly, The civill places and power of kirkmen, their sitting in Session, Councill, and Exchequer, their riding, sitting, and voting in Parliament, and their sitting in the Bench as Justices of Peace, which, according to the constitutions of this Kirk, are incompatible with their spiritual sanction, lifting them up above their brethren in worldly pomp, and do tend to the hinderance of the ministrie. Fifthly, The keeping and authorising corrupt Assemblies at Linlithgow, 1606 and 1608, at Glasgow, 1610, at Aberdene, 1616, at St Andrews, 1617, at Perth, 1618, which are null and unlawfull, as being called and constitute quite contrary to the order and constitutions of this Kirk, received and practised ever since the reformation of religion; and withal laboring to introduce novations into this Kirk, against the order and religion established. A sixth cause is the want of lawfull and free Generall Assemblies, rightly constitute, of Pastors, Doctors, and Elders, yearly or oftner, *pro re nata*, according to the libertie of this Kirk, expressed in the Book of Policy, and acknowledged in the Act of Parliament, 1592. After which the whole Assembly in one heart and voyce did declare, that these and such other, proceeding from the neglect and breach of the Nationall Covenant of this Kirk and kingdome, made *in anno* 1580, have been indeede the true and maine causes of all our evils and distractions. And therefore ordain, according to the constitutions of the Generall Assemblies of this Kirk, and upon the grounds *respective* above specified, That the foresaid Service Book, Books of Cannons, and Ordination, and the High Commission, be still rejected; that the Articles of Perth be no more practised; that episcopall government, and the civill places and power of kirkmen, be holden still as unlawfull in this Kirk; that the above named pretended Assemblies, at Linlithgow, 1606 and 1608, at Glasgow, 1610, at Aberdene, 1616, at St Andrews, 1617, at Perth, 1618, be hereafter accounted as null and of none effect. And that for the preservation of religion, and preventing all such evils in time coming, Generall Assemblies rightly constitute, as the proper and competent judge of all matters ecclesiasticall, heereafter be kept yearly and oftner, *pro re nata*, as occasion and necessity shall require; the necessity of these occasionall Assemblies being first remonstrate to his Majestie by humble supplication, as also that Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synodall Assemblies, be constitute and observed according to the order of this Kirk.

After the voycing of the act, (anent the causes of our bygone evils,) his Majestie's Commissioner consented verbally to the said act, and promised to give into the clerk in writ the declaration of his consent, and that he should ratifie this act in the ensuing parliament.

Sess. 18, Aug. 26, 1639.—Act approving an old Register of the Generall Assembly.

The whole Assembly, (upon the report made to them anent the old Register of the Assembly gotten from Mr John Rig,) all in one voice approved the said Register, and ordained the same to make faith in judgement and outwith, in all time coming, as a true and authentick Register of the Kirk of Scotland, conforme to the testimonie subscribed by the Committee, to be insert in the Books of Assembly, whereof the tenor followeth:—

We, under-subscribers, forsameikle as the late Generall Assembly, holden at Glasgow, gave power and commission to us to peruse, examine, and cognosce, upon the validity, faith, and strength of the Books and Registers of the Assembly, particularly set down in the commission given to us thereanent; according whereunto we did carefully view, peruse, and consider the saids Registers, and gave our testimony thereof under our hands, of the validity and sufficiency of the samine to the said Generall Assembly. And now, having a new commission given to us from the Generall Assembly now presently convened and sitting at Edinburgh, to peruse, examine, and cognosce upon the validity, faith, and strength of another Register of the As-

sembly, which was not set down and recommended to us by the said former commission, which Register beginneth at the Assembly holden at Edinburgh the sixth day of March 1572, and endeth at the Assembly likewise holden at Edinburgh 1573, we have carefully viewed, perused, and considered the said Register; and being deeply and maturely advised, as in a matter of greatest weight and consequence, do attest before God, and upon our consciences declare to the world, and this present Assembly, that the said Register above exprest is a famous, authentick, and good Register, which ought to be so reputed, and have publike faith in judgement and outwith, as a valid and true record in all things; and finds the same to be of the same hand-writ, and subscribed by the same clerk of the Generall Assembly, as divers of the said other Registers (formerly perused by us) are. And in testimonie of our solemne affirmation, we have subscribed these presents with our hands, at Edinburgh, the day of August 1639.

Act Sess. 19, August 27, 1639.—Act approving the Deposition of the Ministers by the Committees.

The Assembly, after the receiving of the whole reports from the committees appointed for revising of the processes and sentences, led, deduced, and pronounced before, and by the severall commissions granted by the Assembly at Glasgow, all in one voice approved the saids whole processes as orderly proceeded, and the whole sentences pronounced thereintill as just and lawful decrees, without prejudice of any favour that can be showne to any person or persons, against whom the said sentences are pronounced upon their supplications, or of justice to such as complain of their processe, and offers to reduce the same, upon whatsoever reason competent, by the constitution of this Kirk and kingdome, before the Generall Assembly, and the commissioners thereof, they being appointed for that effect.

Act Sess. 20, August 28, 1639.—Act anent receiving of deposed Ministers.

The which day the Generall Assembly, upon the report of the committees anent these who are deposed by Synods, Doe make this generall act, recommending to the Synods all these who are deposed before them for subscribing of the declinator, and reading of the Service-Book, and for no other grosse cause, That upon their true repentance and submission to the constitutions of this Kirk, and upon their purgation and clearnesse from any grosse faults laid to their charge in any new processe against them, they may be found by the Synods capable of the ministrie, when God grants them an ordinary and lawfull calling, by admission from the Presbyterie, either in the church they served in before, or in any other church.

Act Sess. 21, August 29, 1639.—Act anent the keeping of the Lord's Day.

The Generall Assembly recommendeth to the severall Presbyteries the execution of the old Acts of Assembly against the breach of the Sabbath-day, by going of Mylnes, Salt-Pannes, Salmond-fishing, or any such like labour; and to this end revives and renues the Acts of the Assembly holden at Halyrudehouse, 1602, Sess. 5, whereof the tenor follows:—

The Assembly, considering that the conventions of the people, specially on the Sabbath-day, are very rare in many places, by distraction of labour, not only in harvest and seed-time, but also every Sabbath, by fishing both of white fish and salmond-fishing, and in going of mylnes: Therefore, the Assembly dischargeth and inhibiteth all such labour of fishing, as well white fish as salmond fish, and going of mylnes of all sorts upon the Sabbath, under the pain of incurring the censures of the Kirk; and ordaines the Commissioners of this Assembly to mean the same to his Majestie, and to desire that a pecuniall paine may be enjoyned upon the contraveeners of this present act.

Act Sess. 22, August 29, 1639, à meridie.—Articles and Overtures approved by the Assembly.

That some Commissioners be appointed to visit and peruse the whole Acts of Generall Assemblies, and to marke such Acts as are for the use of the Kirk in generall, to extract the same out of the registers, to the effect that after they be tryed, they may be printed according to the old acts of the Assembly at Edinburgh, March 7, 1574, Session 9.

The Assembly appoints the Presbyterie of Edinburgh to have a care of this article, and to report their diligence to the next Assembly.

That course may be taken for restraining of people from passing to England to marry, which is the occasion of great inconveniencies.

The Assembly alloweth this article, and recommends to the Parliament that they would appoint a pecuniall summe to be payed by the contraveeners.

That the acts furnishing expences to commissioners sent by the Presbyteries to the Generall Assembly, and sent in commission by Generall Assemblies, may be explained; and it be declared that all such commissioners whatsoever, by their stipends may be furnished by the kirks of the Presbyterie, according to the order set down in the act of the last Assembly, since the errand is common, and the benefit concerneth all; and that order may be taken, how that an expedient voluntarie course, thought fit by the Assembly, shall, by advise of Parliament, have the force of a law, for compelling these to pay who are stented, both for the last and this Assembly, and in time to come.

The Assembly allows this article, and referres the same to the Parliament.

That the Session-books of every Paroche be presented once a year to the Presbyteries, that they may be tryed by them.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

That the Act of the 38th Assembly at Edinburgh, October 24, 1578, Sess. 8, ordaining Ministers who are deposed to be charged, under the pain of excommunication, to dinit their places, that they may be unquestionably vacand, may now be renewed.

The Assembly alloweth this article, and remits the same to the Parliament.

The Assembly would revive or renew all former Acts of Assembly against Papists, and excommunicate persons, against haunTERS with them, and receivers of them.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

That an uniforme Catechisme may be appointed to be used throughout this whole Kingdome, in the examinations before the communion.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

That all ministers or intrants presented to kirks be tryed before their admission, if they be qualified for the places to which they are presented, besides the ordinary tryalls of expectants before their entrie to the ministrie.

The Assembly alloweth this article.

Sess. 23, Aug. 30, 1639.—The Supplication of the Generall Assembly to the King's Majestie's Commissioner, concerning the Book called "The Large Declaration."

Wee, the members of this present Assembly, for our selves, and in name of the severall Presbyteries, Burghs, and Universities, for which we are commissioners, representing the great dishonour done to God, our King, this Kirk, and whole kingdome, by the book called "A Large Declaration," have here represented the same to your Grace, and have collected some amongst many of false, grosse, and absurd passages, that, from the consideration thereof, your Grace perceiving the intolerable evils foresaids contained therein, may be pleased to represent the same to our gracious Sovereigne, and in our behalfe humbly to beseech his Majestie, so much wronged by the many foul and false relations, suggested and perswaded to him as trueths, and by stealing the protection of his royall name and authoritie to the patrocine of such a book, to be pleased first to call in the said book, and thereby to shew his dislike

thereof; next, to give commission and warrant to cite all such parties as are either knowne or suspect to have hand in it, and to appoint such as his Majestie knowes to be either authors, informers, or any wayes accessarie, being natives of this kingdome, to be sent hither to abyde their tryall and censure before the Judge Ordinary, and in speciall, Master Walter Balcanquell, now Deane of Durlham, who is known, and hath professed to be the author, at least avower and maintainer of a great part thereof; that by their examplar punishment, others may be deterred from such dangerous courses, as in such a way to raise sedition betwixt the King and his subjects, God's honour may be vindicate from so high contempt, his Majestie's justice may appear, not only in cutting away such malefactors, but in discouraging all such under-miners of his throne, his loyall and loving subjects shall be infinitely contented to be cleared before the world of so false and unjust imputations, and will live hereafter in the greater securitie, when so dangerous a course of sedition is prevented, and so will have the greater and greater cause to pray for his Majestie's long and prosperous reigne.

His Majestie's Commissioner in Councell having received the said supplication, promised to impart the same to his Majesty, and to report his diligence therein.

The Supplication of the Assembly to his Majestie's High Commissioner, and the Lords of Secret Councell.

Wee, the Generall Assembly, considering, with all humble and thankfull acknowledgement, the many recent favours bestowed upon us by his Majestie, and that there resteth nothing for crowning of his Majestie's incomparable goodnesse towards us, but that all the members of this Kirk and kingdome be joyned in one and the same Confession and Covenant with God, with the King's Majestie, and amongst our selves: And conceiving the main lett and impediment to this so good a work, and so much wished by all, to have been the informations made to his Majestie of our intentions to shake off civill and dutifull obedience due to soveraignty, and to diminish the King's greatnesse and authoritie, and being most willing and desirous to remove this and all such impediments which may hinder and impede so full and perfect an union, and for clearing of our loyaltie, Wee, in our own names, and in name of all the rest of the subjects and congregations whom we represent, do now, in all humility, represent to your Grace, his Majestie's Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majestie's most Honourable Privie Councell, and declares before God and the world, that we never had nor have any thought of withdrawing ourselves from that humble and dutifull obedience to his Majestie, and to his government, which by the descent and under the reign of 107 kings is most chearfully acknowledged by us and our predecessors; and that we never had nor have any intention nor desire to attempt any thing that may tend to the dishonour of God, or the diminution of the King's greatnesse and authoritie: But, on the contrary, acknowledging our quietnesse, stabilitie, and happinesse to depend upon the safety of the King's Majestie's person, and maintenance of his greatnesse and royall authority, who is God's vicegerent set over us, for the maintenance of religion and ministration of justice, wee have solemnly sworn, and do sweare, not only our mutuall concurrence and assistance for the cause of religion, and to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, to stand to the defence of our dread Sovereigne, his person and authority, in preservation and defence of the true religion, liberties, and lawes of this Kirk and kingdome, but also in every cause which may concerne his Majestie's honour, shall, according to the lawes of this kingdome, and the duties of good subjects, concur with our friends and followers in quiet manner, or in armes, as we shall be required of his Majestie, his Councell, or any having his authority. And, therefore, being most desirous to cleare ourselves of all imputation of this kinde, and following the laudable example of our predecessors, 1589, do most humbly supplicate your Grace, his Majestie's Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majestie's most Honourable Privie Councell, to enjoyn by act of Councell, that this Confession and Covenant, which, as a testimony of our fidelity to God, and loyaltie to our King, we have subscribed, be subscribed by all his Majestie's subjects, of what rank and quality soever.

The Act of the Lords of Councill at Edinburgh, Aug. 30, 1639, containing the Answer of the preceding Supplication.

The which day, in presence of the Lord Commissioner and the Lords of Privie Councill, compeired personally John Earle of Rothes, James Earle of Montrose, John Lord Lowdown, Sir George Stirling of Keir, Knight, Sir William Douglas of Cavers, Knight, Sir Henry Wood of Bonytoun, Knight, John Smyth, Burgesse of Edinburgh, Mr Robert Barclay, Provost of Irwing, Mr Alexander Henderson, Minister at Edinburgh, and Mr Archbald Johnstoun, Clerk to the Generall Assembly, and in the name of the present sitting Generall Assembly, gave in to the Lord Commissioner and Lords of Privie Councill the petition above written; which being read, heard, and considered by the saids Lords, they have ordained, and ordain the same to be insert and registrate in the books of Privie Councill, and according to the desire thereof, ordaines the said Confession and Covenant to be subscribed in time coming by all his Majestie's subjects of this kingdome, of what ranke and quality soever.

The King's Majestie's Commissioner's Declarations.

The which day his Majestie's Commissioner and Lords of Councill, after the receiving of the supplication of the Generall Assembly, anent the subscribing of the Covenant, having returned to the Assembly, his Majestie's Commissioner, in name of the Councill, declared, that he had received the supplication of the Assembly, desiring that the Covenant might receive the force of an act of Councill, to be subscribed by all his Majestie's subjects, that they had found the desire so fair and reasonable that they conceived themselves bound in duety to grant the same; and thereupon have made an act of Councill to that effect; and that there rested now the Act of Assembly. And that he himself was so fully satisfied, that he came now, as his Majestie's Commissioner, to consent fully unto it; and that he was most willing that it should be enacted here in this Assembly, to oblige all his Majestie's subjects to subscribe the said Covenant, with the Assemblie's explanation. And because there was a third thing desired, his subscription, as the King's Commissioner, unto the Covenant, which he behoooved to do, with a declaration in writ; and he declared as a subject he should subscribe the Covenant as strictly as any with the Assemblie's Declaration; but as his Majestie's Commissioner, in his name, behoooved to prefix to his subscription the declaration following, which no Scots subjects should subscribe or have the benefit of, no not himself as Earle of Traquair; the tenor whereof follows:—

“Seeing this Assembly, according to the laudable form and custome heretofore kept in the like cases, have in an humble and dutifull way supplicate to us, his Majestie's Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majestie's most honourable Privie Councill, that the Covenant, with the explanation of this Assembly, might be subscribed; and to that effect, that all the subjects of this kingdome by act of Councill be required to doe the same; and that therein, for vindicating themselves from all suspitions of disloyaltie, or derogating from the greatnesse and authoritie of our dread soveraigne, have therewith added a clause, whereby this Covenant is declared one in substance with that which was subscribed by his Majestie's father, of blessed memory, 1580, 1581, 1590, and oftner since renewed: Therefore, I, as his Majestie's Commissioner, for the full satisfaction of the subjects, and for settling a perfect peace in church and kingdome, doe, according to my foresaids declaration and subscription, subjoyned to the act of this Assembly of the date the 17th of this instant, allow and consent that the Covenant be subscribed throughout all this kingdome. In witnes whereof, I have subscribed the premisses.”

Likeas his Majestie's Commissioner read and gave in the Declaration following, of his consent to the act of the Assembly, August 17, anent the causes of our bygone evils:—

I, John Earle of Traquair, his Majestie's Commissioner in this present Assembly, doe in his Majestie's name declare, that notwithstanding of his Majestie's own inclination, and many other grave and weightie considerations, yet such is his Majestie's

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incomparable goodness, that for settling the present distractions, and giving full satisfaction to the subject, He doth allow, likeas I, his Majestie's Commissioner, do consent to the foresaid act, and have subscribed the premisses.

Likeas his Majestie's Commissioner read and gave in the Declaration following :—

It is alwayes hereby declared by me, his Majestie's Commissioner, That the practise of the premisses, prohibited within this Kirk and kingdome, outwith the kingdome of Scotland, shall never bind nor inferre censure against the practises outwith the kingdome. Which, when the Commissioner required to be insert in the register of the Kirk, and the Moderator in name of the Assembly refused to give warrant for such practise, as not agreeable with a good conscience, his Grace urged, that it should be recorded at least that he made such a declaration, whatsoever was the Assemblie's judgement in the contrair. And so it is to be understood to be insert here onely *recitative*.

Act ordaining the Subscription of the Confession of Faith and Covenant, with the Assemblie's Declaration.

The Generall Assembly, considering the great happinesse which may flow from a full and perfect union of this Kirk and kingdome, by joyning of all in one and the same Covenant with God, with the King's Majestie, and amongst ourselves, having by our great oath declared the uprightness and loyaltie of our intentions in all our proceedings, and having withall supplicated his Majestie's High Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majestie's honorable Privie Councell, to injoyne by act of councell all the lieges in time coming to subscribe the Confession of Faith and Covenant, which, as a testimony of our fidelity to God and loyaltie to our King, we have subscribed: And, seeing his Majestie's High Commissioner, and the Lords of his Majestie's honourable Privie Councell, have granted the desire of our supplication, ordaining by civill authority all his Majestie's lieges in time coming to subscribe the foresaid Covenant, that our union may bee the more full and perfect, We, by our act and constitution ecclesiasticall, do approve the foresaid Covenant in all the heads and clauses thereof, and ordains of new, under all ecclesiastical censure, that all the masters of universities, colledges, and schooles, all schollers at the passing of their degrees, all persons suspect of Papistry or any other errour, and, finally, all the members of this Kirk and kingdome, subscribe the same with these words prefixed to their subscription :—"The article of this Covenant, which was at the first subscription referred to the determination of the Generall Assembly, being determined, and thereby the Five Articles of Perth, the government of the Kirk by Bishops, the civill places and power of kirkmen, upon the reasons and grounds contained in the acts of the Generall Assembly, declared to be unlawfull within this Kirk, we subscribe according to the determination foresaid." And ordains the Covenant, with this declaration, to be insert in the registers of the Assemblies of this Kirk, Generall, Provinciall, and Presbyteriall, *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*; and in all humility supplicates his Majestie's High Commissioner, and the honourable Estates of Parliament, by their authority to ratifie and injoyne the same, under all civill paines, which will tend to the glory of God, preservation of religion, the King's Majestie's honour, and perfect peace of this Kirk and kingdome.

August 30, 1639.—Act anent Appellations.

The Assembly appointed, That in all time hereafter no appellations should be leaping over either Presbyterie or Synod, but to ascend by degrees as from the Kirk-Session to the Presbytry, or from the Presbyterie to the Synod, and from the Synod to the Generall Assembly, except it be after the Synod be past, and immediatly before the Generall Assembly, or in the time thereof; and renews all former acts made to this effect.

Act anent advising with Synods and Presbyteries before determination in Novations.

The Generall Assembly, desiring that the intended reformation being recovered,

may be established, ordains, That no novation which may disturbe the peace of the Church and make division be suddenly proponed and enacted ; but so as the motion be first communicate to the severall Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirks, that the matter may be approved by all at home, and commissioners may come well prepared, unanimously to conclude a solide deliberation upon these points in the Generall Assembly.

Act anent Ministers Catechising, and Family Exercises.

The Assembly, considering that the long-awaited-for fruits of the Gospel, so mercifully planted and preserved in this land, and the reformation of ourselves and families, so solemnly vowed to God of late in our Covenant, cannot take effect except the knowledge and worship of God be caried from the pulpit to every family within each parish, hath, therefore, appointed that every minister, besides his paines on the Lord's day, shall have weekly catechising of some part of the paroch, and not altogether cast over the examination of the people till a little before the communion. Also, that in every familie the worship of God be erected where it is not both morning and evening, and that the children and servants be catechised at home by the masters of the families, whereof account shall be taken by the minister and elders assisting him in the visitation of every family ; and, lest they fail, that visitation of the severall kirks be seriously followed by every Presbyterie, for this end among others. The execution and successe whereof, being tried by the Synods, let it be represented to the next Generall Assembly.

Sess. 24, Aug. 30, à meridie.—The Assemblie's Supplication to the King's Majestie.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVERAIGNE,

Wee, your Majestie's most humble and loyall subjects, the commissioners from all the parts of this your Majestie's ancient and native kingdome, and members of the Nationall Assembly convened at Edinburgh by your Majestie's speciall indiction, and honoured with the presence of your Majestie's High Commissioner, have been waiting for a day of rejoycing and of solemne thanksgiving to be rendred to God by this whole Kirk and kingdome, for giving us a King so just and religious, that it is not only lawfull for us to be Christians under your Majestie's government, which sometime hath been the greatest praise of great princes, but also that it hath pleased your gracious Majestie to make known that it is your royall will and pleasure that all matters ecclesiasticall be determined in free Nationall Assemblies, and matters civill in Parliaments, which is a most noble and ample expression of your Majestie's justice, and we trust shall be a powerfull mean of our common happinesse under your Majestie's most blessed reign. In the mean while, we do most humbly, upon the knees of our hearts, blesse your Majesty for that happinesse already begun in the late Assembly at Edinburgh, in the proceedings whereof, next under God, we have laboured to approve ourselves unto your Majestie's vicegerent, as if your Majestie's eyes had been upon us, which was the desire of our souls, and would have beene the matter of our full rejoycing, and doe still continue your Majestie's most humble supplicants for your Majestie's civill sanction and ratification of the constitutions of the Assembly in Parliament ; that your Majestie's princely power, and the ecclesiasticall authority joyning in one, the mutuall embracements of religion and justice, of truth and peace, may be seen in this land, which shall be to us as a resurrection from the dead, and shall make us, being not only so farre recovered, but also revived, to fill heaven and earth with our praises, and to pray that King Charles may be more and more blessed, and his throne established before the Lord for ever.

The Assembly appoints the next Generall Assembly to sit at Aberdene the last Tuesday of July next, 1640 years ; and warneth all Presbyteries, Universities, and Burrows, to send their commissioners for keeping the samine ; and thereafter the Assembly was concluded by giving of thanks by the Moderator, and singing of a psalme, according to the custome.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, CONVEENED
AT ABERDENE, JULY 28, 1640.

Sess. 2, July 29, 1640.

The Assembly having past the first day before they would make any act in attending of his Majestie's Commissioner—

This day the Moderator openly asked in face of the Assembly, if there was any Commissioner come from his Majestie; and finding there was none, the Assembly proceeded according to their liberties.

Overtures given in by the Committee appointed by the last Assembly, anent the ordering of the Assembly-House, which being read in audience of the Assembly, they approved the same.

I. The Assembly finds it expedient for the ordering of the house in all time coming, that the commissioners sit together unmixt, and that the places where they sit be railed about, or some other way divided from the seats of others, and that places be provided without the bounds of the commissioners' seats, to persons of respect who are not commissioners, and others according to their qualities, as the magistrates of the town shall find most convenient.

II. Also, that the commissioners having received tickets from the magistrates of the burgh, at the delivery of their commissions, wherby they may have ready accesse to the Assemblie-house and place appointed for them, do keep the hour of meeting precisely, and whosoever comes after the time, or shall be found absent at the calling of the Rols, to be censured as the Assemblie sees fitting; and whatsoever Presbyterie, Burgh, or Universitie, shall not send commissioners, or commissioners sent from them doe not come at all to the Assembly, be summond unto the next Assembly, and censured as the Assembly shall find reasonable.

III. That foure persons of respect have warrant from the Assembly to injoyne that there be no standing, no din, nor disorderly behaviour; and if any shall disobey them, or direct his speech to any except to the Moderator, and that one at once, with leave first asked and given, to be rebuked publicly by the Moderator; and if he desist not, be removed out of the Assembly for that Session.

IV. That no motion come in unto the Assembly but by the committee appointed for matters of that nature; and if the committee refuse to answer the same, let it be proponed to the Assembly, with the reasons thereof.

V. That the minutes of ilk Session be read before their rising, and if the matter concerne the whole Kirk, let it be drawn up in forme and read in the begining of the next ensuing Session, that the Assembly may judge whether or not it bee according to their minde.*

Act anent the Demolishing of Idolatrous Monuments.

Forasmuch as the Assembly is informed, that in divers places of this kingdome, and specially in the North parts of the same, many idolatrous monuments, erected and made for religious worship are yet extant, such as crucifixes, images of Christ, Mary, and saints departed, ordaines the saids monuments to be taken down, demolished, and destroyed, and that with all convenient diligence; and that the care of this work shall be incumbent to the Presbyteries and Provinciaill Assemblies within this kingdome; and their commissioners to report their diligence herein to the next Generall Assemblie.

Act against Witches and Charmers.

The Assembly ordaines all ministers within the kingdome, carefully to take notice of charmers, witches, and all such abusers of the people, and to urge the acts of Parliament to be execute against them; and that the commissioners from the Assembly

* The above Overtures were drawn up by Mr Robert Baillie.—Ed. 1843.

to the Parliament shall recommend to the said supreme judicatory the care of the execution of the lawes against such persons in the most behoovefull way.

Sess. 5, Aug. 1, 1640.—Act for censuring Speakers against the Covenant.

The Assembly ordaines, That such as have subscribed the Covenant and speakes against the same, if he be a minister, shall be deprived ; and if he continue so, being deprived, shall be excommunicate ; and if he be any other man, shall be dealt with as perjured, and satisfie publicly for his perjury.

Sess. 10, Aug. 5, 1640.—Act against Expectants refusing to subscribe the Covenant.

The Assembly ordaines, That if any expectant shall refuse to subscribe the Covenant, he shall be declared incapable of a pedagogie, teaching of a school, reading at a kirk, preaching within a Presbyterie, and shall not have libertie of residing within a burgh, universitie, or colledge ; and if they continue obstinate to be processed.

The Generall Assembly appoints the next Assembly to be in St Andrews, the third Tuesday of July 1641 ; and that the Moderator, in a convenient way, by the Secret Councill or otherwise, as may best serve, request the King's Majestie to send his Commissioner to the said Assembly. And if any exigent fall out, that the Presbyterie of Edinburgh give advertisement for an Assembly *pro re nata*.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AT ST ANDREWS AND EDINBURGH, 1641.

Sess. 1, July 20, 1641.

John Earle of Weymes, his Majestie's Commissioner, presented his Majestie's Letter to the Assembly, whereof the tenor followeth:—

CHARLES R.

TRUSTIE AND WELBELOVED, Wee greet you well. It is no small part of our royall care and desires, that the true reformed religion, wherein by the grace of God wee resolve to live and dye, be settled peaceably in that our ancient and native kingdome of Scotland, and that the same be truly taught, and universally received and professed by our subjects there of all degrees. For preventing of all division and trouble hereafter, wee did intend in our own royall person to have been present at this Assembly, but conceiving it to be unfitting to detain the ministers from their particular charges till the time of our coming to the Parliament, we have resolved to make knowne unto you by these, and by our Commissioner, that in the approaching Parliament it is our intention, by our authority to ratifie and confirm the Constitutions of the late Assembly at Edinburgh, that they may be obeyed by all our subjects living in that our kingdome ; and that we will take into our royall consideration by what meanes the churches belonging to our presentation, when any of them shall happen to vaik, may be best provided with well qualified preachers : Like as we are not unwilling to grant presentations unto such as in these times of trouble have entred into the ministerie, providing they have been examined by the Presbyteries, and approved by them. Because we want not our own feares of the decay of learning in that Church and kingdome, we intend also to consider of the best meanes for helping the schooles and colledges of learning, especially of divinity, that there may be such a number of preachers there, as that each parish having a minister, and the Gospel being preached in the most remote parts of the kingdome, all our subjects may taste of our care in that kinde, and have more and more cause to blesse God that we are set over them. And, finally, so tender is our care, that it shall not be our fault if the churches and colledges there flourish not in learning and religion ; for which royall testimonie of our goodnesse, we require nothing upon your part but that which God hath bound you unto, even that you be faithfull in the charge committed unto you, and care for the soules of the people ; that you study peace and unity amongst yourselves and amongst

the people, against all schisme and faction; and that you not only pray for us, but that you teach the people, which we trust are not unwilling to pay that honour and obedience which they owe unto us, as his Vicegerent set over them for their good; wherein we expect you will by your example goe before them. Which hoping you will doe, wee bid you farewell. From our Court at Whitehall, the 10th day of July 1641.

Sess. 3, July 28, 1641.—Act approving the Overtures of the Assembly at Aberdene, for ordering the Assembly-House.

The overtures for ordering the Assembly-house, given in to and approved by the Assembly of Aberdene, the 29th July 1640, Act Sess. 2, were openly read, and again approved by this Assembly, and ordained to be kept the whole time thereof.

Sess. 5, July 30, 1641.—Act anent old Ministers bruiking their Benefices.

The Assembly having considered the supplication given in by Doctor Robert Howie, Provost of the New Colledge of St Andrews, whereby he craved that (notwithstanding of his dismission of his charge) he should not be prejudged of his full provision and maintenance during his life time, the Assembly thinks it fit and necessary that his provision and maintenance should not be diminished, but that he should enjoy the same fully, as of before, during all the dayes of his lifetime, and craveth his dismission to be only but a cessation from his charge, because of his age and inability; and declares that old ministers and professors of divinity shall not, by their cessation from their charge through age and inability, be put from injoying their old maintenance and dignity. And recommends this and others the like things, concerning the estate of that Universitie of St Andrews, to the Parliament, and the visitation to be appointed from the Assembly and Parliament. And likewise, the Assembly being informed that the said Doctor Howie hath been very painfull in his charge, and that he hath divers papers which would be very profitable for the Kirk, therefore, they think fit that the said Doctor Howie be desired to collect these papers which doeth concerne and may be profitable for the use of the Kirk, that the samine may be showne to the visitors of the said Universitie.

Sess. 8, August 2, 1641, à meridie.—Act against sudden receiving Ministers deposed.

The Assembly ordaines, That ministers who are deposed either by Presbyteries, Synods, or Generall Assemblies, or committees from Assemblies, for the publike cause of the reformation and order of this Kirk, shall not be suddenly received againe to the ministerie, till they first evidence their repentance both before the Presbyterie and Synod within the bounds where they were deposed, and thereafter the samine reported to the next ensuing Generall Assembly.

Sess. 9, August 3, 1641.

The Overtures underwritten, concerning the Universities and Colledges of this kingdom, to be represented by the Generall Assembly to the King's Majesty and Parliament, being openly read, the Assembly approved the saids Overtures, and ordained them to be recommended to the Parliament.

First, Because the good estate both of the Kirk and Commonwealth dependeth mainly upon the flourishing of Universities and Colledges, as the seminaries of both, which cannot be expected unlesse the poore meanes which they have be helped, and sufficient revenues be provided for them, and the same well imployed: Therefore, that out of the rents of prelacies, collegiat or chapter-kirks, or such like, a sufficient maintenance be provided for a competent number of professors, teachers, and bursers in all faculties, and especially in divinitie, and for upholding, repairing, and enlarging the fabrick of the colledges, furnishing libraries, and suchlike good uses, in every universitie and colledge.

II. Next, for keeping of good order, preveening and removing of abuses, and promoting of pietie and learning, it is very needfull and expedient that there be a communion and correspondencie kept betwixt all the universities and colledges; and, therefore, that it be ordained that there be a meeting once every year, at such times and places as shall be agreed upon, of commissioners from every university and colledge, to consult and determine upon the common affairs, and whatsoever may concerne them, for the ends above specified, and who also, or some of their number, may represent what shall be needfull and expedient for the same effect to Parliaments and Generall Assemblies.

III. *Item*, That speciall care be had that the places of the professors, especially of professors of divinity, in every university and colledge, be filled with the ablest men, and best affected to the Reformation and order of this Kirk.

Sess. 10, August 4, 1641.—Act against Impietie and Schisme.

The Assembly, seriously considering the present case and condition of this Kirk and Kingdom, what great things the Lord hath done for us, especially since the renewing of our Covenant, notwithstanding our former backsliding and desertion; and if we shall either become remisse in the duties of piety, or shall not constantly hold and keep our religion, unto which we have bound our selves so straitly and solemnly, what dishonour we doe unto the name of God before men, who have their eyes upon us, and how great judgements we bring upon ourselves: Upon these and the like considerations, the Assembly doth finde it most necessary to stirre up themselves, and to provoke all others, both ministers and people, of all degrees, not only to the religious exercise of publike worship in the congregation, and of private worship in their families, and of every one by themselves apart, but also to the duties of mutuall edification, by instruction, admonition, exhorting one another to forwardnesse in religion, and comforting one another in whatsoever distresse; and that in all their meetings, whether in the way of civill conversation, or by reason of their particular callings, or any other occasion offered by divine providence, no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers: And because the best means have been, and may still be despised or abused, and particularly the duetie of mutuall edification, which hath been so little in use, and so few know how to practise in the right manner, may be, upon the one part, subject to the mocking of ungodly and worldly men, who cannot endure that in others which they are not willing to practise themselves, and, upon the other part, to many errors and abuses, to which the godly through their weaknes may fall, or by craftinesse of others may be drawn into, such as are error, heresie, schisme, scandall, self-conceit, and despising of others, pressing above the common calling of Christians, and usurping that which is proper to the pastoral vocation, contempt or misregard of the publike means, idle and unprofitable questions, which edifie not, uncharitable censurings, neglect of duties in particular callings, businesse in other men's matters and callings, and many such others, in doctrine, charity, and manners, which have dolefully rent the bowels of other kirks, to the great prejudice of the Gospel.

Therefore, the Assembly, moved with the zeal of God against all abuses and corruptions, and according to their manifold obligations, most earnestly desiring and thirsting to promote the work of Reformation, and to have the comfort and power of true godlinesse sensible to every soul, and religion to be universally practised in every family, and by every person, at all occasions, doth charge all the ministers and members of this Kirk whom they doe represent, that according to their severall places and vocations, they endeavour to suppress all impiety and mocking of religious exercises, especially of such as put foule aspersions, and factious or odious names upon the godly. And, upon the other part, that in the fear of God they be aware and spiritually wise, that under the name and pretext of religious exercises, otherwayes lawfull and necessary, they fall not into the foresaid abuses; especially, that they eschew all meetings which are apt to breed error, scandall, schisme, neglect of duties and particular callings, and such other evils as are the works not of the Spirit but of

the flesh, and are contrary to truth and peace; and that the Presbyteries and Synods have a care to take order with such as transgresse the one way or the other.

Sess. 14, August 6, 1641, à meridié.—Act anent Novations.

Since it hath pleased God to vouchsafe us the libertie of yearly Generall Assemblies, It is ordained, according to the Acts of the Assembly at Edinburgh, 1639, and at Aberdene, 1640, that no novation in doctrine, worship, or government, be brought in or practised in this Kirk, unlesse it be first propounded, examined, and allowed in the Generall Assembly; and that transgressors in this kinde be censured by Presbyteries and Synods.

Act Sess. 15, August 7, 1641.—Overtures anent Bursars and Expectants.

The Overtures underwritten, being openly read in audience of the Assembly, were approved, and declared by them to be Acts of the Assembly in all time coming to be observed *respective*, as the samine bears.

I. The Assembly thinks meet, for maintaining of bursars of divinitie, that every Presbyterie that consists of twelve ministers shall maintain a bursar; and where the number is fewer nor twelve, shall be joyned with these out of another Presbyterie where their number exceeds. Where this course is not already kept it is to be begun without longer delay; and every Provinciall is ordained to give an accompt of their number of bursars that is constantly to be entertained by their province, at the next ensuing Generall Assembly.

II. No expectant shall be permitted to preach in publike before a congregation till first he be tryed after the same manner, howbeit not altogether with that accuracie which is injoyned by the act of the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638, which prescribes the order and manner of tryall that is to be kept with these who are to be admitted to the holy ministrie; and none so tryed shall preach in publike without the bounds of the University or Presbyterie where he past his tryalls, till he first make it known to the other Presbyteries where he desires to be heard, by a testimoniall from the Universitie or Presbyterie where he lived, that he hath been of an honest conversation, and past his tryalls conform to the order here prescribed: Which being done in the meeting of the Province or Presbyterie where he desires to be heard, he is to be allowed by them to preach within the bounds of that Province or Presbyterie, without any further tryall to be taken of him.

III. Expectants being educate in a colledge that was corrupt, or under a corrupt minister, if they themselves have been known to have been tainted with error, or opposite to our Covenant and the blessed work of Reformation within this Kirk, the same order is to be kept in admitting them to the holy ministry, or to any place in the colledges or schooles of this kingdome, that was ordained to be kept in admission of these ministers who fled out of the countrey, and shew themselves opposite to our Covenant and Reformation.

Act Sess. 17, August 9, 1641.—Act against unlawfull Bands.

The Assembly, taking to their consideration the question proponed unto them concerning the Band, the copy whereof was presented before them from the Parliament, doth find and declare, that Bands of this and the like nature may not lawfully be made. By which declaration the Assembly doth not intend to bring any censure for what is past, and by the wisdom and care of the Committee of the Parliament is taken away, upon any person, who being required by the Moderator and the Clerk, shall, under his hand, declare before them, That as the Assembly doth finde that the subscribers are not astricted by their oath to the tenor of the said Band, so he findeth himself not to be astricted by his oath to the tenor thereof; but the intention of the Assembly is meerly to prevent the like in time coming.

Sess. 18, August 9, 1641, d meridie.—A Letter from some Ministers in England to the Assemblie.

Right Reverend and dear Brethren, now convened in this Generall Assembly: Wee most heartily salute you in the Lord, rejoycing with you in his unspeakable goodnesse, so miraculously prospering your late endeavours, both for the restoring and settling of your own liberties and priviledges, in Church and common wealth, (which we heare and hope he is now about to accomplish,) as also for the occasioning and advancing of the worke of reformation among ourselves; for which, as we daily blesse the highest Lord, sole Author of all our good, so doe we acknowledge yourselves worthy instruments thereof. And for that (besides all other respects) doe, and ever shall, (by the help of God,) hold you deare unto us, as our own bowels, and our selves obliged to render unto you all due correspondence according to our power, upon all good occasions.

And now, (deare Brethren,) forasmuch as the Church of Christ is but one body, each part whereof cannot but partake in the weale and woe of the whole, and of each other part; and these Churches of England and Scotland may seem both to be imbarqued in the same bottome, to sink and swim together, and are so near conjoynd by many strong tyes, not only as fellow-members under the same Head Christ, and felow-subjects under the same King; but also by such neighbourhood and vicinity of place, that if any evil shall much infest the one, the other cannot bee altogether free; or if for the present it should, yet in processe of time it would sensibly suffer also. And forasmuch as evils are better remedied in their first beginning then after they have once taken deep root; therefore, we, whose names are here under-written, in the behalf of our selves, and of many others, Ministers of the Church of England, are bold to commend to your consideration (being met together in this venerable Assembly) a difference of great concernment, which you may please (in brief) thus to understand. Almighty God having now, of his infinite goodnesse, raised up our hopes of removing the yoke of Episcopacie, (under which we have so long groaned,) sundry other forms of Church-government are by sundry sorts of men projected to be set up in the roome thereof; one of which, (amongst others,) is of some Brethren that hold the whole power of Church-government, and all acts thereunto appertaining, (as election, ordination, and deposition of officers, with admission, excommunication, and absolution of members,) are, by Divine ordinance, *in foro externo*, to be decreed by the most voyces, in and of every particular congregation, which (say they) is the utmost bound of a particular Church, endued with power of government, and only some formalities of solemne execution to be reserved to the officers, (as servants of the saids Church,) if they have any, or if none, then to be performed by some other members, not in office, whom the said Church shall appoint thereunto: And that every of the said particular congregations (whether they consist of few or many members, and be furnished with officers or not) lawfully may and ought to transact, determine, and execute all matters pertaining to the government of themselves, amongst and within themselves, without any authoritative (though not consulatory) concurrence or interposition of any other persons or churches whatsoever, condemning all imperative and decisive power of classes, or compound Presbyteries and Synods, as a meere usurpation. Now, because we conceive that your judgment in this case may conduce much, by the blessing of God, to the settling of this question amongst us; therefore, we doe earnestly intreat the same at your hands, and that so much the rather, because we sometimes hear from those of the aforesaid judgment, that some famous and eminent brethren, even amongst your selves, doe somewhat encline unto an approbation of that way of government. Thus humbly craving pardon for our boldnesse, leaving the matter to your grave considerations, and expecting answer at your convenient leasure, we commit you, and the successe of this your meeting, to the blessing of the Almighty, in whom we shall ever remain,

Your faithfull Brethren, to serve you in all offices of love.

London, July 12, 1641.

*The Assemblée's Answer to the English Ministers' Letter.**

Right Reverend and dearly beloved Brethren in our Lord and common
Saviour Jesus Christ,

Wee, the Ministers and Elders met together in this Nationall Assembly, were not a little refreshed and comforted by the good report which we heard of you, and others of our Brethren of the Kirk of England, by some of our Ministers, who, by the good providence of our Lord, had seen your faces, and conversed with you. But now yet more comforted by your letters which we received, and which were read in the face of the Assembly, witnessing your Christian love, and rejoycing with us in God, for his great and wonderfull work in the reformation of this Kirk, and in the beginning of a blessed reformation amongst your selves, and that you are so sensible of your communion and fellowship with us, and to desire to know our minde and judgement of that which some Brethren amongst you hold concerning Kirk-government.

We doe with our hearts acknowledge and wonder at the great and unspeakable wysedome, mercie, and power of our God, in restoring unto us the truth and puritie of religion, after many backslidings and defection of some in this Kirk, and desire not only to confesse the same before the world, and all other Christian kirkes, but also doe pray for grace to walk worthy of so wonderfull a love; we have been helped by your prayers, in our weak endeavours, and you have mourned with us (we know) in the dayes of our mourning; and therefore is it that you doe now rejoyce and praise God with us. Neither are we out of hope, but the same God shall speedily perfect that which he hath begun amongst you, that your joy may be full; which is the desire of our soule, and for which we doe now pray, and in our severall congregations will be instant at the throne of grace, for this and all other spirituall and temporall blessings upon the Kirk and kingdome of England, by name, expecting the like performance of mutuall love from you, and others equally minded with you, for your parts, till a common consent may be obtained, even that you will recommend the Kirk of Scotland by name in your prayers to God. Thus shall we be as one people, mourning and rejoycing, praying and praising together; which may be one meane of the preservation of unity, and of many other blessings to us both.

We have learned by long experience, ever since the time of Reformation, and specially after the two kingdomes have been (in the great goodnesse of God to both) united under one Head and Monarch, but most of all of late, which is not unknown to you, what danger and contagion in matters of Kirk-government, of divine worship, and of doctrine, may come from the one Kirk to the other, which, beside all other reasons, make us to pray to God, and to desire you, and all that love the honour of Christ, and the peace of these Kirks and kingdomes, heartily to endeavour, that there might be in both Kirks one Confession, one Directory for publike worship, one Catechisme, and one Forme of Kirk-government. And if the Lord, who hath done great things for us, shall be pleased to hearken unto our desires, and to accept of our endeavours, we shall not only have a sure foundation for a durable peace, but shall be strong in God, against the rising or spreading of heresie and schisme amongst our selves, and of invasion from forraine enemies.

Concerning the different formes of Kirk-government, projected by sundrie sorts of men, to be set up in place of Episcopall hierarchie, which we trust is brought near unto its period, we must confesse, that we are not a little grieved that any godly ministers and brethren should be found, who doe not agree with other reformed Kirks in the point of government, as well as in the matter of doctrine and worship; and that we want not our own feares, that where the hedge of Discipline and Government is different, the doctrine and worship shall not long continue the same without change: yet doe not marvel much, that particular Kirks and Congregations which live in such places, as that they can conveniently have no dependencie upon superiour Assemblies, should stand for a kind of independencie and suprema-

* This Letter was written by Mr Alexander Henderson.—Ed. 1843.

cie in themselves, they not considering that in a nation or kingdome, professing the same religion, the government of the Kirk by compound Presbyteries and Synods is a help and strength, and not a hinderance or prejudice, to particular Congregations and Elderships, in all the parts of Kirk-government; and that Presbyteries and Synods are not an extrinsecall power set over particular Kirks, like unto Episcopall dominion, they being no more to be reputed extrinsecall unto the particular Kirks, nor the power of a Parliament, or Convention of Estates, where the shires and cities have their own delegates, is to be held extrinsecall to any particular shire or city.

Our unanimous judgement and uniforme practice is, that, according to the order of the reformed Kirks, and the ordinance of God in his Word, not onely the solemne execution of Ecclesiasticall power and authoritie, but the whole acts and exercise thereof, do properly belong unto the officers of the Kirk; yet so that in matters of chiefest importance, the tacite consent of the congregation be had, before their decrees and sentences receive finall execution, and that the officers of a particular congregation may not exercise this power independently, but with subordination unto greater Presbyteries and Synods, Provinciall and Nationall; which, as they are representative of the particular Kirks conjoynd together in one under their government; so their determination, when they proceed orderly, whether in causes common to all or many of the Kirks, or in causes brought before them by appellations or references from the inferiour, in the case of aberation of the inferiour, is to the severall congregations authoritative and obligatorie, and not consultatory only. And this dependencie and subordination we conceive not only to be warranted by the light of nature, which doth direct the Kirk in such things as are common to other societies, or to be a prudentiall way for reformation, and for the preservation of truth and peace, against schisme, heresie, and tyranny, which is the sweet fruits of this government wheresoever it hath place, and which we have found in ancient and late experience, but also to be grounded upon the Word of God, and to be conforme to the paterne of the Primitive and Apostolicall Kirks; and without which, neither could the Kirks in this kingdome have been reformed, nor were we able for any time to preserve truth and unity amongst us.

In this forme of Kirk-government, our unanimity and harmony, by the mercy of God, is so full and perfect, that all the members of this Assembly have declared themselves to be of one heart, and of one soule, and to be no lesse perswaded that it is of God, then that Episcopall government is of men; resolving, by the grace of God, to hold the same constantly all the dayes of our life, and heartily wishing that God would blesse all the Christian Kirks, especially the famous Kirk of England, unto which in all other respects we are so nearly joyned with this divine forme of government. Thus having briefly and plainly given our judgement for your satisfaction, and desiring and hoping that ye will beleve against all mis-reports, that we know not so much as one man, more or lesse eminent amongst us, of a different judgement, we commend you unto the riches of the grace of Christ, who will perfect that which he hath begun amongst you, to your unspeakable comfort. Subscribed by our Moderator and Clerk.

Edinburgh, August 9, 1641.

*The Assemblie's Answer to the King's Majestie's Letter.**

Most gracious Sovereign,

Beside the conscience of that duetie which we owe to supreme authority, we are not only encouraged, but confirmed by the royall favour and princely munificence, expressed in your gracious Majestie's letters, which filled our hearts with joy, and our mouths with praise, to offer up our prayers with the greater fervencie to God Almighty for your Majestie's happinesse, our selves for our own parts, and for the whole Kirks of this your Majestie's kingdome, which we doe represent, to serve your Majestie in all humble obedience, our faithfull labours for preserving trueth and peace amongst all your Majestie's subjects, and our example (according to your

* This Answer was drawn up by Mr Alexander Henderson.—*Ed.* 1843.

Majestie's just commandments laid upon us) to be a presedent to others in paying that honour, which by all lawes, divine and humane, is due unto your sacred Majesty, being confident that your Majesty shall finde at your coming hither much more satisfaction and content then can be expressed by

Your Majesty's most humble subjects and faithful servants, the Ministers and Elders, met together in the venerable Assembly at St Andrews, July 20, and Edinburgh, July 27, 1641.

Act anent the Kirk of Campheir.

The which day a motion was made in the Assembly, that it seemed expedient for correspondencie that might be had from forraigne parts, for the weal of this Kirk, that the Scots Kirk at Campheir were joyned to the Kirk of Scotland, as a member thereof: which being seriously thought upon and considered by the Assembly, they approved the motion, and ordained Mr Robert Baillie, Minister at Cilwinning, to write to Mr William Spang, Minister at Campheir, and Kirk-Session thereof, willing them to send their minister, and a ruling elder, instructed with a commission to the next Generall Assembly to be holden at St Andrews, the last Wednesday of July 1642, at which time they should be inrolled in the books of the Generall Assembly, as Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of Scotland from the Scots Kirk at Campheir.

The Assembly appoints the next Generall Assembly to be holden at St Andrews, the last Wednesday of July next, 1642.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, CONVEENED
AT ST ANDREWS, JULY 27, 1642.

Act Sess. 1, July 27, 1642.

The King's Letter to the Generall Assembly, presented by his Majesty's Commissioner, the Earle of Dumfermling, July 27, 1642.

CHARLES R.

In the midst of our great and weighty affaires of our other kingdoms, which God Almighty, who is privie to our intentions, and in whom we trust, will, in his own time, bring to a wished and peaceable conclusion, we are not unmindfull of that duetie which we owe to that our ancient and native kingdome, and to the Kirks there, now met together by their Commissioners in a Nationall Assembly. God, whose vicegerent we are, hath made us a king over divers kingdomes, and we have no other desire nor designe but to govern them by their own lawes, and the kirks in them by their own Canons and constitutions. Where any thing is found to be amisse, we will endeavour a reformation in a fair and orderly way; and where a reformation is settled, we resolve, with that authoritie wherewith God hath vested us, to maintain and defend it in peace and libertie, against all trouble that can come from without, and against all heresies, sects, and schismes which may arise from within, nor do we desire any thing more in that kingdom, (and when we shall hear of it, it shall be a delight and matter of gladnesse unto us,) then that the Gospel be faithfully preached throughout the whole kingdom, to the outmost skirts and borders thereof; knowing that to be the mean of honour to God, of happinesse to the people, and of true obedience to us. And for this effect, that holy and able men be put in places of the ministry, and that schooles and colledges may flourish in learning and true pietie. Some things for advancing of those ends we did of our own accord promise in our letters to the last Assembly, and we make your selves judges, who were witnesses to our actions, while we were there in person, whether we did not perform them both in the point of presentations which are in our hands, and in the liberall provision of all the universities and colledges of the kingdome, not only

above that which any of our progenitors had done before us, but also above your owne hopes and expectation. We doe not make commemoration of this our beneficence, either to please our selves, or to stop the influence of our royall goodnesse and bountie for afterward, but that, by these reall demonstrations of our unfained desires and delight to do good, you may be the more confident to expect from us whatsoever in justice we can grant, or what may be expedient for you to obtaine. We have given expresse charge to our Commissioner to see that all things be done there orderly and peaceably, as if we were present in our own person; not doubting but in thankfulness for your present estate and condition, you will abstaine from every thing that may make any new disturbance, and that you will be more wise then to be the enemies of your own peace, which would but stumble others, and ruine your selves. We have also commanded our Commissioner to receive from you your just and reasonable desires, for what may further serve for the good of religion, that, taking them to our consideration, we may omit nothing which may wnesse us to be indeed a nursing father of that Kirk, wherein we were born and baptized, and that if ye be not happy, you may blame not us, but your selves. And now what doe we again require of you, but that which otherwise you owe to us as your soveraigne Lord and King, even that ye pray for our prosperitie and the peace of our kingdomes, that ye use the best meanes to keep our people in obedience to us and our lawes, which doth very much in our personall absence from that our kingdome depend upon your preaching, and your owne exemplary loyaltie and faithfulness, and that against all such jealousies, suspitions, and sinister rumors, as are too frequent in these times, and have been often falsified in time past, by the reality of the contrary events; ye judge us and our professions by our actions, which we trust, through God, in despite of malice, shall ever go on in a constant way for the good of religion, and the weal of our people, which is the chieftest of our intentions and desires. And thus we bid you farewell. Given at our Court at Leicester, the 23d of July 1642.

To our trusty and wel beloved the Generall Assembly in our Kingdom of Scotland, convcened at St Andrews.

Act Sess. 3, July 29, 1642.—Act for bringing in of the Synode Books yeerly to the Generall Assemblies.

The Moderator calling to minde that which was forgotten in the preceeding Sessions, the examination of the Provinciaall books, caused call the roll of the Provinciaall Assemblies, and the Assembly finding very few provinces to have sent their books to this Assembly, notwithstanding of the ordinance of the former Assembly thereanent, for the more exact obedience of that ordinance hereafter, the Assembly in one voyce ordaines, That the books of every Provinciaall Assembly shall be brought and produced to every Generall Assembly; and that this may be performed, ordaines that every Clerk of the Provinciaalls either bring or send the said books yearly to the Generall Assemblies, by the commissioners sent to the Assemblies from these Presbyteries where the clerks reside. Which charge the Assembly also layes upon the said Commissioners, sent from the saids Presbyteries where the clerks reside, ay and whill some meanes be provided, whereby the clerk's charges may be sustained for coming with the saids books themselves; and that under the pain of deprivation of the clerk in case of his neglect, and of such censure of the saids commissioners, in case of their neglect, as the Assembly shall think convenient.

Act Sess. 5, Aug. 1, 1642.—Act anent the choosing of Kirk Sessions.

Anent the question moved to the Assembly, concerning the election of Kirk Sessions, the Assembly ordaines the old Session to elect the new Session, both in burgh and land. And that if any place shall vaik in the Session chosen, by death or otherwise, the present Session shall have the election of the person to fill the vacand roome.

Sess. 6, Aug. 2, 1642.—The Report of the Interpretation of the Act at Edinburgh, anent Tryall of Ministers.

The meaning of the foresaid act is, not that an actual minister to be transported shal be tried again by the tryalls appointed for trying of expectants at their entry to the Ministry, according to the acts of the Kirk ; but only that he bringing a testimonial of his former tryalls, and of his abilities and conversation, from the Presbyterie from whence he comes, and giving such satisfaction to the parochiners Presbyterie whereto he comes in preaching, as the Presbyterie finds his gifts fit and answerable for the condition and disposition of the congregation whereto he is presented. Because, according to the Act of the Assembly, 1596, renewed at Glasgow, some that are meet for the ministry in some places are not meet for all alike ; and universities, towns, and burghs, and places of noblemen's residence, or frequencie of Papists, and other great and eminent congregations, and in sundry other cases, require men of greater abilities, nor will be required necessarily in the planting of all private small paroches, the leaving of the consideration of these cases unto the judgement and consideration of the Presbyterie was the only intention of the act.

The Assembly approves the meaning and interpretation foresaid ; and appoints the said Act, according to this interpretation, to stand in force, and to have the strength of an Act and Ordinance of Assembly in all time coming.

Act Sess. 7, Aug. 3, 1642.—Act anent the Order for making Lists to his Majestie, and other Patrons, for Presentations ; the Order of Tryal of Expectants, and for trying the quality of Kirks.

Forsameikle as his Majestie was graciously pleased, in his answer to the petition tendred by the Commissioners of the late Assembly to his Majestie, to declare and promise, for the better providing of vaiking kirks at his Majestie's presentation with qualified ministers, to present one out of a list of six persons, sent to his Majestie from the Presbyteries wherein the vaiking kirk lyeth, as his Majestie's Declaration, signed with his royal hand at White-hall, the 3 of January last, registrate in the books of Assembly this day, at length beares. And suchlike, whereas the Lords of Exchequer, upon a petition presented to them by the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, and the Procurator and Agent for the Kirk representing two prejudices ; one, that gifts obtained from his Majestie of patronages of Kirks at his presentation, were passing the Exchequer, without the qualification and provision of a list, wherewith his Majestie was pleased to restrict himself ; and the other, that some were seeking gifts of patronage of Bishop-Kirks, which are declared to belong to Presbyteries, to be planted by two acts of the late Parliament : The saids Lords have ordained that no signator, containing gifts of patronages from his Majestie, shall passe hereafter, but with a speciall provision that the same shall be lyable to the tenor of his Majestie's said declaration ; ordaining also the Procurator and Agent of the Kirk to be advertised, and to have place to see all signators whatsoever, containing any patronage, to the effect they may represent the interest of the Kirk therein ; as the said act, of the date the 27th of June last, registrate also in the books of Assembly this day, at length beares. Therefore, that the saids kirks which now are, or which were at his Majestie's presentation the said third day of January last, may be the better provided with able ministers when the samine shall vaik, The Assembly ordaines, that hereafter every Presbyterie shall give up yearly a roll of the ablest of their expectants to their Synods, and that the Synods select out of these rolls such persons whom they, in certain knowledge, judge most fit for the ministrie, and worthiest of the first place, with power to the Synods to adde or alter these rolls given by the Presbyteries as they thinke reasonable ; and that the Synods shall send the rolls, made by them in this manner, to the next Generall Assembly, who shall also examine the rolls of the Synods, and adde or alter the same as shall be thought expedient. Which roll made by the Generall Assembly shall be sent to every Presbyterie, and that the Presbyterie, with consent of the most or best part of the congregation, shall make a list of six persons willing to accept of the presentation out

of that roll of the Assembly, upon every occasion of vacation of any kirk within their bounds, and shall send the samine, together with a blank presentation, the which (if his Majesty be patron to the vacant kirk) shall be sent by the said procurator and agent to such as the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, or in their absence the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, shall direct and think at that time most able and willing to obtain the presentation, to be signed and filled up by his Majestie's choise of one of the list. And if the vacant kirk be of a patronage disposed by his Majesty since the 3d of January, in that case, either the Presbyteries themselves shall send a list of six persons in maner aforesaid, with a blank presentation to the patron, to be filled up by his choise, and subscribed, or send the samine to the saids officers of the kirk, to be conveyed by them to the patron of the vaiking kirk, as the Presbyterie shall think most expedient. It is alwayes declared, that this order shall be without prejudice to the Presbyteries, with consent foresaid, to put actuall ministers upon the said list of six persons, to be sent to the patron of the said vaiking kirks, if they please. And, least that the nomination of expectants by Presbyteries, Synods, or Assemblies, in their rolls or lists foresaid, be misinterpreted, as though the expectants, nominated in these rolls and lists, were thereby holden and acknowledged to be qualified, which is not the intention of the Assembly, who rather think, that in respect of this order, there should be a more exact tryall of expectants then before: Therefore, the Assembly ordaines, That no expectants shall be put on the rolls or lists above mentioned but such as have been upon the publike exercise, at the least by the space of half a year, or longer, as the Presbyterie shall finde necessary. And suchlike ordaines, That hereafter none be admitted to the publike exercise before they be tryed, according to the tryall appointed for expectants at their entrie to the Ministerie in the late Assembly at Glasgow, in the 24th Article of the Act of the 23d Session thereof, which tryall the Assembly appoints to be taken of every expectant before his admission to the publike exercise. And suchlike ordaines, That the samine tryall shall be again taken immediatly before their admission to the ministerie, together with their tryall mentioned in the advice of some brethren deputed for penning the corruptions of the ministry, approven in the said act of the Generall Assembly at Glasgow. And because that kirks of the patronages foresaid will vaik before the rolls and lists be made up by the Presbyteries, Synods, and Generall Assemblies, in maner foresaid: Therefore, in the interim, the Assembly ordains the commissioners of every Presbyterie here present to give in a list of the ablest expectants within their bounds the morn to the Clerk of the Assembly, that the Assembly may out of these rolls make a list to be sent to every Presbyterie, out of which the Presbyteries shall make a list of six persons, with consent foresaid, and send the samine, upon vacancie of any church within their bounds, together with a presentation to his Majestie, or any other patron, in maner foresaid. And because the Procurator and Agent of the Kirk cannot get sufficient information to the Lords of Exchequer anent the right and interest of the Kirk, and Presbyteries in kirks, whereof gifts of patronages may be presented to the Exchequer: Therefore, the Assembly ordaines, for their better information hereanent, that every Presbyterie, with all diligence, use all meanes of exact tryall of the nature and qualitie of all kirks within their bounds, as what kirks belong to the King's Majestie's patronage, what to other laick patronages, what kirks of old were planted by Presbyteries, and what by prelates and bishops, before the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638, what hath been the way and time of the change of the planting and providing of the kirks, if any have been changed, or any other thing concerning the nature and qualitie of every kirk within their bounds, and to send the same to the Procurator of the Kirk with all diligence.

Act anent Lists for the Kirks in the Highlands.

The Assembly considering that in Argyle, and in other places of the Irish language, there will not be gotten six expectants able to speak that language, and, therefore, the Assembly is hopefull, that in these singular cases, his Majestie will be pleased, for kirks vacand in the Highlands, to accept of a list of so many expectants as can be had, able to speak the Irish language. And the Commissioner's Grace promiseth to commend it to his Majestie.

Overtures against Papists, Non-Communicants, and Profaners of the Sabbath.

The Assembly would draw up a supplication to be presented by the commissioners of the Presbyterie of Edinburgh to the Councell at their first meeting, for the due execution of the acts of Parliament and Councell against Papists, wherein it will be specially craved, that the Exchequer should be the intronettors with the rents of these who are excommunicate, and that from the Exchequer the Presbyterie may receive that portion of the confiscate goods which the law appoints to be employed *ad pios usus*.

II. Every Presbyterie would convene, at their first meeting, all known Papists in their bounds, and require them to put out of their company all friends and servants who are Popish within one moneth; also, within that same space, to give their children, sons and daughters, who are above seven years old, to be educate at their charges by such of their Protestant friends as the Presbyterie shall approve, and finde sufficient caution for bringing home within three moneths such of their children who are without the kingdom, to be educate in schooles and colledges at the Presbyteries sight, to finde caution, likewise, of their abstinence from masse, and the company of all Jesuits and priests.

III. That all, of whatsoever rank or degree, who refuse to give satisfaction in every one of the foresaid articles, shall be processed without any delay; but those who give satisfaction shall be dealt with in all meeknesse after this manner: The Presbyteries shall appoint such of their number as they shall find fittest to confer with them, so frequently as the Brethren are able to attend, untill the midst of October next, against which time, if they be not willing to go to church, they shall give assurance to go and dwell in the next adjacent university town, whether Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews, or Aberdene, from November 1 to the last of March, where they shall attend all the diets of conference which the professors and ministers of the bounds shall appoint to them; by which, if they be not converted, their obstinacy shall be declared in the Provincial Synods of April, and from thence their processe shall go on to the very closure without any farther delay.

IV. That every Presbyterie, as they will be answerable to the next Generall Assembly, be carefull to doe their dutie in all the premisses.

V. That there be given presently by the members of this present Assembly, unto the Commissioners of the Presbyterie of Edinburgh, a list of all excommunicate Papists they know, and of all Papists who have children educate abroad, that they may be presented, together with our supplication, to the Councell, at their first sitting.

VI. That the Councell may be supplicate for an act, that in no regiment which goes out of the kingdom any Papists bear office, and that the colonell be required to finde caution for this effect before he receive the Councell's warrant for levying any souldiers; also that he finde caution for the maintaining of a minister, and keeping of a Session in his regiment.

Item, The Assembly would enjoyne every Presbyterie to proceed against non-communicants, whether Papists or others, according to the act of Parliament made thereanent. And suchlike, that acts of Parliament against prophaners of the Sabbath be put to execution.

The Assembly approves the overtures foresaid, and ordains Presbyteries to put the samine to execution with all diligence; and that the Commissioners of every Presbyterie give in a list of the excommunicate Papists within their bounds, and of Papists' children out of the countrey, to the clerk, that the same may be presented to the Councell by the Commissioners of this Assembly.

Act anent the joyning of the Presbyterie of Sky to the Synode of Argyle.

The Generall Assembly, having considered the whole proceedings of the Commissioners of the late Generall Assembly holden at Edinburgh, anent the reference

made to them concerning the Presbyterie of Sky, together with the whole reasons *pro et contra* in the said matter, after mature deliberation, have ratified and approved, and by these presents ratifie and approve, the sentence of the saids commissioners thereintill. And, further, ordains the said Presbyterie of Sky, and all the ministers and elders thereof, to keep the meetings of the Provincial Assembly of Argyle, where they shall happen to be appointed in all time coming, suchlike as any other Presbyterie within the bounds of the said Province of Argyle uses to do; and that the samine Presbyterie be in all time hereafter within the jurisdiction of the said Provincial Assembly, without any further question to be made thereanent.

*Sess. 8, Aug. 3, post meridiem.—The Supplication of this Assembly to the King's Majestie.**

To the King's most Excellent Majestie, the hearty Thanksgiving and humble Petition of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, met at St Andrews, July 27, 1642.

Our hearts were filled with great joy and gladnesse at the hearing of your Majestie's letter, which was read once and again in face of the Assembly, every line thereof almost either expressing such affection to the reformed religion, and such royall care of us, as we could require from a Christian prince, or requiring such necessary duties from us, as we are bound to performe, as ministers of the Gospel and Christian subjects; for which, as solemne thanks were given by the Moderator of the Assembly, so do we all, with one voice, in all humility, present unto your Majestie the thankfulness of our hearts, with our earnest prayers to God for your Majestie's prosperity, and the peace of your kingdoms; that your Majestie may be indeed a nursing father to all the Kirks of Christ in your Majestie's dominions, and especially to the Kirk of Scotland, honoured with your birth and baptisme, promising our most serious endeavours, by doctrine and life, to advance the Gospel of Christ, and to keep the people in our charge in unity and peace, and in all loyalty and obedience to your Majestie and your laws. Your Majestie's commands to your Commissioner, the Earle of Dumfermling, to receive from us our just and reasonable desires for what may further serve for the good of religion here, the favours which we have received already, and your Majestie's desire and delight to do good, expressed in your letter, are as many encouragements to us to take the boldnesse, in all humility, to present unto your Majestie (beside the particulars recommended to your Majestie's Commissioner) one thing, which for the present is the chiefest of all our desires, as serving most for the glory of Christ, for your Majestie's honour and comfort, and not onely for the good of religion here, but for the true happinesse and peace of all your Majestie's dominions; which is no new motion, but the prosecution of that same which was made by the Commissioners of this your Majestie's kingdom in the late Treatie, and which your Majestie, with advice of both Houses of Parliament, did approve in these words:—"To their desire, concerning unitie in religion and uniformitie of Church government, as a speciall meanes of conserving of peace betwixt the two kingdoms, upon the grounds and reasons contained in the paper of the 10 of March, given in to the Treaty and Parliament of England, it is answered, upon the 15 of June, That his Majestie, with advice of both Houses of Parliament, doth approve of the affection of his subjects of Scotland, in their desire of having the conformity of Church government betwixt the two nations; and as the Parliament hath already taken into consideration the reformation of Church government, so they will proceed therein in due time, as shall best conduce to the glory of God, the peace of the Church, and of both kingdoms.—11 of June 1641." In our answer to a declaration sent by the now Commissioners of this kingdom, from both Houses of Parliament, we have not onely pressed this point of unity in religion and uniformity of Church government, as a meane of a firme and durable union betwixt the two kingdomes, and without which former experiences put us out of hope long to enjoy the puritie of the Gospel with peace, but also have rendered the reasons of our hopes and confidence, as from other considerations, so from your Majestie's late letter to this Assembly, that your Majestie, in a happy conjunction with the Houses of Parliament, will be pleased to settle

* Drawn up by Mr Alexander Henderson.—*Ed.* 1843.

this blessed Reformation, with so earnestly desired a peace in all your dominions ; and, therefore, we, your Majestie's most loving subjects, in name of the whole Kirks of Scotland represented by us, upon the knees of our hearts do most humbly and earnestly beg that your Majesty, in the deep of your royall wisdom, and from your affection to the true religion, and the peace of your kingdoms, may be moved to consider that the God of heaven and earth is calling for this Reformation at your hands, and that as you are his vicegerent, so you may be his prime instrument in it. If it shall please the Lord (which is our desire and hope) that this blessed unitie in religion and uniformity in government shall be brought about, your Majestie's conscience, in performing of so great a dutie, shall be a well-spring of comfort to yourself, your memory shall be a sweet savour, and your name renowned to all following generations. And if these unhappy commotions and divisions shall end in this peace and unity, then it shall appeare in the providence of God they were but the noyse of many waters, and the voyce of a great thunder, before the voyce of harpers harping with their harps, which shall fill this whole iland with melodie and mirth, and the name of it shall be, "**THE LORD IS THERE.**"

The Declaration of the Parliament of England sent to the Assembly.

The Lords and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, finding, to their great grief, that the distractions of this kingdome daily increase, and that the wicked counsellis and practises of a malignant party amongst us (if God prevent them not) are like to cast this nation into bloud and confusion, to testifie to all the world how earnestly they desire to avoid a civill warre, they have addressed themselves in an humble supplication to his Majestie for the prevention thereof; a copy of which their petition they have thought fit to send at this time to the Nationall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to the intent that that Church and kingdome (whereunto they are united by so many and so near bonds and tyes, as well spirituall as civill) may see that the like minde is now in them that formerly appeared to be in that nation; and that they are as tender of the effusion of Christian bloud on the one side, as they are zealous on the other side of a due Reformation both in Church and State. In which work, whilst they were labouring, they have been interrupted by the plots and practises of a malignant party of Papists and ill-affected persons, especially of the corrupt and dissolute clergy, by the incitement and instigation of bishops and others, whose avarice and ambition being not able to bear the reformation endeavoured by the Parliament, they have laboured (as we can expect little better fruit from such trees) to kindle a flame, and raise a combustion within the bowels of this kingdom; which, if by our humble supplication to his Majestie, it may be prevented, and that, according to our earnest desire therein, all force and warlike preparations being laid aside, we may returne to a peaceable Parliamentary proceeding, we do not doubt but that, by the blessing of Almighty God upon our endeavours, we shall settle the matters both in Church and State, to the encrease of his Majestie's honour and state, the peace and prosperitie of this kingdome, and especially to the glory of God, by the advancement of the true religion, and such a reformation of the Church as shall be most agreeable to God's Word. Out of all which there will also most undoubtedly result a most firme and stable union between the two kingdomes of England and Scotland, which, according to our protestation, we shall by all good wayes and meanes, upon all occasions, labour to preserve and maintain.

(Subscibitur)

Jo. BROWN, Cler. Parl.

*The Assemblie's Answer to the Declaration of the Parliament of England.**

The Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland having received a declaration sent unto them by the commissioners of this kingdome now at London, from the honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, expressing their care to prevent the effusion of Christian bloud in that kingdome, and their affections to reformation both in Kirk and State, and having taken the same to such consideration as the importance of so weighty matters, and the high estimation they have of so wise and honourable a meeting as is the Parliament of England, did require, have, with universall consent, resolved upon this following answer:—

* Drawn up by Mr Alexander Henderson.—Ed. 1843.

I. That from the recent sense of the goodnesse of God in their own late deliverance, and from their earnest desire of all happinesse to our native King and that kingdome, they blesse the Lord for preserving them, in the midst of so many unhappy divisions and troubles, from a bloody intestine war, which is from God the greatest judgement, and to such a nation the compend of all calamities. They also give God thanks for their former and present desires of a reformation, especially of religion, which is the glory and strength of a kingdome, and bringeth with it all temporall blessings of prosperity and peace.

II. That the hearts of all the members of this Assembly, and of all the wel-affected within this kingdome, are exceedingly grieved and made heavy, that in so long a time, against the professions both of King and Parliament, and contrary to the joynt desires and prayers of the godly in both kingdomes, to whom it is more deare and precious then what is dearest to them in the world, the reformation of religion hath moved so slowly and suffered so great interruption. They consider that not only prelates, formall professours, profane and worldly men, and all that are Popishly affected, are bad counsellours and workers, and do abuse their power, and bend all their strength and policies against the work of God, but the god of this world also, with principalities and powers, the rulers of the darknesse of this world, and spirituall wickednesse in high places, are working with all their force and fraud in the same opposition, not without hope of successe; they having prevailed so farre from the beginning, that in the times of the best Kings of Juda of old, and the most part of the Reformed Kirks of late, a through and perfect reformation of religion hath been awork full of difficulties. Yet doe they conceive, that as it ought first of all to be intended, so should it be above all other things, with confidence in God, who is greater then the world, and he who is in the world, most seriously endeavoured. And that when the supream Providence giveth opportunity of the accepted time and day of salvation, no other work can prosper in the hands of his servants, if it be not apprehended, and with all reverence and faithfulness improved. This Kirk and nation, when the Lord gave them the calling, considered not their own deadnesse, nor staggered at the promise through unbelief, but gave glory to God. And who knoweth (we speak it in humility and love, and from no other mind then from a desire of the blessing of God upon our King and that kingdome) but the Lord hath now some controversie with England, which will not be removed till first, and before all, the worship of his name and the government of his House be settled according to his own will. When this desire shall come it shall be to England, after so long deferred hopes, a tree of life, which shall not only yeeld temporall blessings unto themselves, but also shall spread the branches so far, that both this nation and other Reformed Kirks shall finde the fruits thereof to their great satisfaction.

III. The commissioners of this kingdome, in the late treaty of peace, considering that religion is not only the meane of the service of God and saving of souls, but is also the base and foundation of kingdomes and estates, and the strongest band to tye subjects to their prince in true loyaltie, and to knit the hearts of one to another in true unity and love; they did, with preface of all due respect and reverence, far from arrogancy or presumption, represent, in name of this kingdome, their serious thoughts and earnest desires for unity of religion; that in all his Majestie's dominions there might be one Confession of Faith, one Directory of Worship, one publike Catechisme, and one form of Kirk Government. This they conceived to be acceptable to God Almighty, who delighteth to see his people walking in truth and unity, to be a speciall meanes for conserving of peace betwixt the kingdomes; of easing the King's Majesty and the publike government of much trouble, which ariseth from differences of religion, very grievous to kings and estates; of great content to the King himself, to his nobles, his court, and all his people, when, (occasioned to be abroad,) without scruple to themselves or scandall to others, all may resort to the same publike worship, as if they were at their own dwellings; of suppressing the names of heresies, and sects, Puritans, Conformists, Separatists, Anabaptists, &c., which do rent asunder the bowels both of Kirk and kingdome, of despaire of successe to Papists and recusants; to have their profession, which is inconsistent with the true Protestant religion and authority of princes, set up again, and of drawing the hearts and hands of ministers from unplea-

sant and unprofitable controversies to the pressing of mortification, and to treatises of true pietie and practicall divinity. The Assembly doth now enter upon the labour of the commissioners, unto which they are encouraged, not only by their faithfulness in the late treaty, but also by the zeale and example of the Generall Assemblies of this Kirk in former times, as may appeare by the Assembly at Edinburgh, December 25, in the year 1566, which ordained a letter to be sent to England against the surplice, tippet, corner-cap, and such other ceremonies as then troubled that Kirk, that they might be removed; by the Assembly at Edinburgh, April 24, 1583, humbly desiring the King's Majesty to command his ambassadour, then going to England, to deale with the Queen, that there might be an union and band betwixt them and other Christian princes and realmes, professing the true religion, for defence and protection of the Word of God and professors thereof, against the persecution of Papists and confederates, joyned and united together by the bloody league of Trent; as also, that her Majesty would disburden their brethren of England of the yoke of ceremonies imposed upon them against the liberty of the Word; and by the Assembly at Edinburgh, March 3, 1589, ordaining the Presbyterie of Edinburgh to use all good and possible means for the relief and comfort of the Kirk of England, then heavily troubled, for the maintaining the true discipline and government of the Kirk, and that the brethren, in their private and publike prayers, recommend the estate of the afflicted Kirk of England to God. While now, by the mercy of God, the conjunction of the two kingdomes is many wayes increased, the zeale of the Generall Assembly towards their happinesse ought to be no lesse; but, besides these, the Assembly is much encouraged unto this duetie, both from the King's Majesty and his Parliament joyntly, in their answer to the proposition made by the late Commissioners of the Treaty, in these words:—"To their desire concerning unity of religion, and uniformity of kirk government, as a speciall meanes for conserving of peace betwixt the two kingdomes, upon the grounds and reasons contained in the paper of the 10 of March, and given in to the Treatie and Parliament of England; it is answered, upon the 15 of June, That his Majestie, with advice of both Houses of Parliament, doth approve of the affection of his subjects of Scotland, in their desire of having conformitie of kirk government between the two nations; and as the Parliament hath already taken into consideration the reformation of kirk government, so they will proceed therein in due time, as shall best conduce to the glory of God, the peace of the Kirk, and of both kingdomes." And also severally; for his Majestie knoweth that the custodie and vindication, the conversation and purgation of religion, are a great part of the duetie of civill authority and power. His Majestie's late practise, while he was here in person, in resorting frequently to the exercises of publike worship, his royall actions in establishing the worship and government of this Kirk in Parliament, and in giving order for a competent maintenance to the ministry and seminaries of the Kirk, and his Majestie's gracious letter to the Assembly, (seconded by the speech of his Majestie's Commissioner,) which containes this religious expression:—"Where any thing is amisse, we will endeavour a reformation in a fair and orderly way, and where reformation is settled, we resolve, with that authority wherewith God hath vested us, to maintain and defend it in peace and liberty, against all trouble that can come from without, and against all heresies, sects, and schismes, which may arise from within"—all these doe make us hopefull that his Majestie will not oppose but advance the work of reformation. In like manner, the Honourable Houses of Parliament, as they have many times before witnessed their zeale, so now also, in their declaration sent to the Assembly, which not only sheweth the constancy of their zeale, but their great grief that the worke hath been interrupted by a malignant party of Papists and evill-affected persons, especially of the corrupt and dissolute clergie, by the incitement and instigation of bishops and others, their hope, according to their earnest desire, when they shall returne to a peaceable and parliamentary proceeding, by the blessing of God, to settle such a reformation in the Church, as shall be agreeable to God's Word, and that the result shall be a most firm and stable union between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, &c. The Assembly also is not a little encouraged by a letter sent from many reverend Brethren of the Kirk of England, expressing their prayers and endeavours against every thing which shall be found prejudiciall to the establish-

ment of the kingdome of Christ, and the peace of their soveraigne. Upon these encouragements, and having so patent a doore of hope, the Assembly doth confidently expect, that England will now bestirre themselves in the best way for a reformation of religion, and do most willingly offer their prayers and uttermost endeavours for furthering so great a work, wherein Christ is so much concerned in his glory, the King in his honour, the Kirk and kingdome of England in their happinesse, and this Kirk and kingdome in the purity and peace of the Gospel.

IV. That the Assembly also, from so many reall invitations, are heartened to renew the proposition made by the aforementioned commissioners of this kingdome, for beginning the work of reformation at the uniformity of kirk-government. For what hope can there be of unity in religion, of one Confession of Faith, one form of worship, and one Catechisme, till there be first one forme of ecclesiasticall government? Yea, what hope can the kingdome and Kirk of Scotland have of a firme and durable peace, till prelacie, which hath been the main cause of their miseries and troubles, first and last, be plucked up, root and branch, as a plant which God hath not planted, and from which no better fruits can be expected than such sower grapes as this day set on edge the kingdome of England?

V. The prelaticall hierarchie being put out of the way, the work will be easie, without forcing of any conscience, to settle in England the government of the Reformed Kirks by assemblies. For although the Reformed Kirks do hold, without doubting, their kirk-officers and kirk-government, by assemblies, higher and lower, in their strong and beautifull subordination, to be *jure divino*, and perpetuall; yet prelacie, as it differeth from the office of a pastor, is almost universally acknowledged, by the prelates themselves and their adherents, to be but an humane ordinance, introduced by humane reason, and settled by humane law and custome for supposed conveniencie; which, therefore, by humane authority, without wronging any man's conscience, may be altdred and abolished upon so great a necessity, as is a hearty conjunction with all the Reformed Kirks, a firm and well-grounded peace betwixt the two kingdomes, formerly divided in themselves, and betwixt themselves by this partition wall, and a perfect union of the Kirks in the two nations; which, although by the providence of God in one iland, and under one monarch, yet ever since the Reformation, and for the present also, are at greater difference in the point of kirk-government, which in all places hath a powerfull influence upon all the parts of religion, then any other Reformed Kirks, although in nations at greatest distance, and under divers princes.

VI. What may be required of the Kirk of Scotland, for furthering the work of uniformitie of government, or for agreeing upon a common Confession of Faith, Catechisme, and Directory for Worship, shall, according to the order given by this Assembly, be most willingly performed by us, who long extreamly for the day when King and Parliament shall joyn for bringing to passe so great, so good a work, that all warres and commotions ceasing, all superstition, idolatry, heresie, sects, and schismes being removed, as the Lord is one, so his name may be one amongst us; and mercy and truth, righteousness and peace meeting together, and kissing one another, may dwell in this iland.

Act Sess. 8, August 3, 1642.—Overtures for Transplantation of Ministers, and Provision of Schools, ordained by the late Assembly at Edinburgh to be sent to Synods, and reported to this Assembly.

Act Sess. 11, Edinburgh, August 5, 1641.

These Overtures underwritten, anent the Transporting of Ministers and Professors to Kirks and Colledges, being read in audience of the Assembly, and thereafter revised by a Committee appointed for that effect, the Assembly appoints them to be sent to the severall Synods, to be considered by them, and they to report their judgements thereof to the next Generall Assembly.

I. No transportation would be granted hereafter without citation of parties having

interest, (viz. the minister who is sought and his parish,) to hear what they can oppose, and the matter is to come first to both the Presbyteries, (viz. that wherein the minister dwells whose transportation is sought, and the other Presbytery to which he is sought, if the kirks lye in several Presbyteries;) and if the Presbyteries agree not, then the matter is to be brought to the Synod or Generall Assembly, (which of them shall first occur after such transportation is sought;) and if the Synod (occurring first) agree not, or if there be appeale made from it, then the matter is to come to the Generall Assembly.

II. A minister may be transplanted from a particular congregation (where he can only doe good to a part) to such a place where he may benefit the whole Kirk of Scotland, because, in reason, the whole is to be preferred to a part, such as Edinburgh.

1. Because all the great Justice Courts sit there, as Councell, Session, Justice-Generall, Exchequer, &c., and it concerns the whole Kirk that these fountains of justice be kept clean, both in the point of faith and manners.

2. Because there is great confluence to Edinburgh, from time to time, of many of the chief members of the whole kingdome, and it concerns the whole Kirk to have these well seasoned, who (apparently) are to be the instruments of keeping this Kirk and kingdome in good temper.

That this may be the more easily done, the Assembly first recommends to Edinburgh, that some young men of excellent spirits may be (upon the charges of the said town) trained up, at home or abroad, toward the ministry, from time to time. Secondly, we meane not that all the places of the ministerie of Edinburgh be filled with Ministers to be transported by authority of this Act, but only till they be provided of one Minister (transplanted by the authority of the Assembly) for every Kirk in Edinburgh, and that the rest of the places be filled either according to the generall rules of transportation for the whole kingdome, or by agreement with actual Ministers and their parishes, with consent of the Presbytery or Synod to the which they belong.

III. In the next roome, we finde, that it is a transporting of Ministers for publike good that Colledges (having the profession of Divinitie) be well provided of Professors.

Wherein the Colledge of Divinitie in St Andrews is first to be served, without taking any Professors or Ministers out of Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Aberdene, and then the rest of the Colledges would be provided for as their necessitie shall require; yet (in respect of the present scarcity) it were good for the Universities to send abroad for able and approved men, to be Professors of Divinitie, that our Ministers may be kept in their pastorall charge as much as may be.

Towns also wherein Colledges are, are very considerable in the matter of transportation.

IV. Also congregations where noblemen have chief residence are to be regarded, whether planted or unplanted, and a care is to be had that none be admitted Ministers where Popish noblemen reside, but such as are able men (especially for controversies) by sight of the Presbytery; and, moreover, it is necessary that such Ministers as dwell where Popish noblemen are, and are not able for controversies, that they be transported.

V. They who desire the transportation of a Minister should be obliged to give reasons for their desire; neither should any Presbytery or Assembly passe a sentence for transportation of any Minister till they give reasons for the expedience of the same, both to him and his congregation, and to the Presbytery whereof he is a member. If they acquiesce to the reasons given, it is so much the better; if they doe not acquiesce, yet the Presbytery or Assembly (by giving such reasons before the passing of their sentence) shall make it manifest that what they doe is not *pro arbitratu, vel imperio* onely, but upon grounds of reason.

VI. Because there is such scarcity of Ministers having the Irish tongue, necessity requires, that when they be found in the Lowlands they be transported to the Highlands; providing their condition be not made worse, but rather better, by their transportation.

VII. In the point of voluntary transportation, no minister shall transact and agree with any parish, to be transported thereto, without a full hearing of him and his parish before the Presbyterie to which he belongs in his present charge, or superiour Kirk judicatories, if need shall be.

VIII. The planting of vacant Kirks is not to be tyed to any (either Ministers or expectants) within a Presbyterie; but a free election is to be, according to the order of our Kirk and lawes of our kingdome.

IX. The chief burghs of the kingdome are to be desired to traine up young men of excellent spirits for the ministry, according to their power, as was recommended to Edinburgh; which course will in time (God willing) prevent many transplantations.

The Overtures underwritten, anent the Schooles, being likewise read in audience of the Assembly, they recommend the particulars therein mentioned, anent the providing of the maintenance for Schoolmasters, to the Parliament, and ordaine the rest to be sent to the Synods, to be considered by them; and they to report their judgments thereof to the next Generall Assembly, as said is.

I. Every parish would have a reader, and a schoole, where children are to be bred in reading, witting, and grounds of religion, according to the laudable acts, both of Kirk and Parliament, made before.

And where grammar schooles may be had, as in burghs and other considerable places, (among which all presbyteriall seates are to be reputed,) that they be erected and held hand to.

II. Anent these schooles, every minister, with his elders, shall give accompt to the Presbyteries at the visitation of the kirk; the Presbyteries are to make report to the Synode, and the Synode to the General Assembly, that schools are planted as above said, and how they are provided with men and means.

III. And because this hath been most neglected in the Highlands, Ilands, and Borders, therefore, the ministers of every parish are to instruct, by their commissioners to the next Generall Assembly, that this course is begun betwixt and then; and they are further to certifie, from one Generall Assembly to another, whether this course is continued without omission or not.

IV. And because the means hitherto named or appointed for schooles of all sorts hath been both little and ill payed, therefore, beside former appointments, (the execution whereof is humbly desired, and to be petitioned for at the hands of his Majestie and the Parliament,) the Assembly would further supplicate this Parliament that they (in their wisdom) would finde out how meanes shall be had for so good an use, especially that the children of poore men (being very capable of learning, and of good engines) may be trained up, according as the exigence and necessity of every place shall require. And that the commissioners, who shall be named by this Assembly to wait upon the Parliament, may be appointed to represent this to his Majestie and the Parliament, seeing his sacred Majestie, by his gracious letter, hath put us in hope hereof, wherewith we have been much refreshed.

V. The Assembly would supplicate the Parliament, that for youths of the finest and best spirits of the Highlands and Borders, maintenance may be allotted, (as to bursars,) to be bred in universities.

VI. For the time and manner of visitation of schooles, and contriving the best and most compendious and orderly course of teaching grammar, we humbly desire the Assembly to appoint a committee for that effect, who may report their diligence to the next Generall Assembly.

The Overtures and Articles above written being reported to this Assembly, after reading and serious consideration thereof, the Assembly approves the same, and ordaines them to have the strength of an act and ordinance of Assembly in all time coming.

Sess. 11, August 5, 1642.—Act anent contrary Oaths.

The Generall Assembly, finding the inconvenience of contrary oaths, in trying of

adulteries, fornications, and other faults and scandals, do, therefore, for eviting thereof, discharge Synods, Presbyteries, and Sessions, to take oath of both parties in all time hereafter, recommending to them, in the mean time, all other order and wayes of tryall used in such cases: And that there may be a common order and course kept in this Kirk of trying of publike scandals, the Assembly ordains the Presbyteries to advise upon some common order hereintill, and to report their judgments to the next Assembly.

Overtures anent Family Exercises, Catechising, keeping of Synods and Presbyteries, and restraint of Adulteries, Witchcrafts, and other grosse Sins.

The Committee supplicates the Assembly,

I. To urge the severall Synods and Presbyteries, especially these of the North, that Family Exercise in religion, visitation of the Churches, Catechising, keeping of the Presbyteriall and Provinciaall meetings, (both by preaching and ruling Elders,) be more carefully observed.

II. That the clerk at least subscribe every book before it come to the Assembly, and that every act be noted on the margent, for a directory of expedition.

III. That the Assembly would seriously studie, by all meanes and wayes, how to procure the magistrate's concurrence to curb and punish these notorious vices which abound in the land, especially in the northern parts.

The Assembly approves the Overtures foresaids, and ordains them to be observed; and, for the last, the Assembly, being confident of the readinesse of the Judge Ordinar to restrain and punish these faults, do therefore ordain all Presbyteries to give up to the Justice the names of the adulterers, incestuous persons, witches, and sorcerers, and others guilty of such grosse and fearfull sins, within their bounds, that they may be processed, and punished according to the laws of this kingdom; and that the Presbyteries and Synods be carefull herein, as they will answer to the Generall Assemblies. And because that witchcraft, charming, and such like, proceeds many times from ignorance, therefore, the Assembly ordains all Ministers, especially in these parts where these sins are frequent, to be diligently preaching, catechising, and conferring, to inform their people thereintill.

Sess. 11, Aug. 5, 1642.—Act against Petitions, Declarations, and such like, in name of Ministers, without their knowledge and consents.

The Generall Assembly being informed, that after the petition presented to the Lords of his Majestie's Privie Councill, by the noblemen, burgesses, and ministers, occasionally met at Edinburgh, the 31 day of May last bypast, had received a very gracious answer, there was another petition given in to their Lordships upon the day of June last, entituled, The Petition of the Nobilitie, Gentry, Burrows, Ministers, and Commons; which, as it was not accompanied with any one minister to the Lords of Privie Councill, so all the Ministers of this Assembly disclaimes and disavoweth any knowledge thereof or accession thereto. And the Assembly, conceiving that the King's Majestie himself, and all the courts and judicatories of this kingdom, may be deluded and abused, and the Kirk in generall, and ministers in particular, injured and prejudged by the like practises hereafter, do, therefore, prohibite and discharge all and every one to pretend or use the name of ministers to any petition, declaration, or suchlike, at any time hereafter, without their knowledge, consent, and assistance; and if any shall doe the contrary, ordaines Presbyteries and Provinciaall Assemblies to proceed against them with the highest censures of the Kirk.

Sess. 11, Aug. 5, 1642.—Act anent the Assemblies desires to the Lords of Counsell, and Conservators of Peace.

The Assembly, being most desirous to use all, and to omit no lawfull meane or oc-

casion to testifie their zeale by dealing with God and man, for furtherance of their desires of unity in religion, and uniformity of kirk government, and, considering the great necessity, that the Kirk and State contribute jointly their best endeavours to this happy end: Therefore, enjoynes the Moderator and the Commissioners from the the Assembly to supplicate, with all earnestnesse and respect, the Lords of his Majestie's Honourable Privie Councill, and likewise the Commissioners appointed by his Majestie and the Parliament for Conservation of the Peace, that they may be pleased to concur with the Kirk in the like desires to his Majesty and the Parliament of England, and in the like directions to the Commissioners of this kingdome at London for the time, that by all possible means, civill and ecclesiastick, this blessed worke may be advanced, and a happy settling betwixt his Majestie and his Parliament may be endeavoured, and the common peace betwixt the kingdomes continued and strengthened.

Sess. 11, Aug. 5, 1642.—The Assemblie's humble desire to the King's Majestie for the Signator of L.500 sterling, and recommendation thereof to the King's Commissioner.

The Generall Assembly having received the report of the proceedings of the Commissioners of the late Assembly, and specially that his Majesty was graciously pleased, upon their humble petition, solemnly to promise and declare under his royall hand, his pious resolution and dedication of L.500 sterling, out of the readiest of his rents and revenues, to be employed yearly, on publike necessary and pious uses of the Kirk, at the sight of the Generall Assembly, as his Majestie's gracious answer of the 3 of January 1642, registrate in their books at his Majestie's own desire, for their further assurance of his Majestie's pious zeale, doth more fully propoort. Likeas, being informed that his Majesty was graciously pleased to signe and send down to the Kirk the Signator of the said L.500 yearly, to have past the Exchequer, albeit the samine is not as yet delivered; and, considering his Majestie's pious directions to them by his Majestie's letter, to plant and visit the utmost skirts and borders of the kingdome, as most necessary for the glory of God, the good of the Kirk, and his Majestie's honour and service, which is only stopped by the want of charges for publike visitations; and withall to remonstrate to his Majestie, by his Commissioner, their just and necessary desires for what may further serve to the good of religion, whereunto his Majestie's Commissioner promised his best endeavours and assistance: Therefore, the Assembly doth most earnestly recommend to his Majestie's Commissioner to represent to his Majestie, with his best assistance, the humble and necessary desires of the whole Assembly, that his Majestie will be graciously pleased to command that Signator, already signed by his royall hand, (or to signe another of the samine tenor, whereof they delivered the just double to his Majestie's Commissioner for that effect,) to be sent to this kingdom, and delivered to the commissioners from this Assembly, who are to sit at Edinburgh, or to the Procurator of the Kirk, whereby his Majestie shall more and more oblige this whole Kirk to pray for a blessing from heaven. upon his royall person and government.

Sess. 11, August 5, 1642.—The Assemblie's Letter to the Commissioners of this Kingdom at London.

Right Honourable,

We have received your Lordships' letter, with the declaration of the Parliament of England, and have sent this noble bearer to his Majesty with our humble supplication, and to your Lordships with our answer, earnestly desiring unity of religion and uniformity of kirk government, to be presented by your Lordships and this noble bearer to the Honourable Houses of Parliament. Your Lordships will perceive by the inclosed copies, and by our desires to his Majestie's Honourable Privie Councill and Commissioners for the Conservation of the Peace, to joyn their best endeavours with his Majestie and the Parliament, and their directions to your Lordships, by our leaving acommission behinde us, to concur with them in all ecclesiastick wayes; and by our appointing publike prayers and a solemn fast through this Kirk, for the furtherance

of this great work of reformation, and continuance of the common peace, that this unity in religion and uniformity of kirk government is the chiefest of our desires, prayers, and cares; whereunto, as we have been encouraged by the faithfull labors of the Commissioners of this kingdom in the late treaty, and continued and renewed by your Lordships, so we are assured that your Lordships will omit no lawfull mean, argument, or occasion, of seconding the same there, and advertising our commissioners at Edinburgh wherein they may further concur with your Lordships for the furtherance of the work, which tends so much to the glory of God, advancement of Christ's kingdom, increase of the honour and happinesse of our Sovereign, and the peace and welfare of these kingdoms, whereby your Lordships will oblige this Kirk more and more to pray for a blessing on your persons and travels, and to rest,

Yours in the Lord,

THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY.

St Andrews, Aug. 5, 1642.

A Letter from some Ministers of England.

Reverend and wel-beloved in our Lord and Saviour,

We received with much joy and satisfaction the answer which your Generall Assembly vouchsafed us to our letters of the last yeer. Some of us, in the name of our brethren, thought it then fit, by Mr Alexander Henderson, (a brother so justly approved by you, and honoured by us,) to return our deserved thanks; and we now further think it equall upon this occasion to make a more publike acknowledgement of such a publike favour. You were then pleased to give us fair grounds to expect that brotherly advice and endeavours which the common cause of Christ, and the mutuall interest of the united nations, command us now again to ask, if not to challenge. We doubt not but your experience, together with your intelligence, abundantly informes you of our condition, what various administrations of providence we have passed through, and we still lye betwixt hopes and feares, a fit temper for working—the God of all grace enable us to improve it. As our hopes are not such as may make us fear, so neither doe our feares prevail to the casting away our confidence. Your own late condition, together with this declaration of ours present, may acquaint you with the certain, though subtil, authors and fomentors of these our confused conflicts, which we conceive to be the hierarchical faction, who have no way to peace and safety but through the trouble and danger of others. Our prayers and endeavours, according to our measure, have been, and shall be, for the supplanting and rooting up whatsoever we finde so prejudiciall to the establishment of the kingdome of Christ, and the peace of our Sovereigne. And that this declaration of our selves may not leave you unsatisfied, we think it necessary further to expresse, that the desire of the most godly and considerable part amongst us is, that the Presbyterian government, which hath just and evident foundation both in the Word of God and religious reason, may be established amongst us, and that (according to your intimation) we may agree in one Confession of Faith, one Directorie of Worship, one publike Catechisme, and form of government; which things, if they were accomplished, we should much rejoyce in our happy subjection to Christ our head, and our desired association with you our beloved brethren. For the better effecting whereof, we thought it necessary not only to acquaint you with what our desires are in themselves, but likewise to you, that is, that what way shall seem most fit to the wisdom of that grave and religious Assembly, may be taken for the furtherance of our indeavours in this kind. We understand that our Parliament hath been beforehand with us in this intimation, and it cannot but be our duty, who are so much concerned in the businesse, to adde what power the Lord hath given us with you to the same purpose. This designe and desire of ours hath enemies on the left hand, and dissenting brethren on the right, but we doubt not, that as our hearts justifie us, that our intentions are right, and such as we conceive tend most to the glory of God, and the peace of the churches of the saints, so (by your brotherly concurrence in the most speedy and effectuall way you can find out) the work will, in God's due time, receive a prayed-for, hoped-for issue. We shall not need, by many arguments from mutuall nationall interest, (though we know you will not overlook them,) to inforce this request, the firme bond wherewith

we are all united in our Lord Jesus Christ, we are assured, will alone engage your faithfull endeavours in this businesse. To him we commit you, with these great and important affairs you have in hand. Be pleased to accept of these as the expression of the mindes of our many godly and faithfull brethren, whose hearts we doubt not of, neither need you, though their hands, in regard of the suddenesse of this opportunity, could not be subscribed together with ours, who are

Your most affectionate Friends and Brethren in the Work of the Lord.

London, July 22, 1642.

Answer to the Ministers' Letter.

Right Reverend and beloved in the Lord Jesus,

By our answer to the declaration sent unto us from the Honourable Houses of Parliament, ye may perceive that your letter, which came into our hands so seasonably, was not only acceptable unto us, but hath also encouraged us to renew, both to the King's Majestie and the Houses of Parliament, the desires of the late Commissioners of this kingdome for unity in religion, in the four particulars remembered by you. We cannot be ignorant but the opposition from Satan and worldly men, in Kirk and policy, will still be vehement, as it hath been already, but we are confident, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that the prayers and indeavours of the godly in both kingdoms will bring the word to a wished and blessed issue. This whole nationall Kirk is so much concerned in that reformation and unity of religion in both kingdomes, that without it we cannot hope for any long time to enjoy our puritie and peace, which hath cost us so dear, and is now our chiefest comfort and greatest treasure: Which one cause (beside the honour of God, and the happinesse of the people of God in that kingdome, more desired of us then our lives) is more then sufficient to move us to contribute all that is in our power for bringing it to passe. And since we have with so great liberty made our desires and hopes known both to King and Parliament, it is a duety incumbent both to you and us, who make mention of the Lord, and are watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem, never more to keep silence, nor to hold our peace, day nor night, till the righteousness of Sion go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And if it shall please the Lord to move the hearts of King and Parliament to hearken unto the motion, for which end we have resolved to keep a solemne fast and humiliation in all the kirks of this kingdome, the mean by which we have prevailed in times past, we wish that the work may be begun with speed, and prosecuted with diligence, by the joint labours of some divines in both kingdoms, who may prepare the same for the view and examination of a more frequent ecclesiastick meeting of the best affected to reformation there, and of the commissioners of the Generall Assembly here, that in end it may have the approbation of the Generall Assembly here, and of all the kirks there, in the best way that may be; we wish and hope at last in a nationall Assembly. Our commissioners at Edinburgh shall in our name receive and returne answers for promoting so great a work, which we, with our heart and our soule, recommend to the blessing of God. We continue

Your loving brethren and fellow-labourers.

Act for the Lord Maitland's presenting the Assemblies Supplication to his Majestie, and for going to the Commissioners at London, with the Answer to the Parliament of England's Declaration.

The General Assembly, considering the necessity of sending some person of good worth and quality for to present their humble supplication to his Majestie, and to deliver their directions to the commissioners of this kingdom now at London, with their declaration to the Parliament of England, and answer to some well-affected ministers of that Kirk: And having certain knowledge of the worth, ability, and faithfulness of John Lord Maitland, one of their number, who, being witness to all their intentions and proceedings, can best relate their true loyaltie and respect to their Sovereign, and brotherly affection to the Kirk and kingdom of England therein: Therefore, do unanimously require his Lordship's pains, by repairing to Court and

to London for the premisses, which hereby they commit to his diligence and fidelity, willing his Lordship to make account of his proceedings herein to their commissioners appointed to sit at Edinburgh.

Sess. 12, Aug. 5, post meridiem.—Commission for publike Affairs of this Kirk, and for prosecuting the desires of this Assembly to his Majestie and the Parliament of England.

The Generall Assembly, considering the laudable custome of this Kirk for to appoint some commissioners in the interim betwixt Assemblies, for presenting of overtures and prosecuting the other desires of the Kirk to his Majestie, the Lords of his Councill, and the Estates of Parliament; and taking to their consideration the present condition of the Kirk of England, with the declaration thereof sent down from the Parliament, and some reverend brethren of the ministry there, with their own answer to the Parliament and ministry, and their humble supplication to his Majestie for unity of religion and uniformity of kirk government. And withall, remembring their desires to the Honourable Lords of his Majestie's Secret Councill, and to the Commissioners appointed by the King and Parliament for Conservation of the Common Peace, that they would joyn their concourse in their desires to his Majestie and Parliament, and directions to the Commissioners of this kingdom at London for the time. And likewise, considering their good hopes, from God's gracious favour to this island, that by his good providence he will in his own way and time settle this great work through this whole isle; and that it is both our earnest desire and Christian duty to use all lawfull means and ecclesiastick wayes for furtherance of so great a work, continuance of the common peace betwixt these nations, and keeping a brotherly correspondence betwixt these Kirks: Therefore, the Assembly thinks it necessary before their dissolving to appoint, and by these presents do nominate and appoint, Masters Andrew Ramsay, Alex. Henderson, Robert Dowglas, William Colvill, William Bennet, ministers at Edinburgh, Mr William Arthur, minister at St Cuthbert, Mr James Robertson, John Logan, Robert Lighton, commissioners from Dalkeith to this Assembly; Masters Andrew Blackhall, James Fleeming, Robert Ker, commissioners from Hadingtoun to this Assembly; Masters George Hamilton, Robert Blair, Arthur Mortoun, David Dalgleish, Andrew Bennet, Walter Greg, John Moncreff, John Smith, George Gillespie, John Row, John Duncan, Walter Bruce, commissioners for the Presbyteries within the province of Fyffe; Mr David Calderwood, minister at Pencaitland, Mr John Adamson, Principal of the Colledge of Edinburgh, Mr John Strang, Principal of the Colledge of Glasgow, Mr David Dickson, Mr James Bonar, Mr Robert Bailie, Mr John Bell, Mr Robert Ramsay, Mr George Young, Mr Henry Guthrie, Mr Samuel Oustein, Mr John Robertson, minister at St Johnstoun, Mr John Robertson, minister at Dundie, Mr John Hume, minister at Eckills, Mr Andrew Cant, Mr William Guild, Mr Samuel Rutherford, Mr James Martin, Mr Alexander Monroe, Mr Robert Murray, Mr John Maclellan, Mr Andrew Doncanson, Mr Silvester Lambie, Mr Gilbert Ross, ministers; Marquesse of Argyle, Earles of Lauderdaile, Glencarne, Kinghorne, Eglintoun, Weemes, Cassils; Lords Gordoun, Maitland, Balcarras, Sir Patrick Hepburne of Wauchtoun, Sir David Home of Wedderburne, Sir David Creightoun of Lugtoun, Sir David Barclay of Cullearnie; John Henderson of Fordell, M. George Winrame of Libertoun, Sir Robert Drummond, Sir William Carmichaell, John Binnie, Thomas Paterson, John Sempill, John Kennedy of Air, John Leslie from Aberdene, William Glendining, Provost of Kirkubright, John Colzear, ruling elders, with the concourse of the Procurator of the Kirk; and grants to them full power and commission in this interim betwixt and the next Assembly, for to meet and convene at Edinburgh upon the 17 day of this moneth of August, and upon any other day, or in any other place, as they shall think convenient; and being met and convened, or any fifteen of them, there being alwayes twelve ministers present, with full power for to consider and performe what they finde necessary for the ministerie, by preaching, supplicating, preparing of draughts of one Confession, one Catechisme, one Directory of Publike Worship, (which are alwayes to be revised by the next Generall Assembly,) and by all other lawfull and ecclesiastick wayes, for furtherance of this great work in the union of this

iland in religion and kirk government, and for continuance of our own peace at home, and of the common peace betwixt the nations, and keeping of good correspondence betwixt the Kirks of this iland. Like as, if it shall please God to blesse the prayers and endeavours of his saints for this blessed union, and that if either the Lords of Councill or Commissioners for the Peace shall require their concurrence at home or abroad, by sending commissioners with theirs to his Majesty and Parliament for that effect, or that they themselves shall finde it necessary; the Assembly grants full power to them, not only to concur, by all lawfull and ecclesiastick wayes, with the Councill and Conservators of the Peace at home, but also to send some to present and prosecute their desires and humble advice to his Majesty and the Parliament, and the ministerie there, for the furthering and perfecting of so good and great a worke. Like as, with power to them to promote their other desires, overtures, and recommendations of this Assembly, to the King's Majestie, Lords of Councill, Session, Exchequer, and Commissioners of Parliament for Plantation of Kirks, for common burdens, or conservation of the common peace, and to the Parliament of this kingdom, in case it fall out *pro re nata* before the next Assembly. And such like, with as full power to them to proceed, treat and determine in any other matters to be committed to them by this Assembly, as if the samine were herein particularly insert, and with as ample power to proceede in the matters particularly or generally above mentioned, as any commissioners of Generall Assemblies have had, and have been in use of before; they being alwayes comptable to, and censurable by, the next Generall Assembly, for their proceedings thereanent.

Sess. 13, Aug. 6, 1642.—A Petition from some distressed Professors in Ireland.

To the Reverend and Right Honourable the Moderator and remanent Members of the Generall Assembly of Scotland, convened at St Andrews, July 1642,
The humble Petition of the most part of the Scottish Nation in the North of Ireland, in their own names, and in name of the rest of the Protestants there;

Humbly Sheweth,

That where your petitioners, by the great blessing of the Lord, enjoyed for a little while a peaceable and fruitfull ministerie of the Gospel, yet through our own abuse of so rich a mercy, and through the tyrannie of the prelates, we have been a long time spoiled of our ministers, (a yoke to many of us heavier then death,) who being chased into Scotland, were not altogether unusefull in the day of your need. And we having been since oppressed and scattered, as sheep who have no shepherd, now at last, the wise and righteous hand of the Lord, by the sword of the rebels, hath bereft us of our friends, and spoiled us of our goods, and left us but a few, and that a poor handfull of many, and hath chased from us the rest that were called our ministers, the greatest part whereof we could scarce esteem such, as being rather officers to put the prelates' injunctions in execution, then feeders of our souls; so that now being visited with sword and sicknesse, and under some apprehension of famine, if withall we shall taste of the sorest of all plagues, to be altogether deprived of the ministry of the Word, we shall become in so much a worse condition then any Pagans, as that once we enjoyed a better. Neither know we what hand to turn us to for help, but to the land so far obliged by the Lord's late rare mercies, and so far enriched to furnish help of that kinde; a land whence many of us drew our blood and breath, and where (pardon the necessary boldnesse) some of our own ministers now are, who were so violently plucked from us, so sore against both their own and our wills; yea, the land that so tenderly in their bosoms received our poor outcasts, and that hath already sent us so rich a supply of able and prosperous souldiers to revenge our wrong.

Therefore, although we know that your zeale and brotherly affection would urge you to take notice without our advertisement, yet give us leave, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, to intreat, if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercy, that now in this nick of time, when the sword of the enemie making way for a more profitable entertaining the Gospel, having also banished the prelates, and their followers, when

our extremity of distresse, and the fair hopes of speedy settling of peace, hath opened so fair a doore to the Gospel, you would take the cause of your younger sister, that hath no breasts, to your serious consideration, and pity poore Macedonians, crying to you that ye would come over and help us, being the servants of the God of your fathers, and claiming interest with you in a common covenant, that, according to the good hand of God upon us, ye may send us ministers for the house of our God. We do not take upon us to prescribe to you the way or the number, but in the view of all, the finger of the Lord points at these, whom, though persecution of the prelates drew from us, yet our interest in them could not be taken away, wherein we trust in regard of several of them, called home by death, your bounty will superadde some able men of your own, that may help to lay the foundation of God's house, according to the pattern. But for these so unjustly reft from us, not only our necessity, but equity pleads, that either you would send them all over, which were a work to be paralleled to the glories of the primitive times, or at least that ye would declare them transportable, that, when invitators shall be sent to any of them, wherein they may discern a call from God, there may be no difficultie in their loosing from thence, but they may come back to perfect what they began, and may get praise and fame in the land where they were put to shame. Neither are you to question your power over us so to doe, or crave a president of your own practise in that kind, for our extraordinary need calling on you, furnisheth you with a power to make this a president for the like cases hereafter; herein if you shall lay aside the particular concernment of some few places, which you may easily out of your rich nurseries plant again, and make use of your publike spirits, which are not spent, but increases by your so many noble designes, you shall leave upon us and our posteritie the stamp of an obligation that cannot be delete, or that cannot be expressed,—you shall send to all the neighbouring churches a pattern, and erect for after ages a monument of self-denying tender zeale,—you shall disburden the land of the many outcasts, who will follow over their ministers,—and you shall make it appear that the churlish bounty of the prelates, which at first cast some of these men over to us, is not comparable with the cheerfull liberalitie of a rightly constitute Generall Assembly, to whom we are perswaded the Lord will give seed for the loane which you bestow on the Lord; yea, the day may come, when a Generall Assembly in this land may returne to you the first-fruits of thanks for the plants of your free gift. And although you were scant of furniture of this kinde your selves, or might apprehend more need then formerly, yet, doubtlesse, your bowels of compassion would make your deep povertie, even in a great tryal of affliction, abound to the riches of your liberalitie. But now, seeing you abound in all things, and have formerly given so ample a proof of your large bestowing on churches abroad in Germanie and France, knowing that you are not wearied in well-doing, we confidently promise to our selves, in your name, that ye will abound in this grace also, following the example of our Lord and the primitive churches, who alwayes sent out disciples in paires. But, if herein our hopes shall faile us, we shall not know whether to wish that we had died with our brethren by the enemy's hand; for we shall be as if it were said unto us, Goe, serve other gods! yet looking for another kinde of answer at your hands, for in this you are to us an angel of God, we have sent these bearers, Mr John Gordoun, and Mr Hugh Campbell, our brethren, who may more particularly informe you of our case, and desire, that, at their returne, they may refresh the bowels of

Your most instant and earnest supplicants.

Commission to some Ministers to go to Ireland.

The Assembly having received a petition, subscribed by a considerable number in the North of Ireland, intimating their deplorable condition, through want of the ministerie of the Gospel, occasioned by the tyrannie of the Prelats, and the sword of the rebels, and desiring some Ministers, especially such as had been chased from them, by the persecution of the prelates, and some others, to be added, either to be

sent presently over to reside amongst them, or declared transportable, that, upon invitation from them, they might goe and settle there, together with some particular petitions, desiring the returne of some particular Ministers who had laboured there before: All which the Assembly hath taken to their serious consideration, being most heartily willing to sympathize with every member of Christ's body, although never so remote; much more with that plantation there, which, for the most part, was a branch of the Lord's vine planted in this land. In which sollicitude, as they would be loath to usurpe without their own bounds, or stretch themselves beyond their own measure; so they dare not be wanting, to the enlargement of Christ's Kingdome, where so loud a cry of so extreame necessitie could not but stirre up the bowels of Christian compassion. And although they conceive that the present unsettled condition both of Church and State and Land, will not suffer them as yet to loose any to make constant abode there, yet they have resolved to send over some for the present exigent till the next Generall Assembly, by courses, to stay there four moneths allanerly: And therefore doe hereby authorize and give commission to the persons following, to wit, Mr Robert Blair, minister at St Andrews, and Mr James Hamilton, minister at Dumfreis, for the first four moneths; Mr Robert Ramsay, minister at Glasgow, and Mr John Maclelland, minister at Kirkudbright, for the next four moneths; and to Mr Robert Baillie, Professor of Divinitie in the Universitie of Glasgow, and Mr John Levistoun, minister of Stranraire, for the last four moneths; to repair into the North of Ireland, and there to visit, comfort, instruct, and encourage the scattered flocks of Christ, to employ to their uttermost, with all faithfulness and singleness of heart, in planting and watering, according to the direction of Jesus Christ, and according to the doctrine and discipline of this Church, in all things; and, if need be, (with concurrence of such of the ministers of the army as are there,) to try and ordain such as shall be found qualified for the ministerie, giving charge unto the persons foresaid, in the sight of God, that, in doctrine, in worship, in discipline, and in their dayly conversation, they studie to approve themselves as the ministers of Jesus Christ, and that they be comptable to the Generall Assembly of this Kirk in all things. And in case if any of the above mentioned ministers be impeded by sicknesse, or otherwise necessarily detained from this service, the Assembly ordaines the commissioners residing at Edinburgh for the publike affairs of the Church to nominate in their place well qualified men, who hereby are authorized to undertake the foresaid employment, as if they had been expressly nominate in the face of the Assembly. And this, although possibly it shall not fully satisfie the large expectation of the brethren in Ireland, yet the Assembly is confident they will take in good part at this time that which is judged most convenient for their present condition, even a lent mite, out of their own not very great plenty, to supply the present necessity; requiring of them no other recompence, but that they in all cheerfulness may embrace and make use of the message of salvation, and promising to enlarge their indebted bounty at the next Assembly, as they shall finde the worke of the Lord there to require. In the meane while, wishing that these who are sent may come with the full blessing of the Gospel and peace, and recommending them, their labours, and these to whom they are sent, to the rich blessing of the great Shepherd of the flock.

Sess. 13, August 6, 1642.—Act against slandering of Ministers.

The Generall Assembly, considering the malice of divers persons in raising calumnies and scandalls against ministers, which is not onely injurious to their persons, and discreditable to the holy calling of the Ministerie, but doth also prove often a great prejudice and hinderance to the promoving of the Gospel: Doe therefore ordain Presbyteries and Synods to proceed diligently in processe against all persons that shall reproach or scandall ministers, with the censures of the Kirk, even to the highest, according as they shall finde the degree or quality of the scandal deserve.

Act anent ordering of the Assembly-House.

The Assembly, for better order in time coming, ordains the Act of the Assembly at Aberdene for ordering the House of the Assembly, to be kept hereafter punctually. And, for that effect, that the samine be reade the first Session of every Assembly.

Act for remembring in publike Prayers the desires of the Assembly to the King and Parliament, and indiction of a publike Fast.

The Generall Assembly being desirous to promote the great work of unity in religion, and uniformity in church government, in all thir three dominions, for which the Assembly hath humbly supplicate the King's Majestie, and remonstrate their desires to the Parliament of England, lest they should be wanting in any meane that may further so glorious and so good a work: Doe ordain, that not only the said declaration to the Parliament, and supplication to the King's Majestie, shall be accompanied with the earnest petitions and prayers of the whole brethren, in private and publike, for the Lord's blessing thereunto, according to the laudable custome of our predecessors, who, in the year of God 1589, ordaines that the brethren, in their private and publike prayers, recommend unto God the estate of the afflicted Church of England; but, having just cause of fear, that the iniquities of the land, which so much abound, may marre this so great a work, doe also ordain a solemne Fast to be kept on the second Lord's Day of September, and the Wednesday following, throughout the whole kingdome, for the causes after specified:—

I. Grosse ignorance, and all sort of wickednesse, among the greater part, security, meer formality, and unfruitfulnesse among the best, and unthankfulnesse in all.

II. The sword raging throughout all Christendome, but most barbarously in Ireland, and dayly more and more threatned in England, through the lamentable division betwixt the King and the Parliament there, tending to the subversion of religion and peace in all the three kingdomes.

III. That God may graciously blesse the supplication of the Assembly to the King's Majesty, and their motion to the Parliament of England, for unitie in religion and uniformity of kirk government, and all other meanes which may serve for the promoting of so great a worke, and advancement of the Kingdome of Christ every where.

IV. That God may powerfully overturne all wicked plots and designes of Anti-christ and his followers, and all divisive motions against the course of reformation, and the so much longed for union of the King and Parliament.

V. That God may blesse the harvest.

Reference from the Presbyterie of Kirkcaldie.

Anent the acts of Assemblies for observation of the Lord's Day, profaned by going of salt-pannes, that this Assembly would declare the limits of the Sabbath during which the pannes should stand.

The Assembly referres the answer of this question to the acts of former Assemblies.

Reference from the Synode of Fyffe.

That the Provincial of Angus keep their meeting on the same day with the Synod of Fyffe, which breakes the correspondence between them, appointed by the Generall Assembly of Glasgow.

Answer.

The Assembly ordaines the Provinciaill Assembly of Angus to keep their first meeting upon the third Tuesday of April, conforme to the act of the said Assembly of Glasgow.

Overtures to be advised by Presbyteries against the next Assembly.

How appeals shall be brought into the Generall Assemblies, and by what sort of citation.

What shall be the prescription of scandalls, within what space of time shall they be challenged, whether after three years, the minister having been allowed and approved in life and doctrine by Synods, Presbyteries, and Visitations.

What order shall be taken for keeping Generall Assemblies when Presbyteries send not the full number of commissioners, or when the commissioners abide not untill the conclusion and dissolving of the Assembly.

Order to be advised for testimonials.

The Assembly appoints the next Generall Assembly to hold at Edinburgh, the first Wednesday of August 1643.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY,
CONVEENED AT EDINBURGH, 1643.

Sess. 1, Aug. 2, 1643.—The King's Letter to the Generall Assembly presented by his Majestie's Commissioner, Sir Thomas Hope of Craighall, Knight, his Majestie's Advocate.

CHARLES R.

Trustie and welbeloved—We greet you well. The time now approaching for the holding of the General Assembly of our Kirk of Scotland, and we having appointed Sir Thomas Hope, our Advocate, to be our Commissioner there, we thought good to present him there with these our letters, and to take this occasion to minde you of the duty which you owe to us, your Sovereigne, and to the peace of that our native kingdome. How far we have lately extended our grace and favour towards satisfaction of your humble desires there is not any amongst you but may well remember; and, therefore, in this conjuncture of our affairs, it is but reasonable that we expect from you such moderation in the dutifull proceedings of this Assembly, as may concur with our princely inclinations and desires to preserve that Kirk, and that our kingdome, in peace; having wel observed that alterations in points of religion are often the inlets to civill dissensions, and the hazard, if not overthrow, of both Kirk and kingdomes: Therefore, of our great affection and speciall tendernes to your peace, (who of all our dominions are yet happie therein to the envy of others,) we conjure and require you, in the fear of God, and obedience of us, his vicegerent, that your endeavours and consultations tend onely to preserve peace and quietnesse among you. And so we bid you farewell. Given at our Court at Oxford, the 22d day of July 1643.

To our right trusty and welbeloved Counsellour, Sir Thomas Hope, Knight, our Advocate-Generall, and our Commissioner at the Generall Assembly of the Kirk in our Kingdome of Scotland, and to the rest of the said Assembly now convened.

Sess. 2, Aug. 3, 1643.—Overtures anent Bills, References, and Appeals.

I. That all bills whatsoever, of particular concernment, whereunto all parties having interest are not cited, should be rejected.

II. That all bills be first presented to the inferiour judicatories of the Kirk, who may competently consider of them, and from them be orderly and *gradatim* brought

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to the Assembly, according to the order prescribed for appellations in the Assembly of Edinburgh, 1639, in the 24th Sess. August 30.

III. That the said act of Assembly, 1639, anent appellations, be also extended to references.

IV. In appellations and references, of particular concernment, if all parties having interest have been present in the inferiour judicatorie when the appeal and reference was made, then there is no necessitie of citation. But in case of their absence, citation of parties is so necessar, that if it be wanting appellations and references should not be received.

V. That, conform to former acts of Assemblies, appellations *post sententiam* be made within ten dayes after the sentence, and otherwise not to be respected.

The Assembly ordaines thir Overtures to be given to the severall committees for their direction.

Sess. 3, August 4, 1643.—Act for Election of Professours to be Commissioners to Assemblies by Presbyteries.

The Assembly thinks, if Professours of Divinitie in Universities be Ministers, that they may be chosen commissioners to the Generall Assembly, either by the Presbyterie as Ministers, or by the Universitie as Professours of Divinitie.

Sess. 4, August 5, 1643.—The Petition of the distressed Professours in Ireland for Ministers.

To the Reverend and Honourable Moderatour, and remanent Members of the Generall Assembly of Scotland, convened at Edinburgh, Aug. 1643, The humble Petition of the distressed Christians in the North of Ireland,

Humbly Sheweth,

That whereas you were pleased the last year to take notice of our petition, and conceived so favourable an act in our behalf, from our hearts we blesse the Lord God of our fathers, who put such a thing as this in your heart, to begin in any sort to beautifie the house of the Lord amongst us: doubtlesse you have brought upon your selves the blessing of them who consider the poor; the Lord will certainly deliver you in the time of trouble. We trust no distance of place, no length of time, no pressure of affliction, yea, nor smiling of prosperity, shall delete out of our thankfull memories the humble acknowledgement of your so motherly care, in drawing out your breasts, yea, your souls, to satisfie the hungrie; although we have been beaten with the sword, bitten with famine, our own wickednes correcting us, our backslidings reproving us, yet we have not so farre forgotten the Lord's ancient love but that our hearts were brought to a little reviving in the midst of our bondage, by the ministry of these who at your direction made a short visit amongst us. We know you did not conceive it expedient at that time to loose any for ful settling here, till the waters of the bloudy inundation were somewhat abated, and probability might be of some comfortable abode, which we, through the Lord's revenging hand pursuing our enemies, and the vigilancie of your victorious army, is in a great measure attained unto. Whatsoever might have detained some of these whom ye directed to us, whose stay made our expectation prove abortive, we shall ascribe it to our own abuse of such treasure, and want of spirituall hunger, occasioned justly through the want of food; and yet that same disappointment, together with your faithfull promise of enlarging your indebted bountie, which is put upon record in all our hearts, hath made us conceive the seed of a lively expectation, that you will now no more put your bountie and the means of our life into the hazard of such frustrations, but will once for all bestow an ample and enduring blessing. And of this we are so much the more confident, because our former suit was not denyed but delayed; only we fear, if a new delay be procured, till all things be fully settled, that the observing of winde and clouds shall hinder both sowing and reaping; and, in the meantime, the prelates and their faction may step in and invest themselves of their old tyrannie over our consciences, who, if they once

shall see us possessed of our inheritance, those Canaanites dare not offer to thrust us out. By all appearance, if the Jesuites had any hope to finde welcome amongst us, they had provided us fully ere now with their poysoned plants. Our hearts abhorre the checking or suspecting of your proceedings, yet it is lawfull to learn sometime from our enemy; but in this you have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago, and thereby have engaged your selves to perfect your own beginnings, and bring us out of our orphan condition. We are fallen in your lap. This ruine must be under your hand; you cannot pretend want of bread or cloathing; you must be healers. We have chosen you curators to your little young sister that wants breasts. There is none on earth to take her out of your hand; for we will not, nor cannot hide it from your honours and wisdomes that we want bread, and must not only, as before, have a bit for our present need, but also seed to sow the land.

It is therefore our humble and earnest desire, that you would yet again look on our former petition and your own obligatorie act, and at least declare your consent that a competent number of our own ministers may be loosed to settle here, and break bread to the children that lye fainting at the head of all streets; which although it may be accounted but a restoring of what we lost, and you have found, yet we shall esteem it as the most precious gift that earth can afford. When they are so loosed, if they finde not all things concurring to clear God's calling, it will be in their hand to forbear; and you have testified your bountie. But oh, for the Lord's sake, do not kill our dying souls, by denying these our necessar desires! There are about twelve or fourteen waste congregations on this nearest coast, let us have at least a competent number that may erect Christ's throne of discipline, and may help to bring in others, and then shall we sing, that the people who were left of the sword have found grace in the wilderness. We have sent these our brethren, Sir Robert Adair of Kinbail, Knight, and William Mackenna of Belfast, merchant, to attend an answer from you, who have attained that happinesse to be lenders and not borrowers, and to present the heartie longing affections of,

Your most obliged, and more expecting brethren and servants.

Subscribed by very many hands.

Sess. 6: August 8, 1643.—Acts for subscribing the Covenant.

The Generall Assembly, considering the good and pious advice of the commissioners of the last Assembly, upon the 22 of September 1642, *post meridiem*, recommending to Presbyteries to have copies of the Covenant, to be subscribed by every minister at his admission; doth, therefore, ratifie and approve the samine; and, further, ordaines that the Covenant be reprinted, with this ordinance prefixed thereto, and that every Synod, Presbyterie, and Paroch, have one of them bound in quarto, with some blank paper, whereupon every person may be obliged to subscribe; and that the Covenants of the Synod and Presbyterie be kept by their Moderatours *respectivè*; of Universities by their Principalls; of Paroches by their Ministers, with all carefulnesse. And that particular account of obedience to this act be required hereafter in all visitations of Paroches, Universities, and Presbyteries, and in all trialls of Presbyteries and Synod books.

The Generall Assembly, considering that the Act of the Assembly at Edinburgh, August 30, 1639, injoyning all persons to subscribe the Covenant, under all ecclesiasticall censure, hath not been obeyed: Therefore, ordaines all ministers to make intimation of the said act in their kirks, and thereafter to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against such as shall refuse to subscribe the Covenant. And that exact account be taken of every minister's diligence hereintill by their Presbyteries and Synods, as they will answer to the Generall Assembly.

Sess. 7, August 9, 1643.—Act for Searching Books tending to Separation.

The Generall Assembly, considering the recommendation of the commissioners of the late Assembly at St Andrews, upon the 12 of May last, to every minister within

their severall bounds, especially to ministers upon the coasts, or where there is harbourie and ports, to try and search for all books tending to separation; and finding the same most necessar, do therefore ordain that recommendation to have the strength of an ordinary act of Assembly; and that every minister be carefull to try and search if any such books be brought to this countrey from beyond seas; and, if any shall be found, to present the samine to Presbyteries, that some course may be taken to hinder the dispersing thereof; and earnestly recommend to the civill magistrates to concurre with their authoritie in all things for effectuall execution hereof.

Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of the last Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, having heard the report of the committee appointed to consider the proceedings of the commissioners of the late Assembly at St Andrews, after mature deliberation, and serious consideration thereof, findes the whole acts, conclusions, and proceedings of the saids commissioners, contained in a book and register, subscribed by Master Andrew Ker, their clerk, and by Master David Lindsay, Moderatour, and Master James Hamilton, clerk to the said committee, to declare much wisdome, diligence, vigilancie, and every way commendable zeal and fidelitie, in doing and discharging every thing according to their commission.

Sess. 8, August 10, 1643.—Propositions given by the Commissioners of the Parliament of England to a Committee, to be presented by them to the Assembly.

We, the Commissioners appointed by both Houses of the Parliament of England, desire your Lordships, and the rest of this reverend committee, to represent to the reverend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that we are commanded—

To acknowledge, with all thankfulness to God, their zeal for purging and reforming religion, and care not only to prevent the growth, but utterly to extirpate the reliques of Popery; and also the great blessing of Almighty God upon their so constant and faithfull endeavours thus for establishing them in truth and peace, together with their labour of love to procure the like happinesse to our Church and nation.

To give them an account of their earnest desire and endeavour to see the same work promoted and perfected among our selves; which, though it hath been opposed and retarded by the industrious malice of the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant partie, yet, through God's goodnesse, it hath so far prevailed as to produce the removeall of the High Commission—the making void the coercive power of the prelates and their courts—the ejection of the bishops from the House of Peers—the turning out of many scandalous ministers; besides that they have passed and presented to his Majestie diverse bills, viz., for the suppressing of innovations—for the more strict observation of the Lord's Day—against pluralities and non-residence—for the punishment of the scandalous clergie—for the abolition of Episcopacie—and the calling an Assembly,—the true copies of which we herewithall deliver. Which bills, through the under-mining of the Papists, Prelates, and their party, (the constant enemies of reformation,) have not yet obtained his Majestie's royall assent. And yet considering the urgent necessity of purging and settling the Church, (as hath been often pressed and presented to the Parliament of England by pious and frequent exhortations and declarations from that reverent Assembly,) they have been constrained, by an ordinance of both Houses, to call an Assembly of divines and others, now sitting, to consider and prepare what may conduce thereunto; which, by the assistance of some godly and learned divines sent from this nation, (as is earnestly desired,) we hope may, through the blessing of God, bring it to perfection.

And yet, notwithstanding, to let them know that by reason of the prevailing of the Papists, Prelaticall faction, and other malignant enemies to this so much desired reformation, (all of them being now in arms against the Parliament,) these hopefull beginnings are likely not onely to be rendred ineffectuall, but all the former evils, superstitions, and corruptions, (which for the present, through the blessing of God, are in a good measure removed,) to be re-introduced by strong hand; which, if once they should take root again in the Church and kingdome of England, will quickly spread their venome and infection into the neighbour Church and kingdome of Scot-

land; the quarrell of the enemies of this work being not so much against the persons of men as the power of godlinesse, and purity of God's worship, wheresoever it is professed. Both Houses do, therefore, desire that reverent Assembly to lay seriously to heart the state and condition of their sister Church and kingdome, and not only by their prayers to assist in these straits, but also, by such seasonable and effectuall means as to them shall seem meet, to further and expedite the present aid and assistance demanded by both Houses.

And, lastly, to make known unto them that we are designed and sent by both Houses of Parliament to the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to propound to them, and consult with them concerning such things as may conduce to our own reformation, and our so much desired conjunction with this Church, which they have more fully expressed in a declaration of their own, which herewithall we present.

WILLIAM BOND, *Secr. Commis.*

August 10, 1643.

A Declaration of the Lords and Commons in the Parliament of England, to the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The Lords and Commons in Parliament, acknowledging, with humble thankfulness to Almighty God, the disposer of hearts, the Christian zeal and love which the Generall Assembly of the Churches of Scotland have manifested, in their pious endeavours for the preservation of the true reformed Protestant religion from the subtle practices and attempts of the Popish and Prelaticall party, to the necessary reformation of Church discipline and government in this kingdome, and the more near union of both Churches, do earnestly desire that reverend Assembly to take notice that the two Houses of Parliament, fully concurring with them in these pious intentions, for the better accomplishment thereof, have called an assembly of diverse godly and learned divines, and others of this kingdome, unto the city of Westminster, who are now sitting and consulting about these matters. And likewise have nominated and appointed John Earle of Ruthland, Sir William Armine, Baronet, Sir Henry Vane the younger, Knight, Thomas Hatcher and Henry Darley, Esquires, Committees and Commissioners of both Houses to the kingdome and states of Scotland, who, beside their instructions in matters concerning the peace and commonweal of both kingdomes, have received directions to resort to the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and propound and consult with them, or any commissioners deputed by them, in all occasions which may further the so much desired reformation in ecclesiasticall matters in this Church and kingdome, and a nearer conjunction betwixt both Churches. In performance whereof, Master Stephen Marshall, and Master Philip Nye, ministers of God's Word, and men of approved faithfulness and abilities in their function, both members of this assembly of divines here congregated and sitting, are appointed to assist and advise the same committee in such things as shall concerne this Church. And the two Houses do hereby recommend the committees and divines afore mentioned to the reverend Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to be by them received with favour, and credited in those things which they, or any three or more of them, shall propound to them.

It is likewise desired, that that reverend Assembly will, according to their former promise and resolution, send to the Assembly here such number of godly and learned divines, as in their wisdom they think most expedient for the furtherance of this work, which so much concernes the honour of God, the prosperity and peace of the two Churches of England and Scotland; and which must needs have a great influence in procuring a more safe and prosperous condition to other reformed churches abroad. And that their endeavours may be more effectuall, the two Houses do make this request to them, with their authority, advice, and exhortation, so far as belongs to them, to stir up that nation to send some competent forces, in aid of this Parliament and kingdome, against the many armies of the Popish and Prelaticall party and their adherents, now in arms for the ruine and destruction of the Reformed religion, and all the professors thereof. In all which they shall do that which will be pleasing to God, whose cause it is, and likewise safe and advantageous to their own Church and kingdome, who cannot securely enjoy the great blessings of religion, peace, and

libertie in that kingdome, if this Church and kingdome, by the prevailing violence of that partie, shall bee brought to ruine and destruction.

JO. BROWNE, *Cleric. Parliamentorum.*

HENR. ELSYNGE, *Cler. Parl. D. Com.*

A Letter from some Brethren of the Ministerie in the Kirk of England to the Assembly.

REVEREND AND BELOVED,

The experience which we have had of your forwardnesse in receiving, and faithfulness in weighing our former addresses, hath given us abundant encouragement to take hold upon this present opportunitie of breathing out something of our sorrowes, which your love and our necessity command us to represent to your consideration and compassion. Much we know we may commit to the wisdom and fidelity of our brethren these messengers, to impart unto you concerning our miserable condition, and unto them shall leave the most. Your own nationall, but specially Christian interest, will not permit you to hide your eyes from the bleeding condition of your poor distressed brethren in England, should neither letters nor messengers be sent unto you; but messengers coming, we should at once neglect ourselves, should we not thus a little ease our burdened hearts by pouring them out into your bosomes, and seem ungratefull to you, of whose readinesse to suffer with us, and do for us, we have had so great and ample testimonies.

Surely if ever a poor nation were upon the edge of a most desperate precipice, if ever a poor church were ready to be swallowed up by Satan and his instruments, we are that nation, we are that church. And, in both respects, by so much the more miserable, by how much we expected not a preservation onely, but an augmentation also, of happinesse in the one, and glory in the other. We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of healing, and behold trouble! Our God, who in his former judgements was a moth and rottenesse, (and yet had of late begun to send us health and cure,) is now turned into a lion to us, and threatens to rend the very cawle of our hearts; from above he hath sent a fire into our bones, and it prevails against us; from our own bowels he hath called forth and strengthened an adversarie against us, a generation of brutish, hellish men, the rod of his anger, and the staff of his indignation, under whose cruelties we bleed, and, if present mercy step not in, we die. "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are all thy judgements!" But, O the more then barbarous carriages of our enemies, where ever God gives any of his hidden ones up into their hands, we need not expresse it unto you, who knows the inveterate and deadly malice of the Antichristian faction against the members of our Lord Jesus! And it is well we need not expresse it unto you; for in truth we cannot. Your own thoughts may tell you better then any words of ours, what the mercie of Papists is toward the ministers and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the Lord knows we are not troubled so much with their rage against us, or our own miseries and dangers; but that which breaks our hearts is, the danger we behold the Protestant religion, and all the reformed churches in at this time, through that too great and formidable strength the Popish faction is now arrived at. If our God will lay our bodies as the ground, and as the street under their foot, and poure out our bloud as dust before their fury, the wil of the Lord be done. Might our bloud be a sacrifice to ransom the rest of the saints or Church of Christ from Antichristian fury, we would offer it up upon this service gladly. But we know their rage is insatiable, and will not be quenched with our bloods—immortall, and will not die with us—armed against us, not as men, but as Christians, but as Protestants, but as men desiring to reform ourselves, and to draw ourselves and others yet nearer unto God. And if God gave us up to be devoured by this rage, it will take the more strength and courage (at least) to attempt the like against all the Protestant and Reformed churches. In a deeper sense of this extream danger, threatening us and you, and all the churches, then we can expresse, we have made this addresse unto you, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, humbly imploring your most fervent prayers to the God that hears prayers; who (should we judge by providences) seems to be angry with our prayers, (though we trust he doth but seem so, and though he kill us, yet will we trust in him,) Oh, give

us the brotherly aide of your re-inforced tears and prayers, that the blessings of truth and peace which our prayers alone have not obtained, yours conjoynd may. And give us, reverend and much honoured in our Lord, your advices what remains for us further to doe, for the making of our own and the kingdome's peace with God. We have lien in the dust before him, we have poured our hearts in humiliation to him, we have in sincerity endeavoured to reform ourselves, and no lesse sincerely desired, studied, laboured the publick Reformation; neverthesse, the Lord hath not yet turned himself from the fiercenesse of his anger. And be pleased to advise us further what may be the happiest course for the uniting of the Protestant partie more firmly, that we may all serve God with one consent, and stand up against Antichrist as one man, that our God, who now hides himself from his people, may return unto us, delight in us, scatter and subdue his and our enemies, and cause his face to shine upon us. The Lord prosper you and preserve us, so that the great work of these latter ages may be finished to his honour, and our own and the Church's happinesse, through Christ Jesus.

Subscribed by very many hands.

Sess. 9, August 11, 1643.—Act against Burialls, and hinging of Honours, &c. in Kirks.

The Generall Assembly, considering the great abuse of burying within kirks wherein God's publick worship is exercised, notwithstanding diverse acts of this Kirk, prohibiting the same; and that through toleration thereof, other abuses, in hinging of pensils and brods, affixing of honours and arms, and such like scandalous monuments in the Kirk hath crept in: Therefore, for remedy hereof, do hereby ratifie and approve the former acts and constitutions made against burials in kirks; and inhibites and discharges all persons, of whatsoever qualitie, to burie any deceased person within the body of the kirk, where the people meet for hearing of the Word and administration of the Sacraments; and also inhibites them to hing pensils or brods, to affixe honours or arms, or to make any such like monuments to the honour or remembrance of any deceased person, upon walls, or other places within the kirk where the publick worship of God is exercised, as said is.

Sess. 10, August 12, 1643.—Act anent reposition of Ministers deposed by Superiour Judicatories.

The Generall Assembly, considering that sentences of superiour judicatories of the Kirk should stand effectuell, whill they be taken away by themselves, and that they should not be made void and ineffectuell by inferiour judicatories: Therefore, discharges all Provinciall Assemblies to repon any minister deposed by the Generall Assembly; and all Presbyteries to repon any ministers deposed either by Generall or Provincial Assemblies; and declares and ordains that all such sentences of reposition by these inferiour judicatories, *respectivè*, shall be null in themselves; and that the sentences of deposition by the superiour judicatories, *respectivè*, shall stand valid and effectuell notwithstanding thereof.

Sess. 11, August 14, 1643.—Act against Masters who have Servants that Prophane the Lord's Day.

The General Assembly declares, that the acts made against salmond-fishing upon the Sabbath, or against any other labour upon the Lord's day, to be not only against servants who actually work, but also that the samine should be extended against masters whose hired servants they are.

Sess. 12, August 15, 1643.—Act for preparing the Directorie for the Worship of God.

The Assembly, considering how convenient it is that all the ministers of the particular kirks within this kingdome, in their administration keep unity and uniformity in the substance and right ordering of all the parts of the publick worship of God,

and that all the particular kirks, by the same unity and uniformitie, testifie their unanimous consent against all schisme and division, unto which these times, through the working of Satan and his instruments against the propagation of the Gospel of peace, are so inclineable; doth ordain that a Directorie for Divine Worship, with all convenient diligence, be framed and made ready, in all the parts thereof, against the next Generall Assembly, to be held in the year 1644. And for this end, that such as shall be nominate by this Assembly shall, immediatly after the rising of the Assembly, set themselves apart (so far as may be) from their particular callings, and with all diligence and speed go about this so publick, so pious, and so profitable a work. And when they have brought their endeavours and labours about this Directorie to an end, that it be put into the hands of the commissioners of the Generall Assembly to be revised, and thereafter by them sent in severall copies to all the particular Synods, to be held in April and May, that the samine being reported with their consent, or with their observations, notes, and animadversions to the Generall Assembly, it may in end, after their full triall and approbation, by order and authority from them, be received and practised by all the ministers and particular kirks. And for preserving of peace and brotherly unity in the mean while, till the Directorie, by universall consent of the whole Kirk, be framed, finished, and concluded, the Assembly forbiddeth, under the pain of the censures of the Kirk, all disputation by word or writing, in private or publick, about different practices in such things as have not been formerly determined by this Kirk, and all condemning one of another in such lawfull things as have been universally received, and by perpetuall custome practised by the most faithfull ministers of the Gospell, and opposers of corruptions in this Kirk, since the first beginning of reformation to these times; and doth exhort and command that all endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that all beginnings of separation, all scandall and division, be by all means avoided; and that against envying, and strife, and faction, and glorying in men, every one go before another in the duties of love, and so fulfill the law of Christ; that continuing in one spirit and one minde, and fighting together through the faith of the Gospell, we may mutually aide, strengthen, and comfort one another, in all pastorall and Christian employments, better resist the common adversaries, edifie one another in the knowledge and fear of God, and the more acceptably, and with the greater blessing, serve the Lord, who hath done so great things for us.

Propositions from the English Commissioners presented this day to the Assembly.

We, the Commissioners appointed by both Houses of the Parliament of England, being commanded by them (as we have already declared) to desire the reverend Assembly of Scotland seriously to lay to heart the present estate of their sister Church and kingdome of England, and not onely to assist with their prayers in their straits, but also, by such reasonable and effectuall means as to themselves shall seem meet, to further and expedite the assistance now desired by both Houses from the kingdome of Scotland, and a more strict union with them; have thought fit, in pursuance of the commands received from both Houses of Parliament, to communicate to this Assembly the paper which to this purpose we have lately delivered to the honourable Convention of Estates in this kingdome, that so this reverend Assembly might be the better enabled to contribute their best assistance toward the furthering and expediting of the same. Wherein we assure our selves of their ready and willing affections, considering the great service they may do to God, and the great honour may redound to themselves, in becoming the instruments of a glorious reformation, not onely through this Iland, but from thence possibly to be spread to other Churches, now oppressed under the Antichristian bondage, and tyrannie of the Popish and Prelaticall faction. We will not say there lies any obligation upon this Church and kingdome to comply with the desires of the two Houses of Parliament, though we might call to minde that God, by the hand of the Church and kingdome of England, did once reach forth assistance and aid unto this nation, and hath since used them as a help to that blessed reformation it now enjoyes. And who knoweth whether the wise providence of God hath not suffered this Church and kingdome to be tempted thereby, to make them

the more sensible of the present miseries of their brethren, and likewise given them a good issue with the tentation, that they might be made a means of our deliverance? We shall not need to offer any grounds of prudence to invite them hereunto, who have already prevented us in the acknowledgement of what might be said of that kinde, in the advice presented by the commissioners of the Generall Assembly, July 6, 1643, unto the Convention of Estates, expressing, as one remedie of the present dangers of this Church and kingdome, their earnest desire of renewing the league and association with England, for the defence of religion against the common enemy, and of further extending the same against Prelacie and Popish ceremonies, for uniformity in externall worship, and church government. And we hope that the same God who hath put these desires into the hearts of both kingdomes, will make use of this present opportunity to knit them both to himself and each other in a most strict and durable union, and thereby the more firmly to establish truth and peace in both nations. Howsoever, this which we have done, in discharge of our duty, will afford the comfort of a good conscience in our greatest distresses, and give us ground to expect deliverance some way or other, from the manifold wisdom and power of God, who, though men and means fail, will not cast off his people, nor forsake his inheritance. We have onely this to adde further, that we are commanded by both Houses to let this reverend Assembly know, that it is their earnest desire, that what other propositions may be thought fit to be added and concluded by this Assembly, whereby the assistance and union betwixt the two nations may be made more beneficiall and effectuell for the securing of religion and libertie, should be offered to us, and taken to our speedy consideration.

WILLIAM BOND, *Secr. Com.*

August 15, 1643.

The Paper before mentioned delivered, August 12, to the Convention, and this day to the Assembly.

We, the Commissioners appointed by both Houses of the Parliament of England, are, by our instructions, commanded to put their brethren of Scotland in minde, that the Popish and Prelaticall faction that began with them about the year 1638 and 1639, and then intended to make way to the ruine of the kingdome of England by theirs, have not abated any part of their malice toward the nation and Church of Scotland, nor are at all departed from their designe of corrupting and altering religion through the whole Iland, though they have inverted the manner of their proceeding, conceiving now that they have an easier way to destroy them, if they may first prevail over the Parliament and kingdome of England. In which respect it is the desire of both Houses that the two nations may be strictly united, for their mutuall defence, against the Papists and Prelaticall faction, and their adherents in both kingdomes, and not to lay down arms till those their implacable enemies shall be disarmed, and subjected to the authority and justice of Parliament in both kingdomes respectively. And as an effectuell mean herunto, they desire their brethren of Scotland to raise a considerable force of horse and foot for their aide and assistance, to be forthwith sent against the Papists, Prelaticall faction, and Malignants, now in arms in the kingdome of England.

And for the better encouragement of the kingdome of Scotland to this necessary and so much desired union, we are, by both Houses of Parliament, authorized to assure their brethren, that if they shall be annoyed or endangered by any force or army, either from England or any other place, the Lords and Commons of England will assist them with a proportionable strength of horse and foot to what their brethren shall now afford them, to be sent into Scotland for the defence of that kingdome. And they will maintain a guard of ships at their own charge upon the coast of Scotland, for the securing of that kingdome from the invasion of Irish rebells or other enemies, during such time as the Scottish army shall be employed in the defence of the kingdome of England. And to the end that nothing might be wanting in the Parliament and kingdome of England to facilitate this work, (wherein the true reformed religion, not onely in these two kingdomes, but throughout all Europe, is so highly concerned,)

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we are farther authorized to consider with their brethren, the Estates and kingdome of Scotland, of what other articles or propositions are fit to be added and concluded, whereby this assistance and union betwixt the two nations may be made more beneficial and effectually for the securitie of religion and libertie in both kingdomes.

All which being taken into the serious and Christian consideration of the Right Honourable the Lords and others of the Convention of the Estates of Scotland, we hope there will not need many arguments to perswade and excite them to give their consent, and that with all convenient speed, to these desires of both Houses of the Parliament of England; seeing now they have so fully declared, as by what they have done already, so, by what they are yet desirous to do, that the true state of this cause and quarrell is religion, in the reformation whereof they are and have been so forward and zealous, as that there is not any thing expressed unto them by their brethren of Scotland, in their former or latter declarations, which they have not seriously taken to heart, and seriously endeavoured to effect, (notwithstanding the subtle, malicious, and industrious oppositions,) that so the two kingdomes might be brought into a near conjunction in one form of Church government, one Directorie of Worship, one Catechisme, &c., and the foundation laid of the utter extirpation of Popery and Prelacie out of both kingdomes; the most readie and effectually means whereunto is now conceived to be, that both nations enter into a strict union and league, according to the desires of the two Houses of Parliament.

And to induce the perswasion of this, (if there were cause,) we might observe, that, in the many declarations made by the Generall Assembly or States of Scotland to their brethren of England, there have been sundry expressions, manifesting the great necessitie that both kingdomes, for the securitie of their religion and liberties, should joyn in this strict union against the Papists, Prelats, and their adherents—as also in the endeavour of a near conjunction between the Churches of both nations; the apprehension and foresight of which hath caused the Popish and Prelaticall faction, in forreigne parts as well as in his Majestie's dominions, strictly and powerfully to combine themselves to the hinderance of this so necessary work, and the universall suppression of the true Protestant religion in Europe; a course not much different from that which they took in the year 1585, when the wisdom and zeal of this nation to counter-myne so wicked a conspiracie, and from the due sense of the mutuall interest of these two kingdomes, in religion and libertie, found a necessity of entering into a league of this nature, as well considering that thereby no lesse safetie might be expected to both nations then danger by forbearing the same. And though we doubt not but in so necessary and so good a work many difficulties may arise to interrupt and retard the same, yet we are as confident, that the heartie and brotherly affection of this nation to the Parliament and kingdome of England will easily break through them; and the rather because, in the like cases of difficultie and danger, not only at the time of the league above mentioned, but before, and likewise since, when any opportunity hath offered it self particularly, during the sitting of this present Parliament, the kingdome of England hath been very forward and ready to lay to heart the dangers of the kingdome of Scotland as their own, and to decline no means within the reach of their power for the redresse or prevention of the same.

WILLIAM BOND, *Secr. Com.*

August 12, 1643.

Sess. 13, August 16, 1643.—Recommendation to Presbyteries and Universities anent Students that have the Irish Language.

The Assembly, considering the lamentable condition of the people in the Highlands, where there are many that gets not the benefite of the Word, in respect there are very few preachers that can speak the Irish language; do, for remeid thereof, think good, that young students who have the Irish tongue be trained up at colleges in letters, especially in the studies of divinitie; and, to this effect, recommend to presbyteries and universities to preferre any hopefull students that have the language aforesaid to bursaries, that they, by their studies, in processe of time, attaining to

knowledge, and being enabled for the Ministerie, may be sent forth for preaching the Gospel in these Highland parts, as occasions shall require.

Sess. 14, August 17, 1643.—The Letter from the Assembly of Divines in the Kingdome of England.

To the Right Reverend the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Right Reverend and dearly beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

We, the Assembly of Divines, and others, called, and now sitting by authority of both Houses of Parliament, to be consulted by them in matters of religion, have received from the Honourable House of Commons a speciall order, (dated the 3d of this instant August,) recommending it to us to write a Letter to the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking notice of the pious and good expeditions to this Church and State, certified in the late answer of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, from their meeting at Edinburgh, the 17th of July 1643. And, further, to desire them to possesse the people of that kingdome with our condition, and to encourage them to our assistance in this cause of religion. And having, with that order, received and read the said answer directed to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, we cannot sufficiently expresse the great content and comfort unto which it hath raised us in the midst of the sad and calamitous condition under which we lie.

It is no small refreshing to our mourning spirits to finde, that yet our God hath not left us wholly comfortlesse, nor cast us so far out of his sight, as having made us sick with smiting, that should be verified of us, " Lover and friend hast thou put far from us," and that no man should turn aside to ask how we do; but that we finde so many of the churches of Christ, and, above them all, our dearest brethren of Scotland, so far to take to heart our extremities, as to sit in the dust with us, and so to look upon our adversities, as being themselves also in the body.

And, as we cannot render thanks sufficient unto our God, for remembering such mercie in the midst of so much wrath, so we embrace, with all chearfulnesse, this opportunitie of thankfull acknowledgement of the great debt which your love doth continually lay upon not us alone, but upon this whole kingdome, in the free and full expressions of your care, piety, and zeal, and of like affections of that whole nation, to assist and concurre with the Parliament here, by all good and lawfull means, for settling of religion in godly unity and uniformitie throughout all his Majestie's dominions, against all the designes, power, and malice, of bloudie Papists and the Prelaticall faction, with all their malignant adherents, the common enemies of reformation, truth, and peace.

We are likewise much ingadged to the great vigilancie and travels of the honourable Convention of the Estates of Scotland, in contributing their brotherly advice, and for their readinesse to give assistance for recovering and settling the peace of this kingdome, against the devices, power, and practices of the enemies of religion and the publick good, whereof some hints are given in that answer, and of which, we doubt not, but the Honourable Houses of Parliament will be so sensible as to give such a return as becomes them; for they, better knowing than we do the depth of the evils under which this nation now groaneth, and the further dangers imminent, will be more able to value and improve the great affliction and wisdom of their brethren, in points of so high and generall concernement, for the safetie and glory of the King's Majestie, and of all his kingdomes, and are more fit to take notice of advices of that kinde in reference to the civil state; which, therefore, we wholly leave with them.

But as for the many prudent, pious, and seasonable admonitions which concerne our Assembly, the good Lord reward (for we cannot) seven fold into your bosomes all the good, which you have laboured to procure unto the house of our God; and blessed be his name, who hath put such a thing as this into the hearts of our Parliament, to cleanse the House of the Lord of all the uncleannesse that is in it, by impure doctrine, worship, or discipline.

Nor can we, in the depth of all our sufferings and sorrows, withhold our hearts from rejoicing in the wonderful goodnes of God toward this kingdome, in that he hath let us see the gracious fruit of your effectuall prayers and teares, as well as of our own endeavours this way, in bringing together this Assembly, although in a very troublous time, whereby we may have better opportunity more fully to poure out our soules jointly and together to our God, for healing of this now miserable Church and nation; to consider thoroughly for what more especially the land mourneth; and how we may be most usefull to our great God and Master, Jesus Christ—in contributing somewhat to the vindicating of his precious truth, many wayes corrupted, through the craft of men, that have lyen in wait to deceive—in the seeking out of a right way of worshipping our God, according to his own heart—in promoting the power of godlinesse in the hearts and lives of all his people, and in laying forth such a discipline as may be most agreeable to God's holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of this Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland, (highly honoured by us,) and other the best reformed churches abroad, that so, to the utmost of our power, we may exalt him that is the only Lord over the Church, his own house, in all his offices, and present this Church as a chaste virgin unto Christ.

It is a timely and savourie prayer which you have put up at the throne of grace, touching the due managing of the proceedings in this Assembly, and that with straight intentions we may all seek the truth in everything, which, by the blessing of God upon our labours, must needs produce all those blessings which your worthie commissioners mention. And now, for your comfort as well as our own encouragement, we desire you to take notice of the gracious answer of the God that heareth prayer unto your fervent cryes. For beside our own particular addresses and secret vows to our God to be faithfull, (with disdain of all baits of avarice and ambition,) it hath pleased the Divine Providence so to direct both the Honourable Houses of Parliament, to take care of preventing all obliquitie in our proceedings, and to stop the mouthes of all that watch for their and our haltings, and are apt maliciously to traduce both, (as if we were so restrained by them in our votes and resolutions, as to be bound up to the sense of others, and to carry on private designes in a servile way,) that the Houses have tendered to us, and we have all most readily taken a solemne and serious protestation, in the presence of Almighty God, to maintain nothing in this Assembly, touching doctrine, but what we are perswaded in our consciences to be the truth; nor in matters of discipline, but what we conceive to conduce most to the glory of God, and the good and peace of his Church; which doth not only secure the members against fettering of their judgements or votes, but engage them to the use of all freedome becoming the integrity of conscience, the weight of the cause, the gravitie and honour of such an Assembly. It is likewise a great consolation, that our God hath put it into your hearts to designe some godly and learned brethren to put in their sickles with us into this harvest, which is so great, and requires so many labourers; for which, as we heartily return thanks, so we earnestly pray the Lord to open a way to their timely coming hither, and do assure them of all testimonies of respect, love, and the right hand of fellowship, who shall undertake a journey so tedious, and now so perillous, to joyne with us in the work, when it shall please the Honourable Houses of Parliament to invite them thereunto.

It remaines that we should now spread before you our calamities, dangers, and fears of further evils, not only drawing toward us, but even threatening you also, and crave your compassionate aids in all wayes becoming the servants of Jesus Christ. But your commissioners have so fully declared your certain knowledge and deep sense of them, that they have left us no room for enlarging our selves in this particular to brethren so full of bowels and zeal. And they have sufficiently intimated unto the Honourable Houses that you are well aware how often the common enemies of both kingdomes have consulted together, with one consent, to cut off both the one and the other from being a nation; and that the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites of Moab, and the Hagarens, Geball, Ammon, and Amalek, the cursed Papists, and their implacable and bloody abettors here, do still retain the same malice, and carry on the same designe against religion and perfect reformation even in your kingdome,

happily rescued from their former tyrannies, as well as in this of scorched England, now in the furnace; only they have varied the scene, pouring out all their fury upon us at the present: that so having once troden us under, as mire in the streets, they may afterward more easily (which God avert) set their proud and impure feet upon your necks also. Wherefore, with the good leave and favour of the Honourable Houses of Parliament, we shall now spare the further exciting of you to that which we doubt not of your forwardnesse, by all lawfull and meet means, to promote with all your might; namely, the possessing the good people of that kingdome, (of whose willing minde and readinesse you have already given ample testimony,) touching our condition, and to encourage them to our assistance in this cause of religion.

And now, remembring without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, with all due acknowledgments of the precious effects of your prayers, we most humbly and earnestly desire that the same breathings of the Spirit in you may still continue, and (if possible) more frequently and fervently ascend to your God and our God, not only for removall of outward pressures and the visitation of the sword, that hath already learned to eat much of our flesh, but also for the speciall assistance and protection of the Father of lights, in this great work unto which we are now called, and wherein we already finde many and potent adversaries; that seeing the plummet is now in the hands of our Zerubbabels, all mountaines may become plains, and they may bring forth the capstone of the Lord's house with shouting, crying, Grace, grace unto it; and that how weak and contemptible builders soever we be, the Lord would enable us to build with them, that none may have cause to despise the day of our small beginnings, nor to stop our progresse in the work which he hath given us to do. And as for us, who cannot but take notice of the extraordinary employments unto which you are called in your great Assembly, now also sitting, God forbid that we should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you, that the Lord may enable you to be wise master-builders, preserve your peace alwayes by all means, and make you stedfast, unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, to the praise of the glory of his grace, and to the further benefit and comfort of the whole Church of God, but more especially of this our afflicted ark, now wasted into the midst of a sea of miseries, and tossed with tempests, untill our wise and gracious God, by the furtherance of your prayers and brotherly endeavours, shall cause it to rest upon the mountains of Ararat, which may take away our fears, as well as put an end to our present sufferings, and give you to rejoyce with us, that now mourn for us.

Subscribed by your most loving brethren, highly prying the graces of God in you, and that are your servants for Jesus' sake, in the name of the whole Assembly.

WILLIAM TUISSE, <i>Prolocutor</i> ,	} <i>of the Assembly.</i>
JOHN WHITE, <i>Assessor</i> ,	
CORNELIUS BURGESS, <i>Assessor</i> ,	
HENRY ROBOROUGH,	
ADONIRAM BYFIELD,	
	} <i>Scribes,</i>

Westminster, August 4, 1643.

The Result of the Debates and Consultations of the Committees of the Convention of Estates and Generall Assembly, appointed to meet with the Commissioners of the Parliament of England.

August 17, 1643.

The Committees of the Convention of Estates of Scotland, and of the Generall Assembly, being appointed to meet with the Commissioners of the two Houses of the Parliament of England, upon the papers delivered in by the said commissioners unto the Convention of Estates, and unto the Generall Assembly, upon the 12th and 15th of this instant, 1643, concerning the desires of both Houses for a near and strict union to be entered into by the two kingdomes. And it being declared at the said meeting with what sensible affections the Generall Assembly and Convention did receive the

desires above mentioned, and how beneficiall it would be for the more firme settlement of the said union, that a Covenant should be entred into by both nations; and this forme thereof being by all the foresaid persons taken into most serious debate and consideration, and agreed unto; it was thereupon resolved by them, that it should be presented to the Generall Assembly, to the Convention of Estates of Scotland, and to the two Houses of the Parliament of England, by their respective committees and commissioners, that it might with all speed receive their respective resolutions.

(Subscribed)

J^A. PRIMEROSE.

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WILLIAM BOND, *Sec. Com.*

The League and Covenant above mentioned, being sent with the Commissioners of this Assembly to the Parliament of England, and Assembly of Divines in that kingdom, to be received and approven there, is to be printed at the return thereof.

*Approbation of the League and Covenant above mentioned.**

The Assembly, having recommended unto a committee appointed by them to joyne with the Committee of the Honourable Convention of Estates, and the Commissioners of the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, for bringing the kingdomes to a more near conjunction and union, received from the aforesaid committees the Covenant above mentioned, as the result of their consultations; and having taken the same, as a matter of so publick concernment and of so deep importance doth require, unto their gravest consideration, did, with all their hearts, and with the beginnings of the feelings of that joy which they did finde in so great measure upon the renovation of the Nationall Covenant of this Kirk and kingdom, All with one voice approve and embrace the same, as the most powerfull meane, by the blessing of God, for settling and preserving the true Protestant religion, with perfect peace in his Majestie's dominions, and propagating the same to other nations, and for establishing his Majestie's throne to all ages and generations; and, therefore, with their best affections, recommend the same to the Honourable Convention of Estates, that being examined and approved by them, it may be sent with all diligence to the kingdom of England; that being received and approven there, the same may be, with publick humiliation, and all religious and answerable solemnitie, sworn and subscribed by all true professors of the reformed religion, and all his Majestie's good subjects in both kingdomes.

Sess. Ult., August 19, 1643.—The Assemblies humble desires to his Majestie anent the Lists for Presentations, with a Recommendation to Presbyteries.

The Assembly, considering the difficultie of obtaining six able and well qualified persons, to be put into a list to his Majestie, for every vaiking kirk at his Majestie's presentation: Therefore, do most earnestly recommend to his Majestie's Commissioner to represent their humble desires to his Majestie, that he would be pleased to accept of a list of three; as also, conform to the desire of the last Assembly at St Andrews, that his Majestie would be pleased to accept of any one qualified man who shall be able to speak the Irish language, for kirks vaiking in the Highlands; which the Commissioner's Grace promised to do with the first conveniencie.

And withall, his Grace representing to the Assembly that he conceived his Majestie had already done more, and yet would do more, for satisfaction to the desires of this Kirk anent patronages, nor any other patron—and, therefore, that it were convenient that all other patrons were earnestly desired to follow his Majestie's example—and the Assembly, thinking it very necessary that some generall course were set down for providing and planting of vaiking kirks, whereby all occasions of contests and differences amongst patrons, presbyteries, and paroches may be removed: Therefore, the Assembly recommend to every Presbyterie to consult and advise upon the

* The League and Covenant here referred to was drawn up by Mr Alexander Henderson.—*Ed.* 1843.

best wayes and means for effectuating hereof, and to report the results of their consultations hereintill to the next Assembly.

[Here follow, in the old edition, certain "Overtures anent Witchcraft and Charming," &c.]

Commission for Ministers to go to Ireland.

The Generall Assembly, having received a Petition, subscribed by a very great number in the North of Ireland, intimating their deplorable condition, through want of the ministry of the Gospel, occasioned by the tyrannie of the prelates, and the sword of the rebels, and desiring some ministers, especially such as had been chased from them by the persecution of the prelates, and some others to be added, either to be sent presently over to reside among them, or declared transportable, that upon invitation from them they might go and settle there; together with a letter from the Vicount of Airds to that same effect: All which the Assembly hath taken to their serious consideration, being most heartily willing to sympathize with every member of Christ his body, although never so remote, much more with that plantation there, which, for the most part, was a branch of the Lord his vine planted in this land. In which solicitude, as they would be loath to usurpe without their own bounds, or stretch themselves beyond their own measure, so they dare not be wanting to the enlargement of Christ's kingdome, where so loud a cry of so extreme necessity could not but stir up the bowels of Christian compassion. And although they conceive that the present unsettled condition both of Church and State in that land will not suffer them (as yet) to loose any, to make any constant abode there, yet they have resolved to send over some for the present exigent, till the next Generall Assembly, by courses, to stay three moneth allanerly. And, therefore, do hereby authorize and give commission to the persons following, to wit, Master William Cockburne, minister at Kirkmichell, and Master Matthew Mackaill, minister at Carmanoch, for the first three moneths, beginning upon the 8 of September next; Master George Hutchison, minister at Calmonell, and Master Hugh Henderson, minister at Dalry, for the next three moneths, beginning the 8 of December; Master William Adair, minister at Air, and Master John Weir, minister at Dalsersfe, for the third three moneths, beginning the 8 of March 1644; and Master James Hamilton, minister at Dumfreis, and Master John Macclellane, minister at Kirkubright, for the last three moneths, beginning the 8 of June, the said year, 1644; to repair unto the North of Ireland, and there to visit, instruct, comfort, and encourage the scattered flocks of Christ; to employ themselves to their uttermost, with all faithfulness and singleness of heart, in planting and watering, according to the direction of Jesus Christ, and according to the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk in all things. And, if need be, (with the concurrence of such of the ministers as are there,) to try and ordain such as shall be found qualified for the ministry; giving charge unto the persons foresaids, in the sight of God, that in doctrine, in worship, in discipline, and in their daily conversation, they study to approve themselves as the ministers of Jesus Christ, and that they be countable to the Generall Assembly of this Kirk in all things. And in case of any of the above mentioned ministers be impeded by sickness, or otherwayes necessarily detained from this service, the Assembly ordaines the commissioners residing at Edinburgh for the publick affairs of the Kirk, to nominate in their place well qualified men, who hereby are authorized to undertake the foresaid employment, as if they had been expressly nominate in the face of the Assembly. And this, although possibly it shall not fully satisfie the large expectation of their brethren in Ireland, yet the Assembly is confident they will take in good part at this time that which is judged most convenient for the present condition, even a mite out of their own not very great plentie to supply the present necessity; requiring of them no other recompence but that they, in all cheerfulness, may embrace and make use of the message of salvation, and promising to enlarge their indebted bountie at the next Assembly, as they shall finde the work of the Lord there to require. In the mean while, wishing that these who are sent may come with the full blessing of the Gospel of peace, recommends them, their labours, and these to whom they are sent, to the rich blessing of the great Sheepherd of the flock.

Act against Ministers haunting with Excommunicate Persons.

If any minister haunt the company of an excommunicate person, contrair to the lawes of this Kirk, the said minister, for the first fault, shall be suspended from his ministerie by his Presbyterie during their pleasure; and for the second fault be deprived. And in case the Presbyteries be negligent herein, the Provinciaill Assembly shall censure the Presbyterie thus negligent.

Act anent an Order for using Civill Execution against Excommunicate Persons.

The Assembly, taking to their consideration an article in the heads and propositions sent to the Assembly held at Edinburgh, in August 1573, by the Lord Regent's Grace, and allowed by that Assembly, whereof the tenour followes: "It is resolved that the executions of the sentence of excommunication against persons excommunicate, after the space of fourtie dayes past, shall be presented to the Lord Thesaurer, or his clerk, who thereupon shall raise letters, by deliverance of the Lords of Session, to charge the persons excommunicate to satisfie the Kirk, and obtain themselves absolved, under the pain of rebellion; and, in case they passe to the horne, to cause their escheits be taken up, and also to raise and cause execute letters of caption against them; and these to be done at the King's Majestie's charges:" do ratifie and approve the said article. And, farther, that the intention of the said article may be the better effectuate, doth also ordain, that every Presbyterie cause send to the Procurator or Agent of the Kirk the foresaid execution, that is, an minute or note of the sentences of excommunication within their bounds, bearing the time and cause thereof; and that under the hands of the Moderatour or clerk of the Presbyterie, or of the minister who pronounced the sentence; that the samine may be delivered to his Majestie's Thesaurer, Advocate, or Agent, to cause letters of horning and caption be raised and execute, and other diligence to be used against the excommunicat persons in manner foresaid, and that all other civill action and diligence may be used against them warranted and provided by Acts of Parliament or Secret Councill made thereanent: And that particular account be craved hereof in every Generall Assembly.

*To the King's Most Excellent Majestie, the humble Answer of the Nationall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland.**

Although the many and ample testimonies of your Majestie's royall favour and bountie towards this Kirk and kingdome, be living and lasting monuments to hold all your Majestie's good subjects, and us most of all, in remembrance of that duty which we owe to your Majestie, our great benefactour, never, by any length of time, to be deleted out of our minds; yet, when we remember even of conscience we owe honour and subjection unto your Majestie, as our dread soveraigne, as well in your Majestie's absence as presence, we finde our obligation to be religious, and thereby much increased; and, therefore, have we at this time, in all our consultations and conclusions, of which some have been of more than ordinary weight and concernment, in answer to certain propositions made unto us by the Commissioners of the Houses of Parliament of your Majestie's kingdome of England, and some reverend divines assisting them, fixed our eyes and thoughts upon your Majestie's honour and happinesse, with no other and with no lesse intention, than if we had been honoured by your Majestie's royall person in our Assembly. And in like manner, have given such instructions to some ministers and others, to be sent unto the Assembly of Divines now in England, as, next unto the honour of God, and the good of religion, may most serve for your Majestie's preservation, and the peace of your kingdomes; concerning which, the commissioners of the last Generall Assembly have so fully exprest their humble thoughts and desires, in their supplication and remonstrance sent unto your Majestie, that we need not adde any thing, and your Majestie's times and affairs forbid all repetition. We do onely, in all humilitie, beseech your Majestie to judge of us and our proceedings by the nature and necessity of our vocation, and the

* This Answer was drawn up by Mr Henderson.—Ed. 1843.

rules prescribed in the Word of God for our direction, and not by uncertain rumours, and ungrounded reports of such men as have not the fear of God before their eyes. And do earnestly pray to God Almighty, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, to incline your Majestie's heart to the counsellis of truth and peace, to direct your government for the good of your people, the punishment of malefactours, and praise of well-doers; that this fire of unnaturall and unchristian warre being extinguished, the people of God, your Majestie's good subjects, may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlinesse and honestie.

*The Answer of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland to the Declaration of the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England.**

The Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, having received a declaration from the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, by their committees and commissioners now residing here, have thought good to make knowne unto the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that all the members of this Assembly, and others well-affected here, do, with most thankfull respects, take speciall notice of the expressions which they have been pleased to make in the aforementioned declaration, not only concerning their approbation of the desires and endeavours of the Generall Assembly of this Kirk for the reformation of the Church of England, and the union of both Churches in religion and church government, but also concerning the resolution of both Houses, fully to concur with them in these pious intentions. With the same thankfulnesse and due reverence, they acknowledge the high respects expressed towards them by both Houses, in directing unto them their committees and commissioners, assisted by two reverend divines, and in desiring some of the godly and learned of this Kirk to be sent unto the Assembly sitting there.

The Assembly doth blesse the Lord, who hath not only inspired the Houses of Parliament with desires and resolutions of the reformation of religion, but hath advanced, by severall steps and degrees, that blessed work; by which, as they shall most approve themselves to the reformed churches abroad, and to their brethren of Scotland, so shall they most powerfully draw, even from heaven, the blessings of prosperity and peace upon England. And as it is the earnest wish of their brethren here, that the true state and ground of the present difference and controversies in England may be more and more cleared to be concerning religion, and that both Houses may uncessantly prosecute that good work, first and above all other matters, giving no sleep to their eyes, nor slumber to their eyelids, until they finde out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob, whose favour alone can make their mountain strong, and whose presence in his own ordinances shall be their glory in the midst of them; so it is our confidence, that the begun reformation is of God, and not of man; that it shall increase, and not decrease; and that he to whom nothing is too hard, who can make mountaines valleyes, crooked things straight, and rough wayes smooth, shall lead along and make perfect this most wonderfull work, which shall be remembred to his glory in the Church throughout all generations.

And lest, through any defect upon the Generall Assemblies part, the work of reformation (which hitherto, to the great grief of all the godly, hath moved so slowly) should be any more retarded or interrupted, they have, according to the renewed desires of both Houses of Parliament, and their own former promises, nominated and elected Mr Alexander Henderson, Mr Robert Douglas, Mr Samuel Rutherford, Mr Robert Bailzie, Mr George Gillespie, ministers of God's Word; and John Earle of Cassills, John Lord Maitland, and Sir Archbald Johnstoun of Waristoun, ruling elders, all of them men much approved here; with commission and power to them, or any three of them, whereof two shall be ministers, to repair unto the Assembly of Divines and others of the Church of England, now sitting at Westminster, to propound, consult, treat, and conclude with them, and with any committees deputed by the Houses of Parliament, (if it shall seeme good to the Honourable Houses, in their wisdom, to depute any for that end,) in all such things as may conduce to the utter extirpation of Popery, Prelacie, heresie, schisme, superstition, and idolatrie—and for the settling of the so much desired union of this whole island in one forme of church government, one Confession of Faith, one common Catechisme, and one Directorie for

* Written by Mr Henderson.—Ed. 1843.

the Worship of God, according to the instructions which they have received, or shall receive from the commissioners of the Generall Assembly, appointed to meet at Edinburgh from time to time, with the Assemblie's power for that end. And as the Generall Assembly doth most gladly and affectionatly receive, and fully trust the committees and divines sent hither, so do they hereby commend the aforementioned commissioners, not only to the like affection and trust of the Assembly there, but also to the favour and protection of both Houses of Parliament.

And, for the further satisfaction and encouragement of their brethren in England, the whole Assembly, in their own name, and in name of all the particular churches in this kingdome whom they represent, do hereby declare, That from their zeal to the glory of God and propagation of the Gospell, from their affection to the happinesse of their native King, and of the kingdome of England, and from the sense of their own interest in the common dangers of religion, peace, and libertie, they are most willing and ready to be united and associated with their brethren in a nearer League and Solemne Covenant, for the maintenance of the truly reformed Protestant religion against Popery and Prelacie, and against all Popish and prelaticall corruptions in doctrine, discipline, worship, or church government, and for the settling and holding fast of unity and uniformity betwixt the kirks of this island and with the best reformed churches beyond sea. Which union and covenant shall, with God's assistance, be seconded by their co-operating with their brethren in the use of the best and most effectually means that may serve for so good ends; for the more speedy effectuating whereof, to the comfort and enlargement of their distressed brethren, (whose hope deferred might make their hearts to faint,) the whole Assembly, with great unanimity of judgement and expressions of much affection, have approved (for their part) such a draught and forme of a mutuall League and Covenant betwixt the kingdomes as was the result of the joint debates and consultations of the commissioners from both Houses, assisted by the two reverend divines, and of the committees deputed from the Convention of the Estates of this kingdome, and from the Generall Assembly: Expecting and wishing the like approbation thereof by the Right Honourable the Lords and Commons in Parliament, and by the reverend Assembly there, that thereafter it may be solemnly sworn and subscribed in both kingdomes, as the surest and straitest obligation to make both stand and fall together in that cause of religion and libertie.

As the Estates of this kingdome have often professed, in their former declarations, the integritie of their intentions against the common enemies of religion and libertie in both kingdomes, and their great affection to the brethren in England, by reason of so many and so near relations, so doubtlesse now, in this time of need, they will not fail to give reall proof of what before they professed. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversitie." Neither shall the Assembly, or their commissioners, be wanting in exhorting all others to their duty, or in concurring, so far as belongeth to their place and vocation, with the Estates now convened, in any lawfull and possible course which may most conduce to the good of religion and reformation, the honour and happinesse of the King's Majestie, the deliverance of their brethren of England from their present calamitous condition, and to the perpetuating of a firme and happy peace betwixt the kingdomes.

*The Assemblie's Answer to the Right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Church of England.**

Right Reverend and dearly beloved,

As the sufferings of Christ abound in you, so our heartie desire to God is, that your consolations may much more abound by Christ. The perusing of your letter produced in every one of us such a mixture of affections as were at the laying of the foundation of the Second Temple, where there was heard both shouting for joy and weeping aloud. We rejoyced that Christ our Lord had at last in that land created a new thing, in calling together, not as of before, a prelaticall convocation, to be task-masters over the people of the Lord, but an assembly of godly Divines, minding the things of the Lord, whose hearts are set to purge the defiled house

* Written by Mr R. Blair.—Ed. 1843.

of God in that land; yet this our joy was not a little allayed by the consideration of the sad and deplorable condition of that kingdome, where the high provocations of so many years, the hellish plots of so many enemies, in a nick of time, have brought in an inundation of overflowing calamities. We know you are patiently bearing the indignation of the Lord, because you have sinned against him, till he throughly plead your cause, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon, who now laugh among themselves, while you are fed with the bread of tears, and get tears to drink in great measure, being on the mountains, like the doves of the valleys, all of you mourning, every one for his iniquitie.

It is now more nor evident to all the Kirks of Christ with what implacable fury and hellish rage the bloud-thirsty Papists, as Babylon without, and the prelatie faction, the children of Edom, within, have adjoyned to themselves many malignant adherents, of time-serving Atheists, haters of holinesse, rejecters of the yoke of Christ, (to whom the morning light of reformation is as the shadow of death,) have begun to swallow up the inheritance of the Lord, and are not easily satisfied, in making deep and long furrowes on your backs. We cannot say that the loudnesse of your cry surpasseth the heavinesse of your stroake; but though "the Lord hath delivered the men, every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king, and they have smitten the land," yet "the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous;" this cloud shall speedily passe away, and a fair sunshine shall appear.

As for us, though your extreame calamitie did not threaten the ruine of our religion, peace, and liberties, as it doth most evidently, we would hate our selves, if we did not finde our hearts within us melting with compassion over you; you are engraven on the tables of our hearts, to live and die with you; we could desire that our heads were waters, and our eyes a fountain of tears, that we might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of the Lord's people; so calamitous a condition of any of the Kirks of Christ could not but be very grievous unto us; how much more shall not we stoup and fall down in the dust to embrace our dearest brethren of England, to whom we are tied in so near and tender relations. When we were but creeping out of the deep darknesse and bondage of Popery, and were almost crushed with the fury of forreigne invaders, joyned with intestine enemies, pretending the name and warrant of authority, as now your oppressours do, then did the Lord, by your fathers, send us seasonable assistance against that intended and begun bondage, both of soul and body; the repayment of which debt the Divine Providence seemeth now to require at our hands. And whereas, of late, through our security, we had fallen into a wofull relapse, and were compassed about with dreadfull dangers on all hands, while we aymed at the recovery of our former puritie and libertie, then we wanted not the large supply of your fervent prayers, and other brotherly assistance of that nation, while those who are now your malignant enemies would have swallowed us up.

These strait bonds of your ancient and late love do so possesse our hearts, that, when the motions of the Commissioners of the Honourable Houses of Parliament, and your letters, did challenge our advice and aid for defence of religion and advancement of reformation, our smoaking desires for a more strict union and uniformitie in religion betwixt both the nations did break forth into a vehement flame, in such sort, as when the draught of a League and Covenant betwixt both kingdomes for defence of religion, &c., was read in open audience, it was so unanimously and heartily embraced, with such a torrent of most affectionate expressions, as none but eye or ear witnesses can conceive; whereof the two reverend divines sent from you to us, being then present, no doubt, will give you an account. Neither was it so onely with us; but also the Honourable Convention of Estates here, with the like harmony of affectionate expressions, did entertain the same; so that we hope to be reall and constant in prosecuting the contents of this covenant. When we, in our straits, fled to the Lord, and entred in covenant with him, he owned us and our cause, rebuked and dissipated our enemies, and hitherto hath helped us, and blessed our enterprises with successe from heaven, notwithstanding our great weaknesse and unworthinesse. We trust in the Lord, that as once it was prophesied of Israel and Judah, so shall Scotland and England become one stick in

the hand of the Lord; they shall ask the way to Sion, with their faces thitherward, saying, "Come, let us joyne our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall covenant, that shall not be forgotten;" and so shall it come to passe, that the Lord's Jerusalem in this island shall be a cup of trembling, and a burthensome stone to all their enemies round about. Though now it be the time of Jacob's trouble, the Lord will deliver him out of it. Reverend and dear brethren, we conceive your case, and of all the faithfull in that land, to be no other then of a woman crying, travelling in birth, and pained till she be delivered. The great red Dragon (under whose standard the sons of Belial are fighting) is your arch-enemy. This cannot but be a time of fear and sorrow; but when the male-childe shall be brought forth, the pain shall cease, and the sorrow shall be forgotten. We are very confident in the Lord, that you will be faithful to Jesus Christ, in the work committed to you by him, in all his ordinances, and taking neither foundation, corner-stone, nor any part of the rubbish of Babell, to build the city that is called, "The Lord is there;" but, measuring all with the golden reed of the sanctuary, you may more closely be united to the best reformed Kirks, in doctrine, worship, and government, that you may grow up in him in all things which is the Head, even Christ.

And now, reverend and dear brethren, though we know that you abound in all gifts and graces, the Spirit of Jesus Christ being plentifully powred out upon you, yet, according to your desire, and the motion made by the Commissioners of the Honourable Houses of Parliament, to testifie our hearty sympathie with you in the work of the Lord, we have nominate and elected some godly and learned of this Church to repair to your Assembly. We doubt nothing of your hearty embracing them in the Lord, and their diligent concurrence with you in advancing that great work.

Not onely the common danger we are under, but the conscience of our duty to his suffering people, layeth bonds on us frequently to present you, and that blessed work of reformation in your hands, to the throne of grace, that the God of all grace, who will call you into his eternall glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, may make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Subscribed, in name of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by the
Clerk of the Assembly.

Edinburgh, August 19, 1643.

*The Assemblie's Answer to the Reverend their beloved Brethren, Ministers in the Church of England.**

Reverend and Beloved,

We acknowledge, with thankfulness to God, that this is one of the good blessings bestowed upon our Kirk of late, and a pleasant fruit of our free Assemblies, that a way is opened for keeping communion with our sister kirks abroad, and correspondence with you, our dear brethren, in whose joy and sorrow we have so near interest, and whose cause and condition we desire to lay to heart as our own.

All your former letters were most acceptable, and full of refreshment unto us, being taken as the earnest of a more full and constant fellowship, longed after and hoped for; and this your last, although full of sadness and sorrow, yet accounted of us all most worthy of our tenderest affection and best respects, both for your cause who sent it, and for these worthy witnesses which did attest it; wherein as you have given unto us no small evidence, not only of your love, but also of trust and friendly respect, by choosing to poure out your grieved souls in our bosome; so we shall wish, and God willing endeavour, that you may really finde some measure of brotherly compassion in our receiving thereof. For these your sad expressions of deep sorrow, being, as you have given us to conceive, but a part of your complaint, and a lamentation lesse then the causes doth require, cannot but melt every heart wherein there is any the least warmnesse of the love of Christ and his saints; and what childe of the Bridegroom's chamber can hear the voice of so many friends of the Bridegroom lamenting for the evils which have befallen Christ's bride in England, in the very night before her expected espousalls, and not sit down and mourn with them, except his heart be fallen

* Drawn up by Mr David Dickson.—*Ed.* 1843.

asleep and frozen within him? This pitifull condition of our sister Church in England hes matter enough, we confesse, to move, yea, to rend our bowels.

If we should weigh this your heaveie grief in the scales of common reason, we behoved either to stand aloof from your plague, as men astonished, or sink down in heaviness, and be swallowed up of sorrow; but when we ponder your sad condition in the ballance of the sanctuary, we finde that nothing hath as yet befallen unto you, save that which hath been the exercise of the saints in former times, who have been made to sit down for a while in the shadow of death, before the day of their deliverance. We finde nothing but that which may be a fit preparation for a comfortable outgate from all your troubles. What if it was necessary, in the wise dispensation of Almighty God, that a people in great estimation for wisdom and power, such as England, should be thus farre humbled as you declare, to the end that your deliverance may be seen hereafter to be of the Lord, and not of your selves? What if the Lord would not draw back his hand from the wine-presse wherein you now lye, till he should draw forth from you these pitifull expressions of your low estate, and so provide himself witnesses against the day to come, that he may have the greater and purer glory in your salvation, and your gloriation may be in the Lord alone? Dear brethren, comfort yourselves in the Lord; this sowing in tears doth promise a reaping in joy, and who knoweth how soon he will give to you who are mourners in Zion beauty for ashes, the oyle of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that you may be called the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified."

Though weeping be in the evening of this begun reformation and purging of the Lord's house among you, yet in the morning, when the discovered filthinesse and sweepings of the temple shall be orderly cast out, joy shall come with thanksgiving and praise. Though a fire be kindled in the land, yet it is not to consume any of the mettall; for the Lord is sitting down as a refiner amongst you, and especially to purifie the sons of Levi, that he may have a more pure oblation of spirituall worship and service in all his holy ordinances, throughout all the land, which is no token of wrath, but of loving-kindnesse towards you. No wonder, that Satan doth thus rage, as you relate, foreseeing his casting out; no wonder he stirre up all the children of disobedience, and kindle their naturall malice against the children of God, with the inspiration of hellish fury; no wonder the spirit of Antichrist be mad, when the morsell half swallowed down is like to be pulled out of his throat, the fat morsell of the rich revenues of England; no wonder he be cruell against you, the servants of Christ, who are consuming him by the breath of the Lord's mouth.

You do well to expect no mercy, if Papists and Prelatsp revail over you, neither desire we to deceive our selves with hopes to be free from what their power and malice can do against us; for they will not do to us, if they get the upper hand, as we have done, and must do, if God bring them low again under us, as they were before, for we and they are led by the contrary spirits of Christ and Antichrist. We have laboured, and must labour, for their conversion, but they (except in so far as God shall bridle them) will not rest without our destruction; for their fury against our persons is much more fierie than our zeal is fervent against their abominations. Let them follow the spirit of lying and murdering, wee must take us to our refuge, and joyne our selves, with all that are sensible of the danger of the reformed religion, in prayer and supplication. "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Now for advice, what can we say to you who are upon your watch-tower, wherein is the spirit of wisdom and counsell, who lye thus, as humble disciples, under the Lord's foot, who did never forsake them that sought him. Go on, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, against all opposition, without fear of whatsoever dangers, to purge the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches thereof, to set up all his ordinances in their full beautie and perfection, to the uttermost of your power, according to the pattern of the Word of God, and zeal of the best reformed Kirks; and let these two kingdomes be knit together, as one man, in maintaining and promoting the truth of the Gospel; let us enter in a perpetuall covenant, for our selves and our posterity, to endeavour that all things may be done in the house of God according to his own will, and let the Lord do with us what seemeth good in his eyes. "Only wait upon

the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart." Let your hands be ever at your Master's work, and hold your faces resolutely to his cause. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quite yourselves like men, be strong; for ye shall see the salvation of the Lord," and your labour shall not be in vain.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland,
by the Clerk of the Assembly.

Commission of the Generall Assembly for these that repair to the Kingdome of England.

The Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, finding it necessary to send some godly and learned of this Kirk to the kingdome of England, to the effect underwritten; therefore, gives full power and commission to Master Alexander Henderson, Master Robert Douglas, Master Samuel Rutherford, Master Robert Bailzie, and Master George Gillespie, ministers; John Earle of Cassills, John Lord Maitland, and Sir Archbald Johnstoun of Waristoun, elders, or any three of them, whereof two shall be ministers, to repair to the kingdome of England, and there to deliver the declaration sent unto the Parliament of England, and the letter sent unto the Assembly of Divines now sitting in that kingdome; and to propone, consult, treat, and conclude with that Assembly, or any commissioners deputed by them, or any committees or commissioners deputed by the Houses of Parliament, in all matters which may further the union of this island in one forme of kirk government, one Confession of Faith, one Catechisme, and one Directorie for the Worship of God, according to the instructions which they have received from the Assembly, or shall receive, from time to time hereafter, from the commissioners of the Assembly, deputed for that effect. With power also to them to convey to his Majestie the humble answer sent from this Assembly to his Majestie's letter, by such occasion as they shall think convenient; and suchlike to deliver the Assemblies answer to the letter sent from some well-affected brethren of the ministry there. And, generally, authorizes them to do all things which may further the so much desired union and nearest conjunction of the two Churches of Scotland and England, conform to their instructions aforesaid.

Reference to the Commission anent the Persons designed to repair to the Kingdome of England.

The Assembly having, this day, approven the nomination made by the commissioners of the late Assembly of persons to repair to the Synod of Divines in England; and having, of new, elected and nominated all the same persons, except Master Eleazar Borthwick, who is now with God; therefore, gives power to the commissioners to be appointed by this Assembly for the publick affairs of this Kirk to nominate and appoint any other whom they shall think meet in his place. And, suchlike, the Assembly refers to the said commission to consider whether it be convenient to send now at this present time to the kingdome of England all the persons appointed to go thither, and to designe the persons whom they think meet to go at this present occasion, to determine the time of their dispatch, and to give unto them their instructions. And, further, in case of sicknesse or death of any of the persons appointed for that employment, or in the case of any other necessary impediment of their undertaking the samine, gives power to the said commission to nominate others in their place, if the commission shall finde it convenient.

Commission for the Publick Affairs of this Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, considering the laudable custome of this Kirk in appointing commissions betwixt Assemblies for the publick affairs of the Kirk, and the commendable practice of the late Assembly at St Andrews, in appointing their commission for prosecuting that blessed work, for uniting the Kirks of this island in religion and kirk government, by all lawfull and ecclesiastick wayes, for continuance of our own peace at home, and of the common peace betwixt the two nations, and for other good ends, as at length is exprest in that commission: And finding that the painfull endeavours

and proceedings of that commission, unanimously approven in this Assembly, though they have much advanced that glorious work of unity in religion and government, yet hes not brought the samine to full perfection and a finall accomplishment: And the Assembly being now much animate and encouraged to prosecute that work by the Parliament of England their bills past against Episcopacie, and sundry other corruptions, and the good hopes of a Solemne Covenant betwixt the nations; and conceiving that in thir times of danger there may be some occasions for conveying the Assembly before the time indicted for their next meeting: Therefore, the Assembly, finding it necessary to appoint a new commission, by these presents, nominates and appoints Mr Andrew Ramsay, Mr Alexander Henderson, &c., &c., to meet at Edinburgh the 21 day of August next, and upon any other day thereafter, and in any other place, they shall think good; and gives and grants unto them, or any fifteen of them, there being twelve ministers present, full power and commission to consider and performe what they finde necessary, by praying and preaching, by supplicating his Majestie and all the judicatories of this kingdome, by declarations and remonstrances to the Parliament of England, to the Synod of Divines in that kingdome, by informations, directions, instructions to, and continuall correspondence with, the commissioners now designed by this Assembly to go to the Synod of Divines in England, or by any other lawfull ecclesiastick wayes, for furtherance of this great work, in the union of this island in religion and kirk government, and for continuance of our own peace at home, and of the common peace betwixt the nations, and keeping of good correspondence betwixt the kirks of this island: With power also to them to concur with the Lords of Councill, Commissioners of Peace, or with the Honourable Estates, assembled in Convention or Parliament, or with their committees and commissioners, in prosecuting this good work at home or abroad, by all ecclesiastick wayes. And, suchlike, with power to them to prevent the dangers contained in the remonstrance presented unto the Convention of Estates by the commissioners of the late Assembly, in June last, and to prosecute the remedies of these dangers contained in another remonstrance presented by the saids commissioners to the Convention the 6 of July last, by admonitions, directions, censures, and all other ecclesiastick wayes: And, further, in case their brethren of England shall agree to the Covenant betwixt the kingdomes, the draught and frame whereof is now so unanimously approven in this Assembly, gives also unto the persons foresaid, or the quorum above written, full power and authoritie to command and enjoyn the samine to be subscribed and sworn by all the members of this Kirk; and that in such order and manner, and with such solemnities, as they shall think convenient for so great and glorious a work; and to send their directions to Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, for execution of their orders thereanent: And with power to proceed against any person whatsoever that shall refuse to subscribe and swear the said Covenant, with all the censures of the Kirk, or to refer the tryall and censures of such delinquents to Presbyteries or Synods, as they shall think convenient. And, suchlike, gives unto the persons foresaids power and libertie to call a Generall Assembly *pro re nata*, in case they shall finde the necessity of the Kirk and this great work to require the same: With full power also to them to give answers, in name of the Assembly, to all letters sent to the Assembly from the kirks of Holland, Zealand, or any other forraigne reformed kirks: And, further, gives power to them to promote the other desires, overtures, and recommendations of this or of any former Assemblies to the King's Majestie, Parliament, or Convention of Estates, to the Lords of Councill, Session, Exchequer, Commissioners of Parliaments, for Plantation of Kirks, for the Common Burdens, and for Conserving the Peace. And, suchlike, gives as full power and commission to them to treat and decerne in any other matters referred, or to be referred, to them by this Assembly, as if the samine were herein particularly insert. And, generally, gives unto the persons foresaids, or the quorum above mentioned, full power and authoritie to do and performe all things which may advance, accomplish, and perfect the great work of unity of religion and uniformity of kirk government in all his Majestie's dominions, and which may be necessary for good order in all the publick affairs of this Kirk, untill the next Assembly, *ne quid detrimenti capiat Ecclesia*. With als ample power in all matters, particularly or generally above mentioned, as any other commission of Generall Assemblies hes had or been in use of before; they being

always countable to, and censurable by, the next Generall Assembly, for their proceedings thereintill.

The Generall Assembly appoints the meeting of the next Generall Assembly to be at Edinburgh, the last Wednesday of May, in the year 1644.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, CONVEENED
AT EDINBURGH, 1644.

Die Jovis penult. Maii. Sess. 2.—The Letter from the Presbyterie with the Army in England to the Generall Assembly.

Right Reverend,

Having the opportunity of the sitting of this Venerable Assembly, we thought our selves obliged to render some accompt of the estate of our affairs. It hath pleased the Lord to exercise us since our outcoming with many straits and difficulties, yet in the mids thereof he hath wonderfully upheld and carried us through. The depth of his wisdom hath suspended us for a time from any great action, to make us walk humbly before him, and to keep us in a continuall dependance upon himself: And yet he hath, by his own power, scattered before us the great Popish army, and much diminished the number thereof, so that they do not now appeare against us in the fields, that all may learne to trust in God, and not in man. It was farre from our thoughts and intentions to have come this length, at that instant when the course of Divine Providence pointed out our way unto us, which led us on, by some long and speedie marches, to joyne with my Lord Fairfax and his sonne their forces. The city of York, wherein a swarme of obstinate Papists have taken sanctuary, is blocked up; now and then God favoureth us with successe in some enterprises about it, and wee look for more, if the time be come which he hath appointed for the deliverance of this people.

Our soules do abhorre the treacherous attempts of our disnated countrey men that have endeavoured to make their native kingdome a seat of warre, and our bowels within us are moved to think upon the maine mischiefs, if not tymeously prevented, that may follow upon the unnaturall warres there, like unto these under which this kingdome hath groaned for a long time. We have found none more malicious and cruell against us than these of our own nation, and we measure those at home by these here. "Cursed be their rage, for it is fierce; and their anger, for it is cruell." The present danger calls upon all to lay out of their hands what ever may hinder their haste; as one man to come together for saving the vineyard, that the wilde boares would lay waste, and taking the foxes that would destroy the vines. You are, right reverend, now set upon the highest watch-tower, from whence you may discover the dangers that threaten on all coasts; and wee need not put you in minde to give warning to the watchmen in their several stations to rouse up the people from their too great security, to call them to unfeigned humiliation, and to stirre them up to wrestle with God by prayer, that hee would preserve truth and peace at home against the machinations of malignants; that hee would prepare the people here, and make them more fit to embrace the intended reformation; and that hee would command these unnaturall and bloody warres to cease, that religion and righteousness may flourish through the three dominions. Praying God to send upon you the Spirit of truth, who may lead you in all truth, we remaine,

Your loving brethren, the Presbyterie of the Scottish Army in England.

Master ROBERT DOUGLAS, *Moderator, in their name.*

Middlethorp, Maii 20, 1644.

The Petition from the Distressed Christians in the North of Ireland.

To the Reverend and Honourable Moderator and remanent Members of the
Generall Assembly of Scotland, convened at Edinburgh, in May 1644, The
humble Petition of the Distressed Christians in the North of Ireland,

Humbly sheweth,

That whereas your former enlarged bounty and our present overflowing straits would require a gratefull acknowledgement of the one, and a serious representation of the other, our case is such, as neither can be expected at our hands, being stricken with astonishment, and full of the furie of the Lord. We are these, indeed, who have seen affliction by the rod of his wrath; so that it were more fit we had a cottage in the wilderness, amongst the owles to mourn out our imbittered spirits, then that by word or writ we should compeere before any of his people; although you cannot be wearied in wel-doing, yet we shall no way think it strange, if now you shall give over any more care of us, seeing the Lord hath testified against us, and the Almighty hath afflicted us. Your judgement is with the Lord, and your reward is with God, not onely for your two years' visiting and watering a barren vineyard, but also for your zeale and care to have your reformation spread amongst other opprest and borne down churches, whereof you have given an ample and famous testimony in sending hither that blessed League and Covenant, which wee much desired and longed for, as, by our petitions to the Church and State of our native kingdome, is knowne unto you; which hath had a wished and gracious successe, by the favour and blessing of God accompanying the pains of these to whom the tendering thereof was intrusted by you. And we, conceiving a chief part of our miserie to consist in our want of opportunitie to joyne our selves with the people of God in the foresaid League, esteeming our selves rejected of God, and unfit to be joynd in any comfortable fellowship in the Gospel with them, when the said League and Covenant was presented to the regiments, wee made bold to lay hold upon the opportunity, (though afflicted abjects,) and cheerfully and unanimously joynd our selves thereunto; that if wee perish in our misery, wee may die a covenanted people; and, if our miserable life be prolonged, we may finde shelter and refreshment under the shadow thereof in our fierie trials, confidently expecting from the Lord, by our neerer conjunction with you than of before, an accomplishment of what is agreed into the Covenant, which ye bountifully expressed before we were one with you, to your never-dying commendation. We are nothing shaken in our minds with the odious aspersions of sedition, combination against the King, and overthrow of municipal laws, &c., (wherewith our Covenant is branded,) nor with the threats of these who should be comfortable to us in our troubles; but are the more encouraged to beleeve that God shall raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and repair the breaches thereof; for, since we covenanted with God, and united our selves together, our dying spirits have revived, and we sing like these who have come forth from their graves, for God hath had mercy on Jacob: In testimony whereof, he hath opened the bowels of the churches of Holland, who were strangers to us, and yet dear brethren, and tender sympathizers with us in our afflictions and sorrows, who, when these who were left of the sword were in danger to dye by famine, did plentifully relieve us in our straits, not onely by comfortable encouragements to walk humbly with God, and wait for him who hides his face from the house of Jacob for a season; but also by their rich supply in victuals, and others necessar for our relief and comfort, which we humbly desire our Lord to repay seven-fold in their bosome, and become your supplicants to joyne with us in a gratefull acknowledgement of their singular favours. And upon the heels of these favours, you have continued your unparallelled compassions in keeping your forces, and enabling them, together with the other forces, for avenging the cruell murders and effusion of Christian blood in this land, notwithstanding of your owne multiplied difficulties. The Lord hath begun to delight into us, and in a day of salvation hath helped us, (so happy are the people who are in covenant with God.) We are these (indeed) who may justly be burnt up for our unfruitfulness in the dayes of our plenty, and stubbornesse in the dayes of our affliction, which hath brought us so low, that where we once enjoyed a blessed plenty,

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we must now beg of the crumbs that fall from your table. Wee cannot dissemble, but, so farre as we can discern our owne hearts, we would preferre the joyfull sound of the Gospel to our much wished peace and precious lives. But it may be discerned your consultations of before have been guided by the Spirit of the Lord; in that when wee twice, in our forward hasting desires, begged the present loosing and planting of some ministers amongst us, you judged it more convenient to supply us by turnes, as foreseeing that our captivity was likely to endure. Our hopes are so far revived, that we trust to see the day when he shall take the cup of trembling out of our hands, and put it in the hands of them that afflicted us.

And, therefore, if you account us fellow-partners of the purchased inheritance, yet again suffer our necessitie to plead with you, that as it hath been by the committee of bills already advised that a competent number of ministers may be gifted to us by your commission, when they shall see the calling cleared, the same may be granted as a testimony of your confidence and expectation of our delivery; and, in the mean time, some others may be sent by turnes, to keep in the dying lives of above twenty-foure desolate congregations, who are in danger to perish for want of vision; and although we do professe we count not our selves worthy of such favours, yet as we have resolved to dye with the cry of hope in our mouthes to the Lord's throne; so, in obedience of the use of the means by him appointed, we stretch out our hearts and our hands to you for help, and have sent our brother, William Mackenna, merchant at Belfast, to attend what answer it shall please the Lord, by you, to returne unto

Your distressed Brethren and Supplicants.

Subscribed by very many hands.

Junii 3, 1644, ante meridiem, Sess. 5.—Act for the present Entrie of the new erected Presbyterie at Biggar.

The which day, anent the supplication subscribed and given in to the Generall Assembly, by the Ministers and Ruling Elders of the kirks of Biggar, Skirling, Brochton, Glenquhome, Kelbocho, Culter, Lamyngtoun, Symontoun, Covingtoun, Quothquen, Welstoun, and Dolphingtoun, making mention, That the Generall Assembly at Edinburgh, in August 1643 years, by their act, of the date of the twelfth day of the samine moneth and year, did, upon good grounds, and after tryall, and hearing of all parties to the full, erect a Presbyterie seat at Biggar, to consist of the kirks above written; and granted to their Presbyterie full power of jurisdiction, and exerceing discipline, with all other liberties and priviledges belonging to any other Presbyterie; but suspended the entrie and possession of this new erected Presbyterie during the pleasure of the Assembly: And, therefore, desiring the said Generall Assembly to ordaine and appoint the entrie and possession of the foresaid Presbyterie at Biggar now presently; and to declare, that it is their pleasure, that the entrie and possession thereof shall be no longer suspended, as the supplication proports. Which supplication being read in audience of the Generall Assembly, and thereafter the commissioners from the Presbyteries of Lanerk and Peebles, and all others having entresse to oppose the desire foresaid, being publickly called, and the saids commissioners for Peebles and Lanerk, personally present, being at length heard in what they could say or alledge therein; and the said supplication, and desire thereof, with the alledgeances and objections made against the samine, being taken to consideration by the Assembly, and they therewith being fully and ripely advised—The Assembly, after removing of the parties, and after consideration of the premisses, and voycing of the foresaid desire, ordaines the entrie and possession of the foresaid Presbyterie of Biggar, consisting of the particular kirks above mentioned, to begin now presently; and appoints and ordaines all the Ministers and Ruling Elders of the foresaid kirks above specified, whereof the said Presbyterie consists, to meet and conveene as a Presbyterie, with all conveniencie, at the said kirk of Biggar, which is the place and seat of the samine Presbyterie. And the Assembly refers to the Commissioners to be appointed by them for the Publick Affairs of the Kirk, to determine to what Synod this the said new erected Presbyterie shall be subordinate; as also to prescribe the

order and solemnities that shall be necessar for entring and possessing the Ministers and Elders in the said Presbyterie.

Junii 3, 1644, Sess. 6.—Act concerning the Declaration subscribed by the Scottish Lords at Oxford.

The Generall Assembly, having received a copy of a declaration, made and subscribed at Oxford, sent unto them from the Honourable Convention of Estates, and having seriously considered the tenour thereof, doth finde the same to be a perfidious band and unnaturall confederacy, to bring this Kirk and kingdome to confusion, and to be full of blasphemies against the late Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdomes, of vile aspersions of treason, rebellion, and sedition, most falsly and impudently imputed to the Estates, and the most faithfull and loyall subjects of these kingdomes: And, seeing it is incumbent to the Assembly to take notice thereof, and to stop the course of these malicious intentions, in so farre as concernes them, declare, that the subscribers of this or the like declaration or band, or any that have been accessory to the framing, or that has been or shall be accessory to the execution thereof, deserve the highest censure of the Kirk: And, therefore, gives power to the Commissioners of this Assembly appointed for the Publick Affairs to proceed against them to the sentence of excommunication, unlesse they make humble confession of their offence publickly, in such manner and in such places as the Commission shall prescribe; or, otherwise, to refer the tryall and censure of such delinquents to Presbyteries or Synods, as they shall think convenient. And, when the sentence of excommunication shal be pronounced, discharges Presbyteries or Synods to relax any from the sentence without the advice of the Generall Assembly or their commissioners, *nisi in extremis*. And, in respect of the atrocitie of this fact, the Assembly, in all humility, do seriously recommend to the Right Honourable the Estates of Parliament to take such course as the persons that shall be found guilty may be exemplarily punished, according to the merit of so unnaturall and impious an offence: And that some publick note of ignominie be put upon the declaration and band it self, if their Honours shall think it meet.

Act against the Rebels in the North and South.

The Generall Assembly, considering the just sentence pronounced against the principall actors in that rebellion in the North and South, by ordinance of the commissioners of the late Assembly, and finding it most necessary that such as assisted or joyned with them in that impious and unnaturall fact be likewise censured; therefore, ordains Presbyteries and Synods *respectivè* to proceed against them with the highest censures of the Kirk, if they give not satisfaction by publick repentance; and, when the sentence of excommunication shall be pronounced, the Assemblie discharges the said judicatories to relax any of them from the sentence without the advice of the Generall Assembly or their commissioners, *nisi in extremis*; to whom also the saids Presbyteries and Synods shall be answerable for their diligence in the premisses, as they shall be required. And the Assembly doth humbly recommend to the Honourable Estates of Parliament to take such course as the persons that shall be found guilty may be exemplarily punished, according to the merit and degree of their offence.

Act against Secret Disaffectors of the Covenant.

The Generall Assembly, understanding that divers persons disaffected to the Nationall Covenant of this Kirk, and to the Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdoms, do escape their just censure, either by their private and unconstant abode in any one congregation, or by secret conveyance of their malignant speeches and practises; therefore, ordains all ministers to take speciall notice when any such persons shall come within their paroches, and, so soon as they shall know the same, that without delay they cause warn them to appear before the Presbyteries within which their

paroches lyes, or before the Commissioners of this Assembly appointed for Publick Affairs, as they shall finde most convenient; which warning the Assembly declares shall be a sufficient citation unto them; and, als, that all ministers and elders delate to the saids judicatories, *respectivè*, every such disaffected person, although without their own paroch, so soon as they shall hear and be informed of them. And the Assembly ordains the said commissioners not only to proceed to tryal and censure of such disaffected persons, but also to take a special account of the diligence of ministers, elders, and presbyteries herein, *respectivè*.

Act for sending Ministers to the Armie.

The Assembly, understanding that ministers are not duly sent forth to the regiments of the army, neither such as are sent duly relieved, which neglect falleth out oftentimes by reason of questions among Presbyteries interessed in the regiments; therefore, for remedy hereof, thinks it convenient that this order be kept hereafter:—That a list be made of three ministers by the colonels, or in their absence the chief officers of every regiment, with advice and consent of the Presbyterie at the army, and sent to Presbyteries here, or, if the list be of ministers in divers Presbyteries, to the commissioners of the General Assembly, that they may appoint one out of that list to be sent to the regiment, to attend them for performing ministeriall duties three moneths; and that the relief of ministers already sent, or to be sent hereafter, shall be in the same manner. And the Assembly ordains ministers who shall be thus appointed by Presbyteries, or the commissioners of the Assembly, *respectivè*, to repair to the armie with all diligence, under the paine of suspension; and humbly recommends to the Honourable Estates of Parliament to provide some way whereby these ministers may have due and ready payment of their allowance, from the time of their going from their charges here. And it is declared, that this order shall be also kept for sending forth of ministers to the regiments in the second expedition.

Renovation of the Commission for the Publick Affairs of the Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, considering that the Commissioners appointed by the last Assembly, upon the nineteenth day of August 1643 years, the last session thereof, to sit at Edinburgh for the Publick Affairs of the Kirk, have not yet fully perfected that great work for unitie of religion and uniformitie of kirk government in his Majestie's dominions; and that now, in respect of the present condition of affairs in this kingdom, their proceedings cannot be examined at this time; therefore, finding it necessary that the said commission be renewed unto the commissioners therein mentioned, and to the persons after named, now thought fit to be added, for the better expediting of the businesse, do hereby appoint the persons particularly nominate in the said commission, viz., Masters Andrew Ramsay, &c., &c.,* to meet at Edinburgh upon the fifth day of this instant moneth of June, and upon the last Wednesday of August next, the last Wednesday of November next, and upon the last Wednesday of February next, and upon any other day, or in any other place, they shal think meet; giving and granting unto them, or any fifteen of them, there being twelve ministers present, full power and commission to prosecute the said work of unitie in religion and uniformitie of kirk government in all his Majestie's dominions, and to do and performe all things particularly or generally contained in the said commission of the preceding Assembly, or in an act of the said Assembly upon the said 19 day of August, intituled, "A reference to the Commission anent the persons designed to repair to the Kingdome of England;" and to treat and determine therin, and in all other matters referred unto them by this Assembly, siclike, and as freely, as if all these were herein expressed, and as the persons nominat in the said former commission might have done, by vertue of the said act and former commission, at any time by-gone, and with as ample power as any commission of former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before, they being alwayes comptable and censurable for their whole proceedings hereintill by the next Generall Assembly.

* Seventy ministers and fifty-three elders are named in this commission.—*Ed.* 1843.

Renovation of the Commission granted to the Persons appointed to repair to the Kingdome of England.

The Generall Assembly, finding that the great work of unity in religion and uniformity of kirk government in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected, do therefore renew the commission granted for that effect by the preceeding Assembly, unto the persons appointed to repair to the kingdome of England, upon the 19th day of August 1643, in the last session thereof, giving and granting to the persons therein mentioned the same power to do all and every thing particularly or generally contained in the said commission, in the same manner, and as fully, as if the same were herein expressed, and as they might have done at any time bygone, by vertue of the former commission.

The Assemblie's Answer to the Presbyterie with the Armie.

Reverend and loving Brethren in the Lord,

We received yours of the 17th and 20th of May, and were much refreshed with the knowledge you gave unto us therein of your sense of our condition here, and of the Lord's dealing with your selves there in your straits and difficulties. We rejoyce exceedingly to see you make such a blessed use of the Lord's delays, for your further humiliation and dependence upon him. That sanctuary your enemies and the enemies of your God hath taken shall not save them. You have found by experience in your marches and maintenance, that events are not ordered by the propositions of men, but by the providence and purpose of God. There is a time for every purpose under heaven, and the cup of the Amorites must be filled; which being now full of every abomination, yea, of the blood of the saints, the cry whereof cannot but be heard in heaven and answered on earth, presageth no lesse to us, than that the Lord's time of his deliverance of his own, and destruction of his enemies, draweth near.

We are not unsensible of your present estate, and by the Lord's grace shall be carefull, both here and with our congregations at home, to make all take the same to heart. As for our condition here, remembred with such pious affection by you, we doubt not but ye have heard what the Lord hath done for us; these happy beginnings of the Lord's scattering our unnaturall enemies in the North gives us confidence of his assistance in the midst of difficulties against these that assault us in the South. It is nothing with the Lord to help, whether with many or with them that have no power.

The security of this nation, indeed, is great. It is our part to blow the trumpet to give warning to the people, and to rouse them from that fearfull condition which threatneth so much desertion. And to this end, we have injoynd a solemne fast, the causes whereof, being more particularly considered by our commissioners here, will no question be sent unto you, that, if the Lord please, you may joyne with us there in that action.

Wee have set down an order to be kept hereafter for sending ministers unto the armie, which the clerk will send herewith unto you. Now, the Lord our God, in whose name his people go forth against his enemies, help and assist them, and cover their heads in the day of battell, and be their refuge; and blesse your travels and endeavours for the good of their souls and his own glory.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly, by the Moderator.

Edinburgh, June 3, 1644.

Sess. 7, June 4, 1644.—The Letter from the Commissioners at London to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Reverend, and beloved in the Lord,

It was the earnest desire of our hearts to have come unto you at this time, and to have brought with us the desireable fruits of our weighty employments and labours, to our common rejoycing in the mids of so many troubles, both here and there; but our Lord, in his wisdom, hath not judged it fitting that this should be the time of our joyfull harvest, and of bringing our sheaves, to be matter of sacrifice to himself, and

of shouting to us. Both nations, as yet, doe but go forth weeping and bearing their precious seed; yet are we confident through Jesus Christ, that as it is a seed-time, if the labourers (although other men before us have laboured, and we are entred into their labours) prove faithfull unto the end, the harvest shall come in due time, and in great plenty.

The Common Directory for Publick Worship in the Kirks of the three kingdomes is so begun (which we did make known to the commissioners of the Generall Assembly) that we could not think upon any particular Directory for our own Kirk, and yet is not so far perfected that wee could present any part thereof unto your view; for, although wee have exhibited unto the grand committee (which is composed of some of the members of both Houses, and of the Assembly, with our selves) the materials of the publick prayers of the Kirk, the method of preaching, and the order of administration of both sacraments, and have the Catechisme in hand, yet are they not thoroughly examined by the committee, nor at all by the Assembly or Parliament, which we cannot impute to any neglect or unwillingnesse, but to the multiplicity and weight of their affairs, by which they are sore pressed, and above their power.

The Directory for Ordination of Ministers (which, upon the extreme exigence of this Kirk, was much pressed by the Parliament) is agreed upon by the committee and Assembly, and some dayes past is presented to both Houses, but hath not yet passed their vote. The Assembly hath been long in debate about the officers and government of the Kirk, (concerning which we offered the two papers which wee drew up, according to the practice of our own and other reformed kirks, and so neere as we could conceive to the minde of the Generall Assembly, and did send to the commissioners of the Generall Assembly,) and hath passed many votes about the one and the other, but hath not brought their thoughts to such ripenesse and perfection that they could think upon the publishing of them, or presenting them to your sight; nor is it in their power to do so without warrant of Parliament. Your wisdoms will consider that they are not a Generall Assembly, but some select persons, called by authority to give their advice in matters of religion—that they walk in a way which hath not been troden by this nation before this time—that many things seeme new unto them, and cannot obtain their assent till they see them clearly warranted by the Word of God—that matters of the government of the Kirk have been much controverted here, and the prejudices against presbyteriall government are many and great—that the two extremes of Prelacie and Independencie, which latter is the generall claime of all sects and sectaries, have prevailed most in this Kirk, and no other thing known by the multitude but the one or the other—that such as look toward the government of the reformed kirks finde a mighty party within and without opposing them—and that reformation and uniformitie must, therefore, be a work so full of difficulty, that the hand of the Most High God, which is now begun to be stretched out in this land, must bring it to passe.

There was also presented to the Assembly a new Paraphrase of the Psalmes in English meeter, which was well liked of, and commended by some of the members of the Assembly; but because we conceived that one Psalme Book in all the three kingdomes was a point of uniformity much to be desired, we took the boldnes (although we had no such expresse and particular commission) to oppose the present allowing thereof till the Kirk of Scotland should be acquainted with it; and, therefore, have we now sent an essay thereof in some Psalmes. We have also sent another specimen in print, done by some ministers of the city. Your wisdoms hes to consider whether it be meet to examine them by your commissioners there, that their judgements be sent up unto the Assembly here, both about the generall of uniformity in this point, and about the particular way of effecting it, whether by either of these two, or by any other paraphrase, or by changing some expressions in the books now in use, which is aymed at by the first of these two.

As we cannot but admire the good hand of God in the great things done here already, particularly that the Covenant (the foundation of the whole work) is taken—Prelacie and the whole train thereof extirpated—the Service-Book in many places forsaken—plain and powerful preaching set up—many colledges in Cambridge provided with such ministers as are most zealous of the best reformation—altars removed—the

communion in some places given at the table with sitting—the great organs at Paul's, and of Peter's in Westminster, taken down—images, and many other monuments of idolatry, defaced and abolished—the Chappel-royal at Whitehal purged and reformed—and all by authority, in a quiet manner, at noon-day, without tumult; so have we from so notable experience, joyned with the promises of the Word, sufficient ground of confidence that God will perfect this work against all opposition, and of encouragement for us all to be faithfull in the work of God, which is carried on by his mighty hand, that no man can oppose it, but he must be seen fighting against God. It is unto us no small matter of comfort, that we have heard of no minister of the Gospel (except such as the Kirk hath rejected) joyning with the Malignants there in their ungodly and unnaturall afflicting of that kingdome, while they are endeavouring the relief of the afflicted in this kingdome; and we pray and hope, that they may carefully keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and walk worthy both of their holy calling and of the great work which the Lord is working by his own weak servants in Kirk and Policy.

Be pleased to receive a letter from the Assembly, unto which you will return such an answer as shal seem good unto your wisdom, and withall (which is our humble desire) some word of your thankfull acknowledgement of the respect and favours done by them unto us.

We have, at all occasions since our coming hither, acquainted the commission with our proceedings, and, by the help of God, shall be industrious in obeying your directions and theirs during our abode here, which, through the power and blessing of God bringing the affairs of his own Church to a peaceable and blessed successe, wee wish may be for a short time, and unto which your fervent prayers, through Christ, may be very effectuell; which, therefore, is the humble and earnest desire of

Your affectionate fellow-labouring and fellow-feeling brethren in the
work of the Lord,

JO. MAITLAND.

ALEX. HENDERSON.
ROBERT BAILLIE.

SAM. RUTHERFURD.
GEORGE GILLESPIE.

Worcester House, London, May 20, 1644.

The Letter from the Synod of Divines in the Kirk of England to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Right Reverend, and dearly-beloved Brethren
in Jesus Christ,

The blessing and comfort of that inviolable union which our gracious God hath vouchsafed to both Churches and nations, gave us opportunity, the last year, to breath out some of our sighs into your compassionate bosomes; and such have been the soundings of your bowels, as have offered violence to heaven by your effectuell fervent prayers, and brought many sweet refreshings to our languishing spirits, by your pious and comfortable letters, in answer to ours.

This makes us studious of all means of acknowledging your tender sympathie, and of laying hold on all opportunities of repairing again to the same streams of consolation; for which end, as we cannot but confesse that, in the midst of those boisterous waves wherein we have been daily tossed, wee have met with many gracious and unexpected encouragements, so we must needs renew our former mournings, and rend our hearts afresh unto you, with greatest instance for all the assistance that your prayers, tears, learning, piety, and largeness of heart, can possibly contribute to your poor afflicted and still conflicting brethren: And this we the rather beg of you, who, having been first in the furnace of affliction, and are come out of great tribulation, are meetest to commiserate, and best able to comfort others in any trouble, by the comforts wherewith you your selves have been comforted of God.

It was in our desires to have presented to your Venerable Assembly some of our

dearest respects in writing, by that eminently learned and much honored Commissioner of yours, the Lord Waristoun; but his departure hence was so sudden to us, and unexpected by us, that we could not have time (as his Lordship can inform you) to tender by him such a testimony of our brotherly and intimate affections, as may, in some measure, suite with your manifold and most affectionate expressions toward us, when our sighings were many, and our hearts faint. For such hath been your love, that no waters can quench it, and such the undertakings of the whole kingdome of Scotland, through your furtherance, that we already begin to reap the fruits of all that piety, prudence, and valour, which at this day render your nation worthily renowned in the Christian world; and us exceedingly straitned and restlesse in our selves, untill God please to open a way for our endeavours to make some more answerable returnes.

Toward this, our thoughts and hopes were to have made, ere now, some proceedings of our Assembly legible in yours. But such are the continued distractions which lye upon our spirits, by means of the sad and bleeding condition of this kingdome, as have cast us much behinde our own expectations, and hindred that expedition, which the necessities of this nation, and the desires of our brethren abroad, do earnestly call for at our hands.

Sometimes, through God's goodnesse, wee have a prosperous gale; sometimes, againe, we saile, like Paul and his company, "very slowly many dayes." And even then, when wee draw near "the fair havens," some contrary windes put us out into the deep again. We walk in paths that have hitherto been untrodden by any Assembly in this Church. We therefore are inforced to spend more time in our inquiries, and in seeking of God a right way for us, that at length we may put into that highway, the way of holinesse, wherein wayfaring men, though fools, shall not erre. And we will wait upon our God, (before whom we have been this day humbling of our souls,) untill he lead us into all these truths which we seek after; and we shall labour to be yet more vile in our own eyes, as finding, by experience, that it is not in man to direct his way.

Those winds, which for a while do trouble the aire, do withall purge and refine it; and our trust is, that, through the most wise Providence and blessing of God, the truth, by our so long continued agitations, will be better cleared among us, and so our service will prove more acceptable to all the Churches of Christ, but more especially to you, while we have an intente eye to our peculiar protestation, and to that publick sacred Covenant entred into by both the kingdoms, for uniformity in all his Majestie's dominions.

Which work we carry on (against what ever difficulties are cast in our way) with more ease and comfort, by the great sedulity and seasonable assistance wee daily receive from your Noble and Reverend Commissioners sitting among us. Their prudence will (we doubt not) sufficiently furnish you with more particular information touching our affaires. And here, we cannot but acknowledge that the assiduous presence of these our learned and highly esteemed brethren among us, and their free and faithfull contributing of their counsels to us, doe oblige us much to a double duty, the one of thanks, which we now heartily render to you, for sending to us such excellent helpers; the other of request, which wee earnestly make for their continuance with us, untill the work bee brought up to the finishing cubite.

Now, the great Master-Builder (without whose Almighty concurrence the builders labour but in vain) accomplish and perfect all his own glorious work in your hands, and in ours also, to his own glory, the peace and edification of all the churches, and the comfort of our selves over all our travels and sufferings.

Your most affectionate brethren and servants in the Lord, by the direction,
and in the name of this whole Assembly,

WILLIAM TWISSE, *Prolocutor.*

CORNELIUS BURGES, *Assessor.*

HENRY ROBROUGH, *Scriba.*

ADONIRAM BYFIELD, *Scriba.*

Westminster, May 17, 1644.

The Generall Assemblie's Answer to the Right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Kirk of England.

Right Honourable, Right Reverend, and most dearly beloved in our Lord,

We do thankfully acknowledge your respectfull remembrance of us by your letters at all occasions, and not a little rejoyce to see that happie correspondence and Christian communion so sweetly entertained amongst us, which is so acceptable in the sight of the Lord, especially when kept and entertained betwixt kirks and kingdomes about affairs of highest and most publick concernment and interest. We have nothing more in our desires than to entertain that harmonious correspondence, that Christian sympathie and compassion, that sounding and re-sounding of bowels, which well beseemeth kirks and nations, united by a Solemn League and Sacred Covenant, for mutuall endeavours, by all lawfull means, to a further unitie in that faith once delivered to the saints, and greater uniformitie in divine worship, discipline, and government, according to the paterne.

The case and condition of your bleeding kingdome is no lesse sensible to us than if our selves were in affliction with you, but we trust all is working to your best, and to our Lord's glory; that some of you hes fallen, it is to try you, purge you, and make you white. If the Lord by those means be with that reformation of his ordinances, bringing also alongst that other reformation of hearts and lives, should it not be welcomed with all joy, although it bee upon the expence of blood and lives? The Lord will turn the bygone rage of man to his glory and your spiritual good, the remnant of rage will he restrain. The Lord delivereth his owne by degrees—"he is with them in trouble, and delivereth them, and honoureth them." He who hath been sensibly with you hitherto, and upholden you in your trouble, will, we trust, yet deliver you and honour you. The more ye sow in teares, the greater shall be your harvest of peace and joy, when the Lord, according to the dayes wherein he hath afflicted you, and the years wherein yee have seen evill, shall make you glad, and his work to appeare unto you, and his glory unto your children, and the beautie of the Lord your God to be upon you, and shall establish the work of your hands; yea, even establish the work of your hands.

We should prove both unthankfull to God and unfaithfull to men, did wee not hold out unto you the Lord's gracious and powerfull dealing with us in the like condition, and comfort you with the consolations wherewith wee our selves have been comforted. We were involved in the like difficulties; we had the strong opposition of highest authoritie set over two powerfull kingdoms, beside this of ours; and the unhappy providence of our wickedly-wise and wary Prelates had done what in them lay to make the ministry of this land sworn enemies to the intended reformation; so that we walked in a very wilderness, in a labyrinth, and as upon deep waters, wherein not onely did our feet lose footing, but also our eyes all discovering or discerning of any ground; yea, wee were ready to lose our selves; yet the Lord hath graciously rid us, and recovered us out of all these difficulties, and set our feet upon a rock, and ordered our goings. The experience we have had in our own persons, affoordeth us confidence and hope concerning your affaires, and we trust this hope shall not be disappointed; it is our duety to hope upon experience, and it is the Lord's word and promise that such an hope shall not be ashamed. It cannot choose but beget confidence in you, when yee shall consider, that ye have seen before your eyes your neighbouring ship of this Kirk and kingdome, having (as it were) loosed from your side, in the like or self-same storme, notwithstanding all tossing of windes and waves, yet ("not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts") to have arrived safe and sound to the port and harberie; yea, and to have dared to put out again unto the storm, to contribute her weak endeavours for your help.

We acknowledge your impediments to be great and many—the sufferings of your brethren, the people of God, cannot choose but both damp your spirits and divide your thoughts. Your walking in an untroden and unknown way, must put you (though never so willing to go on speedily, yet) to take time and leisure to ask for the right way; and ye want not the opposition of some amongst your selves, to whom, notwithstanding, we trust the Lord will reveale his truth in his own time. Never-

thelesse, (much honoured and dear brethren,) go on courageously against the stream of all opposition; every mountain in the way of Zerubbabel the Lord shall make plain, and as many of you as are perfect be thus minded, that forgetting the things that are behinde, and looking to the things that are before, you presse hard towards the mark, as having before you not onely the prize of the high calling and recompence of reward, but also at the end of this race, these two precious pearls and inestimable jewels of truth and unity, and all the reformed churches beholding and looking on, not onely as witnesses, but also being ready to congratulate and embrace you.

We were greatly refreshed to hear by letters from our commissioners there with you, and by a more particular relation from the Lord Waristoun now with us, of your praiseworthy proceedings, and of the great good things the Lord hath wrought among you, and for you. Shall it seem a small thing in our eyes that the Covenant (the foundation of the whole work) is taken—that that Antichristian Prelacy, with all the traine thereof, is extirpate—that the door of a right entrie unto faithful shepherds is opened—many corruptions, as altars, images, and other monuments of idolatry and superstition, removed, defaced, and abolished—the Service-Book in many places forsaken, and plaine and powerfull preaching set up—the great organs at Pauls and Peters taken down—that the Royall Chappell is purged and reformed, sacraments sincerely administrate, and according to the paterne in the mount—that your colleges, the seminaries of your Kirk, are planted with able and sincere professors—that the good hand of God hath called and kept together so many pious, grave, and learned divines for so long a time, and disposed their hearts to search his truth, by their frequent humiliations, continuall prayers, and learned and peaceable debates? Should not all and each one of these stir up our souls to blesse the Lord, and render both you and us confident, that he who hath begun the good work will perfect it, and put the cope-stone upon it, that the beauty of a perfected worke may shine to all nations, and we may say and shout, “Grace, grace unto it”—that the time may be when full liberty and leasure shall be to all the builders of the house of God, to give themselves, with both their hands, to the building up and edifying the people of God in these things that belong to life and godlinesse, to the making of them wise to salvation, and thoroughly furnished to every good work, and when the Lord shall delight to dwell more familiarly, and to work more powerfully in and by his thoroughly purified ordinances—that you, afflicted and tossed with tempests and not comforted, shall have your stones laid with fair colours, your foundations with sapphires, your children shall be taught of God, and shall have great peace, and no weapon framed against you shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth against you in judgement shall bee condemned—that the Lord will awake as in the ancient dayes, as in the generation of old—that the redeemed of the Lord shall come unto Zion with singing, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away?

And as we are confident that the Lord, who heareth prayer, and hath promised to guide his servants into all truth, will bring your labours to a comfortable conclusion; so do all the reformed Kirks, and the Kirk of Scotland above all others, extreemly long for the taste of the fruits of their pious labours and continual pains; and, so much the more, that we have suspended some materiall determinations amongst our selves, upon expectation of uniformity; and that, in the meane time, so many scandalous papers come to our view, and to the hands of the people here, for libertie of conscience, toleration of sects, and such practices as are contrary to the doctrine, government, and peace of all the reformed Kirks. For stopping and suppressing whereof, as we doubt not but your Wisedome, and the authority of the Honourable Houses of Parliament, will use some more effectuell means; so do we hope that your determinations shall carry such evidence of divine truth, and demonstration of the Spirit, that those unhappy clouds of darknesse shall be so scattered that they shall be no more gathered nor appear hereafter, to the dishonour of God, the prejudice of his truth, and the scandalizing of so many souls for which Christ hath dyed.

We doe, with hearty thankfulnessse, resent all the kindness and respect you have shown to our commissioners, and your high esteeme of them in love for the work's sake; although their presence here would be very comfortable unto us, very steedable to the publick, and necessar in respect of their great and important particular

charges and stations; yet do we willingly dispense with all, yea, nothing shall be too dear unto us, so that this work be finished with joy, and Jerusalem made the glory and praise of the whole earth. Because of the house of the Lord our God, we will seek her good: For our brethren and companions' sake, we will now say, Peace be within her walls, prosperity within her palaces.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland,
by the Moderator of the Assembly.

Edinburgh, June 4, 1644.

The Assemblie's Answer to their Commissioners at London.

Reverend and beloved Brethren,

It would have been the rejoycing of our hearts, and the lightning of our countenances, to have seen your faces, and enjoyed your presence here with us, especially should yee have arrived unto us laden with the spoils of Antichrist, the trophies of the Kirk of Christ, and the long longed-for fruits of your painfull labours; but seeing it hath pleased the Lord, whose interest in the businesse is main and principall, otherwise to dispose, it doth become us, with all humility, to submit to his good pleasure, with faith and patience to attend his leasure, for he that beleeveth maketh not haste, and with more frequency and fervencie in prayer seek to him who will be sought for these things, and having begun the good work will perfect it, and double the benefit, by bestowing it in a more seasonable time unto us.

We have not been a little refreshed with your letters sent unto us and the commissioners of the preceding Assembly, and with these from the Reverend Synod of Divines, the answer whereof you will be pleased to present unto them; by all which, and more particularly by a full relation from the Lord Waristoun, a faithfull witness and a fellow-labourer with you there, we see and acknowledge that, by the Lord's blessing, the progresse of the work is already more than we can overtake in the course of our thankfulnesse, that your labours are very great, your pains uncessant, your thoughts of heart many, that ye endure the heat of the day; but being confident of your patient continuance in wel-doing, and that your labours shall not be in vaine in the Lord, we have renewed your commission, and returned the Lord Waristoun unto you, according to your desire, that ye may prosecute that great work which the Lord hath blessed so farre in your hands.

When the ordination and entry of ministers shall be conformable to the ordinance of God, there is to be expected a richer blessing shall be powred out from above, both of furniture and assistance upon themselves, and of successe upon their labours; for which end, as our earnest desire is that the directory for it may be established, so doe we exceedingly long to see the Common Directory for Worship perfected, which may prove an happy meane of that wished for uniformity in the Kirks of the three kingdoms, shall (we trust) direct by all rocks of offence and occasions of stumbling, and shall remove all these corruptions wherewith the Lord's sacrifice and service hath been defiled.

That point concerning a change of the Paraphrase of the Psalmes in meeter, we have referred to the commissioners here, whose power and commission, granted by the preceding Assembly, we have renewed and continued.

That there be difficulties concerning kirk government, we think it not strange, for these reasons you lay out before us; yet because the minds of men are still in suspense upon the successe of the determination of that reverend Assembly, on the one hand, and upon the successe of the warre on the other, which doth not a little faint their hearts and feeble their hands, both you and we must be instant with God and man for a finall determination of all these debates, and a happy and speedy conclusion of this great affaire, so much concerning his own glory and the good of his Kirk. "Now the Lord lead you in all truth, and give you understanding in all things."

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly, by the Moderator.

Edinburgh, June 4, 1644.

The Assemblée's Letter to the Kirks in the Netherlands.

Fratres in Domino plurimum colendi,

Quæ anno superiore Ecclesiarum Zelandicarum nomine, missæ sunt ad nos Literæ, ut eas communis totius Ecclesiæ vestræ Belgicæ voluntatis testes fuisse interpretaremur, effecit benevolentia vestra tot tantisque officiis nobis spectata; quam sententiam nobis confirmarunt ea quæ copiose clarissimus Eques D. Archibaldus Jonstonus Varistonus in foro supremo Judex, a reliquis tum Ordinum tum Ecclesiæ hujus Regni Delegatis Londino non ita pridem remissus, in hac ipsa Synodo Nationali de eximio vestro erga nos studio commemoravit; præsertim quanta fide, quam sollicita diligentia nostram, vel Domini potius nostri Jesu Christi causam, quæ nunc Londini agitur, et promoveritis, et promovere etiamnum satagatis. Quo in negotio, ex iis, quorum ab eo recitata audivimus nomina, de propensa reliquorum voluntate et cura, ut conciliandæ Ecclesiarum Britannicarum unionis fœlicitur suscepta consilia, vestra ope et opera prosperum mature sortiantur exitum, minime obscura fecimus indicia. Sunt hæc tam illustria benevolentiae vestræ testimonia, et in omnium bonorum oculis adeo perspicua, ut eorum memoriam nulla unquam delere potuerint oblivia. Laboris autem et jam impensi et porro suscepti ad controversias in Synodo Londinensi suborientes fœlicitur expediendas et decidendas nequando pœniteat, ex eo quem per divinam jam benedictionem fructum cepistis, optima quæq. in posterum sperare consentaneum est.

Huic tam honorificæ beneficiorum vestrorum commemorationi a D. Varistonio factæ supervenerunt ex partibus Hiberniæ aquilonaribus Literæ multorum Chirographis subsignatæ; qui singularis gratiæ in illam Ecclesiam divinitus effusæ, ex quo tempore in societatem fœderis trium unitorum sub Rege nostro Regnorum admissi sunt, mentione facta, hujus inquit divinæ benedictionis amplissimum nuper habuimus testimonium, Sanctorum in Belgio liberalitatem eximiam; qui nobis, ignotis licet et peregrinis, fratres se nostri amantissimos, et malorum nostrorum sensu tenerimo compunctos aperte demonstrarunt. Pauculos enim nos gladio superstites, et fame propediem interituros, omnibus extremis circumventos, in ipso articulo sublevarunt; nec tantum oratione ad consolationem composita nobis animos confirmarunt, hortantes ut humiliter incedentes Deum liberatorem expectemus, qui non nisi ad breve tempus faciem suam a domo Jacob abscondere solet, sed subsidio insuper opulento cum annonæ, tum aliarum rerum ad nostram in tantis angustiis relaxationem et solatium necessariarum, copiose nos refocillarunt. Tantam munificentiam cum supplices a Deo contendimus, ut septuplam ipsis in sinum rependat, tum demisse vos etiam atq. etiam rogamus, ut in tanti beneficii agnitione Ecclesiis Belgicis, nobiscum gratias agatis. Hæc illi. In quo quidem officio si illis desimus, in nos pariter et illos graviter peccemus.

Agnoscamus igitur illustrissimorum et potentissimorum Hollandiæ, Zelandiæ, aliorumque Ordinum Belgicorum tam eximiam beneficentiam; quibus non conniventibus modo et permittentibus (quod ipsum non vulgare beneficium habendum esset) sed authoribus etiam, modumque et rationem præscribentibus, exemplo quoque præeuntibus, in subsidium fratrum nostrorum Hibernensium collecta per Ecclesias facta ad ipsos mature deportata sit; agnoscimus piorum in iisdem Ecclesiis Belgicis tam expromptam voluntatem et liberalitatem; agnoscimus tantum beneficium non in ipsos magis fratres nostros, quam in illorum persona in nosmetipsos esse collatum: Vosque (fratres reverendi) obnixè rogatos volumus, ut quemadmodum nos ad omnem grati animi significationem prompti semper erimus, ita qua vobis potissimum ratione commodum videbitur, illustrissimis et potentissimis ordinibus nostro nomine gratias agatis; populo autem Christiano curæ vestræ commisso tum publice universo, tum privatim singulis, ut occasio tulerit, demonstratis quam honorifice de ipsis sentiamus, et quanti faciamus tam eximiam benevolentiam et charitatem, qua in Ecclesiarum Hibernicarum consolatione viscera nostra refocillaverunt. Quæ autem vestræ fuerint partes, fratres charissimi, quam pio studio et labore, quam assidua diligentia tantæ charitatis semen in segetem et maturam tandem messem provexeritis, cum nos libentes agnoscimus, tum res ipsa loquitur, et fructus opimus abunde testatur. Imprimis autem (quod caput est) tantæ gratiæ authorem et largitorem nos una cum Ecclesiis Hibernicis laudamus et celebramus; comprecantes ut in vos universos, in Ecclesias a Do-

mino vobis commissas, in illustrissimos Belgii vestri Ordines Spiritum suum copiose effundat, ut quemadmodum in Rep. vestra adversus hostem potentissimum defendenda, et inter tantas bellorum moles indies amplificanda, in Evangelii luce et veritate incontaminata contra inferorum portas in vestris Ecclesiis propugnanda, atque inde latius propaganda, immensa Dei vobis excubantis potentia, multiformis sapientia, et eximia beneficentia, per universum terrarum orbem hactenus celebrata est; ita bonis omnibus vos deinceps cumulare pergat idem fons omnis bonitatis, ut frementibus religionis et libertatis vestræ hostibus, sapientiæ et optimarum artium juxta ac armorum triumphorumque gloria inter nobilissimas gentes Resp. vestra fœderata quotidie magis emineat, Ecclesia sacrorum puritate, et cœlestis veritatis splendore perspicua refulgeat; eoque prospere vobis cedant vestra prudentissima et saluberrima consilia, quibus certissimum ad fœlicitatem publicam compendium vos capessere demonstratis, nec vobis tantum consultis, sed de vicinis etiam Ecclesiis solliciti, qua opera, qua consilio opibusque vestris eas sublevatis et confirmatis omnes, et quasi de specula universis prospicientes de periculis imminetibus commune facitis, et ad ruinam ab hostibus dolose machinatum mature præcavendam armatis.

Ergo quod anno superiori, veluti signo dato, Reformatas omnes Ecclesias, missis ex Zelandia literis commonuistis, ut cum impostores, Jesu nomen impudenter ementiti, cæterique Antichristi satellites, quo securius in populum erroribus Pontificiis fascinatam grassari, et puriores Christi Ecclesias funditus extirpare queant, arctissima conjuratione sociati ad impia consilia patranda sese accinxerunt; ita Ecclesiæ quoque Reformatæ sine mora consilia in medium alacriter conferant, et animos ac vires jungant, ut perniciem sibi omnibus intentatam in hostium capita retorqueant; ni fecerint, tam pudendæ ignaviæ excusatione apud posteritatem carituri, consilium non minus prudens et fidum, quam fœlix et salutare libenter et tum agnovimus et nunc ipso etiam eventu comprobamus.

Principio autem ad hoc consequendum necessarium videtur, ut sine mora, convolemus omnes ad Deum nostrum clementissimum, qui postquam Ecclesiarum Reformatarum mores minime, reformatos multis annis longanimitate sua pertulisset, ferulam primum, mox etiam gladium vibratum interminatus, tandem rubentem, et madidum suorumque sanguine calentem et spumantem, per regiones plurimas jam diu circumtulit; in nos denique reliquos nunc intonat, nisi mature resipuerimus, et de domo ipsius amplius purganda, de gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi pluris facienda, de cultu Dei ipsiusque institutis religiosius habendis, de Sabbatho ejus sanctificando, a quo nimium oculos nostros avertimus, et de moribus, ad pietatis normam componendis magis, serio quam hactenus, a nobis factum est, nobiscum statuentes cum populo, Dei sub Nehemia, Josia, reliquisque piis gubernatoribus, religioso fœdere percusso, tanquam firmissimo vinculo, Deo obstricti, nos inter nos, arctius adversus hostes univermus, ut avertat Deus, jam fumantem et capitibus nostris imminentem iram, quam peccata nostra plurima et maxima, adversus nos provocarunt et accenderunt.

Non tantum nobis deferimus, nondum eos renovato cum Deo fœdere, et votis nuncupatis, dignos edidimus fructus, ut nostrum exemplum vobis proponere libeat: Quod tamen experti sumus, de Dei erga nos gratia, quod gratitudo erga Deum, quod gloria ipsius a nobis flagitat, celare non audemus. Quæcunque nostra male merita sunt in conspectu Dei et hominum; certe ex quo die nos de religioso fœdere cum Deo, et inter nos ineundo cogitavimus, a portis inferorum revocari, et res nostræ omnes in Deum nostrum, necessario conjectæ melius habere cœperunt, et fœliciore hactenus successu processerunt. Quod si de fœderis hujusmodi religiosa societate coeunda, (quod rerumstrarum et religionis in Britannia, nostra ex fœdere nuper inito perpurgandæ et stabiliendæ commodo fieri possit,) vestræ prudentiæ visum fuerit cogitare, et ex consilio eorum quorum interest statuere, ac cum aliis Reformatis Ecclesiis agere, (pro ea qua apud omnes valetis gratia,) ut eandem vobiscum ineant rationem, non dubium est, per Domini ac Dei nostri benignissimi Jesu Christi, in Ecclesias suas gratiam, fore, ut non modo, quod certissimum adversus impendentia mala perfugium anno superiore missis ex Zelandia literis denunciastis, Ecclesiæ Reformatæ arctioris societatis vinculo inter se unitæ ad hostium conatus, impetusque frangendos corroborentur et confirmentur; sed disjecti etiam lapides domus Dei, per Germaniam ex rudere et cineribus redivivi recolligantur, ac gloriosum Domini nostri templum ibidem

instauretur; et purioris religionis Professores in istis Ecclesiis, per resipiscentiam ad cum qui percussit eos, reversi, et quod nullis canescat sæculis fœdere Domino nobiscum coadunati, malis, sub quorum pondere tot annos gemiscunt, tandem sublevantur. Qui dies longe optatissimus si per Dei gratiam semel illuxerit; de consiliorum communione inter Reformatorum Ecclesiarum Synodis per Legatos et literas concilianda iniri possit ratio, per quam Ecclesiæ hostes compescantur, hæreses opprimantur, et schismata resarciantur, pax cum Deo, et inter Ecclesias firma conservetur, et gloriosum Dei opus in Evangelio per orbem terrarum propagando, et Antichristi regno abolendo promoveatur. Quod ut optandum, et sperandum, piis et prudentibus vestris meditationibus, ut bonum semen fœcundissimo solo commendamus.

Vestræ Dignitati, et Fraternitati addictissimi, Pastores et Seniores Nationalis Synodi Scoticanæ, et nostro omnium nomine ac mandato.

JA. BONAR, *Moderator.*

Edinburgi, 4 Junii 1644.

Direct.—Ecclesiis Dei quæ sunt in unitis Hollandiæ, Zelandiæ, aliisque fœderati Belgii Provinciis.

Ordinance concerning Bursars.

The Assembly, understanding that the overture for maintaining bursars, in the Assembly holden in the year 1641, upon the 7th of August, Sess. 15, is never yet put in practice; do, therefore, ordain Presbyteries to put the same in practice with all diligence, and to make account thereof to the next Assembly.

Ordinance for uplifting and imploying Penalties contained in Acts of Parliament upon Pious Uses.

The Assembly, understanding that the executing of some laudable Acts of Parliament, made against non-communicants and excommunicate persons, and of divers other acts containing pecuniary pains for restraining of vice, and advancing piety, is much neglected by the slownesse of Presbyteries and Ministers in seeking execution thereof: Therefore, ordains Presbyteries and Ministers *respective* to be diligent hereafter by all means in prosecuting full and exact execution of all such acts of Parliament, for lifting the saids penalties contained in the same, and for faithfull imployment thereof upon pious uses, and that every Presbyterie report their diligence herein yearly to Generall Assemblies.

An Overture concerning Promises of Marriage made by Minors to those with whom they have committed Fornication.

Forsameikle as it is found by experience, that some young men being put to colleges by their well-affected parents, that they may be instructed in the knowledge of arts and sciences, to the intent they may bee more able for publick employments in the ecclesiastick and civill state, that the said children hes committed fornication; and the woman and her friends hes seduced the foresaid schollers, being minors, to make promise of marriage to the party with whom they have committed fornication; and thereupon intends to get the benefite of marriage with the said young men; not onely without the consent of their parents, but to their great grief, and to the great appearance of the ruine and overthrow of their estate; which may be the case of noblemen and gentlemen's children, as wel as of these of other estates and degrees within the kingdom. Wherefore, if the Assembly think it expedient, it would be declared that all such promises be made null and of none effect, especially where the maker of the promise is minor, and not willing to observe the samine, because his parents will not consent, but oppose and contradict, threatening to make him lose not onely his favour, but both blessing and birthright. This ordinance shal not onely be

very expedient for many good civill causes, but is very consonant and agreeable to the Word of God, and will be very comfortable to many godly parents, who otherwise may be disappointed of their pious intentions, and have the comfort they expected turned to an heavy and grievous crosse.

The Generall Assembly thinks it convenient at this time to delay any determination in the matter above written untill the next Assembly, that in the meane time every Presbyterie may take the same to their serious consideration, and report their judgements to the Assembly.

Act concerning Dissenting Voices in Presbyteries and Synods.

The Assembly thinks it necessar, if any member of Presbyteries or Synods shall finde in matters depending before them that the Moderator shall refuse to put any thing of importance to voices; or if they finde any thing carried by plurality of voices to any determination which they conceive to be contrary to the Word of God, the acts of Assembly, or to the received order of this Kirk, that in either of these cases they urge their dissent to be marked in the register; and if that be refused, that they protest as they would desire to be free of common censure with the rest; and the Assembly declares the dissenters to be censurable, if their dissent shall be found otherwise nor they conceived.

Act concerning the Election of a Moderator in Provinciall Assemblies.

The Generall Assembly, understanding that some Provinciall Assemblies in choosing their Moderator tye themselves to these persons who have been before named and designed in particular Presbyteries, which is against the libertie of the Provinciall Assembly; therefore, discharges Presbyteries to make any such nomination hereafter; and ordain Provincials, in their first meeting, to elect their Moderator, and to make their own list for that effect without any such prælimitation.

Act for keeping of the Fast by the Congregations in the Towne where the Assembly holds.

The Assembly judge it most necessar and comely, seeing the first day of the meeting of Generall Assemblies is, by the laudable practice of this Kirk, a day of fasting and humiliation, for craving the Lord's blessing to that meeting, that not onely the members of the Assembly, but that all the congregations also of the town where the Assembly holds, be so exercised; and that publick worship be in all the kirks thereof that day for that effect.

The Generall Assembly appoints the meeting of the next Assembly to be upon the last Thursday of May, in the year 1645, at Edinburghe.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, MET
OCCASIONALLY AT EDINBURGH, JANUARY, 1645.

Sess. 2, Die Jovis, January 23, 1645, post meridiem.—The Letter from the Commissioners at London to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Reverend, and beloved in the Lord,

As we are not without the knowledge, so are we not without the feeling, of the distresses of our native countrey, and of the troubles of our dear brethren, specially

that the hand of the Lord is stretched out against you, not only by invasion from without, of the basest of the children of men, but also by the unnaturall treachery of some within, who have dealt perfidiously in the Covenant and cause of God: "They hisse and gnash the teeth, they say, We have swallowed her up; certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it: the Lord . . . hath caused thine enemy to rejoyce over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries." Yet (saith the Lord, who is "thy Maker and thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel,). . . for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee; for this is as the waters of Noah, . . . the Covenant of my peace shall not be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." When the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid, the Priests and Levites sung together in praising and giving thanks to the Lord, "Because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever." And we hope at this time, upon the coming of our Reverend brethren, and the sight of that which they bring with them, the noise of the shout of joy shall be louder than the noise of the weeping of the people. This we may say, that not many years ago many of us would have been content to have losed our lives, that we might have obtained that which the Lord, if not in a miraculous, yet in a marvellous and mercifull Providence, hath brought to passe in this iland in these dayes, which many before us have desired to see, and have not seen. God forbid that it should seeme a small thing in your eyes which is done here already, as it is expressed in a paper from the Parliament, and letters from the Assembly. Ye are best acquainted with the tentations and difficulties which ye meet with there, which are also very sensible unto us; and when we consider how the Lord hath carried on his work here at the first taking of the Covenant, and since, against much learning and contradiction, against much policie, power, and all sorts of opposition, (such as reformation useth to encounter,) we are ravished with admiration of the right hand of the Almighty. For our part, we may confidently avouch in the sight of God, and before you, whom next unto God we do respect and reverence, and to whom, as your servants, we are accomptable, that in all our proceedings we had first of all the Word of God before our eyes for the rule—and for our patern the Church of Scotland, so much as was possible—and no lesse (if not more) then if all this time since we parted from you we had been sitting in a Nationall Assembly there, and debating matters with our brethren at home. Where we were not able to get every thing framed to our minde, we have endeavoured, as much as we could, to preserve our own reformation and practice, of which our brethren will give you accompt in the particulars, we hope, to your satisfaction. That an uniformitie in every thing is not obtained in the beginning, let it not seem strange. The levelling of the high mountain of Prelacie, the laying aside of the Book of Common Prayer, the Directory of Worship, concluded in both Houses of Parliament, and the principal propositions of Church government passed in the Assembly, all of them according to the Solemne League and Covenant, the greatest of all, are three or foure witnesses to prove that the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad, and which make us "like them that dream;" and we are sure, that not onely the reformed Kirks, but the Papists will say, the Lord hath done great things for them.

All that we desire is, 1. That the Directory of Worship may be returned by our brethren with all possible expedition, that it may be published here, and put in practice, as that which is extreamely longed for by the good people, and will be a remedy of the many differences and divisions about the worship of God in this kingdome, especially in this place. If there be any thing in it that displeaseth, let it be remonstrated upon irrefragable and convincing reason, otherwise ye will in your wisdom give approbation to it. 2. If there be any particular differences among some brethren, which are not determined, but passed over in silence in the Directory, and yet hinted at in the letter from the Assembly, we hope that in your wisdom ye will so consider of them, that they may be layde aside in due time, and that in the mean while, till the Directory be concluded and put in practice, there be no trouble about them, for that were as snow in summer, and rain in harvest. We know nothing of that

kinde that all of us who love unitie, order, and edification, may not perfectly agree in, without scandall or disturbance: And we beseech the Lord to keep that Kirk free of such sects and monsters of opinions, as are daily set on foot and multiplied in this kingdome, through the want of that church government by Assemblies, which hath preserved us, and we hope, through the blessing of God, shall cure them. 3. Because nationall Assemblies cannot frequentlie conveene, we humbly desire that such a Commission may be settled, as we may at all occasions, til the work be finished, have our recourse unto, for our direction and resolution; for we know both our own weakness and the greatnesse of the work, wherein we can promise no more but to be faithfull in obeying your commandments, as in the sight of God, whom with our souls we pray to grant you his Spirit to guide you into all truth. And thus continue

Your humble and faithfull servants,

(*Subscrib.*)

LOUDOUN.
JO. MAITLAND.

ALEX. HENDERSON.
SAM. RUTHERFURD.

Worcester House, January 6, 1645.

Direct.—For the Right Reverend the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland.

The Letter from the Synode of Divines in England to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Right Reverend, and dearly Beloved in the Lord Jesus,
“As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far countrey.” We, your brethren, yet remaining in the furnace of affliction, and still labouring in the very fire, have at length, by the good hand of God upon us, attained so far toward the mark at which we all aime, that we shall now send you by two of your reverend and faithfull commissioners, Mr Robert Baillie and Mr George Gillespie, (our much honoured brethren,) some good news of that great work after which your zeal for truth and peace hath so much thirsted, and for which you “have not loved your lives unto the death.”

Our progresse therein hath not been so expeditious as was desired and expected. This, unto such as either know not or consider not the weight and greatnesse of the work, nor the manifold difficulties which have occurred to obstruct our proceedings in this day of darkness and calamity, (too sad to be expressed,) hath been like unto “hope deferred, which makes the heart sick.” Howbeit, we trust, that when their desire (namely, that which we have prepared, and are further in travell with) shall come unto them, it will be, through God, a tree of life, as, to our great comfort and encouragement, we already perceive it to be to both the Honourable Houses of Parliament.

Touching the severall papers brought to us from your honourable and reverend commissioners, by the hands of the committee appointed to treat with them in matters of religion, (one of the papers being given in the 10th of November 1643, concerneth the severall sorts of Church-Officers and Assemblies; another, bearing date the 24th of January 1643, concerneth Congregationall Elderships, and Classical Presbyteries; the other, being presented the 15th of August last, representeth the necessity of making greater speed in settling the intended uniformity in religion, according to the late solemne Covenant,) we hold it our duty, in regard both of the art and inseparable union which the Lord hath happily and seasonably made between you and us, and of your indefatigable and inestimable labour of love to this afflicted kingdom, to give your Lordships and the rest of that Venerable Assembly some brief account.

Concerning one Confession of Faith, and forme of Catechisme, we make no question of a blessed and perfect harmony with you. The publick doctrine held out by our Church to all the world, (especially when it shall be reviewed, which is in great part done,) concurring so much with yours, may assure you of your heart's desire in those particulars, so soon as time and opportunity may give us liberty to perfect what we have begun.

The chief reason of laying aside the review of our publick doctrine, after the happy

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and much desired arrivall of your reverend commissioners here, was, the drawing up and accelerating of a Directory for Worship, and of a Forme of Church Government; in both of which we stood at a greater distance from other reformed churches of Christ, and particularly from yours, (which we very much honour,) with whom our solemne sacred Nationall Covenant requireth us to endeavour the nearest conjunction and uniformity, that we, and our posterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

Nor have our labours therein been frustrate; for we have perfected and transmitted a Directory for Worship to both Houses of Parliament, where it hath received such acceptance that it is now passed in both the Honourable Houses of Parliament; which we hope will be to the joy and comfort of all our godly and dear brethren in all his Majestie's kingdoms and dominions.

We have not advised any imposition which might make it unlawfull to vary from it in any thing; yet we hope all our reverend brethren in this kingdom, and in yours also, will so far value and reverence that which, upon so long debate and serious deliberation, hath been agreed upon in this Assembly, (when it shall also passe with you, and be settled as the common Publick Directory for all the Churches in the three kingdoms,) that it shall not be the lesse regarded and observed. And albeit we have not expressed in the Directory every minute particular which is or might be either laid aside or retained among us, as comely and usefull in practice; yet we trust that none will be so tenacious of old customs, not expressly forbidden, or so averse from good examples, although new, in matters of lesser consequence, as to insist upon their liberty of retaining the one or refusing the other, because not specified in the Directory; but be studious to please others rather than themselves.

We have likewise spent divers moneths in the search of the Scriptures to finde out the minde of Christ concerning a Forme of Church Government, wherein we could not but expect the greatest difficulty. For our better progresse herein wee have, with all respect, considered the severall papers of your honourable and reverend commissioners touching this head, and do with all thankfulness acknowledge their great zeal, judgement, and wisdom expressed therein; as also the excellent assistance and great furtherance of your reverend commissioners in this great work, which now, through God's goodnesse, is very near to a period also.

In pursuit whereof we made a strict survey and scrutinie of every proposition, that we might finde it agreeable to and warranted by the Word of God, in a method of our own, without resting upon any particular modell or frame whatsoever already constituted. What we have performed, and how farre we have proceeded therein, we leave to the information of your reverend commissioners, who have been eye and ear witnesses of all that hath past, and we doubt not but you will shortly receive a satisfactory answer from hence, so soon as it shall be passed in the Honourable Houses of Parliament.

And now, right honourable and right reverend brethren, let it not seem grievous that we have thus long delayed the satisfying of your earnest and just expectation. It is the lot of Jerusalem to have her walls built in troublous times, when there are many adversaries. Nor let it offend, that (albeit we acknowledge the many great and inestimable expressions of your love, zeal, and helpfulnesse, unto us every way in the day of our distresse, to be beyond all that we can in words acknowledge) we professe plainly to you, that we do most unwillingly part with those our reverend and dear fellow-labourers, your commissioners, whom now you have called home to render an account of their employment here; which hath been so managed both by them and the rest of their honourable and reverend colleagues as deserveth many thanks, and all honourable acknowledgement, not onely from us, but from you also.

Give us leave to adde, that the long experience we have had of the great sufficiency, integrity, and usefulness of them all, in the great work of Christ, our common Lord and Master, inforceth us (next to our greatest sute, for the continuance of your fervent prayers) to be earnest suiters, not onely for the continuance of these excellent helpers, Mr Alex. Henderson, and Mr Sam. Rutherford, yet remaining with us, but also for the speedy return hither of our reverend brethren that are now going hence, for the perfecting of that work which yet remains. And this sute, we trust, you will

the rather grant, because of the great and joint concernment of both Churches and kingdoms in these matters.

Now, the Spirit of wisdom and of all grace rest upon you in all your great consultations; as at all times, so especially now, when you shall be gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the further building up and polishing of his Church; and cause the fruit of all your labours to be to the praise and glory of God, and the comfort and rejoycing of the hearts of all the Israel of God: He reward all our dear brethren of that sister Church and Nation manifold into their bosome all the labours, love, and sufferings which they have afforded, and still do cheerfully continue, for our sakes and the Gospel's, in this distracted and bleeding kingdome—suppresse all commotions and bloody practices of the common enemy, in both, yea, in all the three kingdoms—set up the Throne of Jesus Christ, and make all the kingdoms to be the Lord's, and our Jerusalem to be a praise upon earth, that all that love her and mourn for her may rejoyce for joy with her, and may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation.

Subscribed by your most loving brethren, and fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord, in the name of this whole Assembly,

WILLIAM TWISSE, *Prolocutor.*
 CORNELIUS BURGESS, *Assessor.*
 JOHN WHITE, *Assessor.*
 HENRY ROBROUGH, *Scriba.*
 ADONIRAM BYFIELD, *Scriba.*

Westminster, January 6, 1644.

Direct.—To the Right Honourable and Right Reverend, the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, these present.

Sess. 5, January 28, 1645, post meridiem, Die Martis.—*Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission of the two preceding Assemblies.*

The Generall Assembly, having heard the report of the committee appointed to consider and examine the proceedings of the Commissioners of the two last Generall Assemblies, viz., of the Assemblies held in Edinburgh in the yeers 1643 and 1644; and after mature deliberation, and serious consideration thereof, finding that the whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions of the said Commissioners, contained in a book and register subscribed by Master Andrew Ker, their clerk, and by Master George Leslie, moderator, and Master William Jaffray, clerk to the said committee, declare much wisdom, diligence, vigilance, and commendable zeal; and that the saids Commissioners have orderly and formally proceeded in every thing according to their commissions: Do, therefore, ratifie and approve the said whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions of the Commissioners of the two Assemblies aforesaid.

Sess. 10, February 3, 1645, Die Lunæ, post meridiem.—*Act of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, for the Establishing and putting in Execution of the Directory for the Publick Worship of God.*

Whereas an happy unity and uniformity in religion amongst the Kirks of Christ in these three kingdoms, united under one Sovereigne, hath been long and earnestly wished for by the godly and well-affected amongst us—was propounded as a main article of the large treaty, without which band and bulwark no safe, well-grounded, and lasting peace could be expected—and, afterward, with greater strength and maturity, revived in the Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdomes, whereby they stand straitly obliged to endeavour the nearest uniformity in one forme of Church Government, Directory of Worship, Confession of Faith, and Forme of Catechising—which hath also, before and since our entring into that Covenant, been the matter of many supplications and remonstrances, and sending commissioners to the

King's Majestie, of declarations to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and of letters to the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and others of the ministerie of the Kirk of England—being also the end of our sending commissioners, as was desired from this Kirk, with commission to treat of uniformitie in the foure particulars afore mentioned, with such committees as should be appointed by both Houses of the Parliament of England, and by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster—and, beside all this, it being, in point of conscience, the chief motive and end of our adventuring upon manifold and great hazards, for quenching the devouring flame of the present unnaturall and bloody warre in England, though to the weakening of this kingdome within itself, and the advantage of the enemy which hath invaded it, accounting nothing too dear to us, so that this our joy be fulfilled: And now this great work being so far advanced, that a Directory for the Publick Worship of God in all the three kingdomes being agreed upon by the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, after consultation with the divines of both kingdomes there assembled, and sent to us for our approbation, that being also agreed upon by this Kirk and kingdome of Scotland, it may be, in the name of both kingdomes, presented to the King, for his royall consent and ratification. The Generall Assembly having most seriously considered, revised, and examined the Directory afore mentioned, after severall public readings of it, after much deliberation, both publickly and in private committees, after full liberty given to all to object against it, and earnest invitations of all who have any scruples about it to make known the same, that they might be satisfied, do unanimously, and without a contrary voice, Agree to and Approve the following Directory, in all the heads thereof, together with the preface set before it; and doth require, decerne, and ordain, that, according to the plain tenour and meaning thereof, and the intent of the preface, it be carefully and uniformly observed and practised by all the ministers and others within this kingdome whom it doth concerne; which practice shall be begun upon intimation given to the severall Presbyteries from the Commissioners of this Generall Assembly, who shall also take speciall care for the timeous printing of this Directory, that a printed copy of it be provided and kept for the use of every kirk in this kingdome; also that each Presbyterie have a printed copy thereof for their use, and take speciall notice of the observation or neglect thereof in every congregation within their bounds, and make known the same to the Provinciaill or Generall Assembly, as there shall be cause. Provided alwayes, that the clause in the Directory, of the administration of the Lord's Supper, which mentioneth the communicants sitting about the table, or at it, be not interpreted, as if in the judgement of this Kirk it were indifferent and free for any of the communicants not to come to and receive at the table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the elements by the minister to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves. It is also provided, that this shall be no prejudice to the order and practice of this Kirk in such particulars as are appointed by the Books of Discipline and Acts of Generall Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory.

Finally, the Assembly doth, with much joy and thankfulness, acknowledge the rich blessing and invaluable mercy of God, in bringing the so much wished for uniformity in religion to such a happy period, that these kingdoms, once at so great distance in the form of worship, are now, by the blessing of God, brought to a neerer uniformity than any other reformed Kirks, which is unto us the return of our prayers, and a lightning of our eyes and reviving of our hearts, in the midst of our many sorrows and sufferings, a taking away in a great measure the reproach of the people of God, to the stopping of the mouthes of malignant and disaffected persons, and an opening unto us a door of hope, that God hath yet thoughts of peace towards us, and not of evill, to give us an expected end. In the expectation and confidence whereof we do rejoyce, beseeching the Lord to preserve these kingdomes from heresies, schismes, offences, prophanenesse, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godlinesse, and to continue with us, and the generations following, these his pure and purged ordinances, together with an increase of the power and life thereof, to the glory of his great name, the enlargement of the kingdom of his Son, the corroboration of peace and love between the kingdoms, the unity and consent of all his people, and our edifying one another in love.

Sess. 14, February 7, 1645, post meridiem.—Overtures for advancement of Learning, and good Order in Grammar Schools and Colledges.

I. That every grammar school be visited twice in the year by visitors, to be appointed by the Presbyterie and Kirk-session in landward parishes, and by the town-councill in burghs, with their ministers; and where universities are, by the universities, with consent alwayes of the patrons of the school, that both the fidelitie and diligence of the masters, and the proficiencie of the schollers in pietie and learning may appear, and deficiencie censured accordingly; and that the visitors see that the masters be not distracted by any other employments which may divert them from their diligent attendance.

II. That for the remedie of the great decay of poesie, and of abilitie to make verse, and in respect of the common ignorance of prosodie, no schoolmaster be admitted to teach a grammar school, in burghs or other considerable paroches, but such as after examination shall be found skilfull in the Latine tongue, not only for prose, but also for verse; and that after other trials to be made by the ministers, and others depute by the Session, town, and paroch for this effect, that he be also approven by the Presbyterie.

III. That neither the Greek language nor logick, nor any part of philosophie, be taught in any grammar school or private place within this kingdom to young schollers, who thereafter are to enter to any colledge, unlesse it be for a preparation to their entrie there; and, notwithstanding of any progresse any may pretend to have made privately in these studies, yet, in the colledge he shall not enter to any higher classe then that wherein the Greek language is taught, and being entred shall proceed orderly through the rest of the classes, untill he finish the ordinary course of four years; unlesse after due triall and examination, he be found equall in learning to the best or most part of that classe to which he desires to ascend, by overleaping a mid classe, or to the best or most part of those who are to be graduat, if he supplicate to obtain any degree before the ordinary time; and also, that there be found other pregnant reasons to move the Faculty of Arts to condescend thereto. And otherwise, that he be not admitted to the degree of Master of Arts.

IV. That none be admitted to enter a student of the Greek tongue in any colledge, unlesse after triall he be found able to make a congruous theame in Latine; or at least, being admonished of his errour, can readily shew how to correct the same.

V. That none be promoted from an inferiour classe of the ordinary course to a superiour, unlesse he be found worthy, and to have sufficiently profited; otherwise, that he be ordained not to ascend with his condisciples, and if he be a burser, that he lose his burse; and namely, it is to be required, that those who are taught in Aristotle be found well instructed in his text, and be able to repeat in Greek, and understand his whole definitions, divisions, and principall precepts, so far as they have proceeded.

VI. Because it is a disgrace to learning, and hinderance to trades and other callings, and an abuse hurtfull to the publick, that such as are ignorant and unworthy be honoured with a degree or publick testimony of learning; that, therefore, such triall be taken of students, specially of magistrands, that those who are found unworthy be not admitted to the degree and honour of Masters.

VII. That none who have entred to one colledge for triall or studie be admitted to another colledge, without the testimoniall of the masters of that colledge wherein he entred first, both concerning his literature and dutifull behaviour, so long as he remained there; at least untill the masters of that colledge from whence he cometh be timely advertised, that they may declare if they have any thing lawfully to be objected in the contrary. And that none be admitted, promoted, or receive degree in any colledge, who was rejected in another colledge for his unfittnesse and unworthinesse, or any other cause repugnant to good order, who leaves the colledge where he was, for eschewing of censure, or chastising for any fault committed by him; or who leaves the colledge because he was chastised, or for any other grudge or unjust quarrell against his masters.

VIII. That none of those who may be lawfully received in one colledge, after he was in another, be admitted to any other classe, but to that wherein he was or should have been in the colledge from whence he came, except upon reasons mentioned in the third article preceding.

IX. That at the time of every Generall Assembly, the Commissioners directed thereto from all the universities of this kingdom meet and consult together for the establishment and advancement of pietie, learning, and good order, in the schools and universities, and be carefull that a correspondence be kept among the universities, and so farre as is possible an uniformitie in doctrine and good order.

The Generall Assembly, after serious consideration of the Overtures and Articles above written, approves the same, and ordains them to be observed, and to have the strength of an act and ordinance of Assembly in all time coming.

*To the Honourable and High Court of Parliament, The humble Petition of the
Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland.*

According to the constant and commendable practice of the Generall Assemblies of this Kirk, we judge it incumbent to us, Right Honourable, when the displeasure of the Almighty, and the extreame danger of this Kirk and kingdome is so undenyably demonstrate to the eyes of the whole world, by the invasion, increase, and successe of these barbarous Irishes, and treacherous countrey men joyned with them; not onely out of conscience of the trust committed unto us, to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against these who have joyned or shall happen to joyn themselves with these enemies of God and his cause, to appoint a solemne fast and humiliation through the kingdom, and to give warning to all the ministers and members of this Kirk of the dangers and duties of the time; but also, out of respect to your Honours, "who judge not for man, but for the Lord; who is with you in the judgement, and standeth in the congregation of the mighty," humbly to present your Honours with our thoughts and desires concerning the duties which the exigency of this time expecteth from your hands.

The impunity of known incendiaries and malignants, as, by the course of Divine Providence, (permitting those who have formerly escaped the hand of justice to be the prime instruments of our present troubles,) it is held forth for a cause of the wrath which yet burneth more and more; so hath it been acknowledged before God, in our publick humiliations, to be a maine cause of God's controversie with the land, and an accession to the guiltinesse of the cruelty, villany, and other mischiefs committed by them and their followers; and to lye still under the guilt after solemne confession were an high provocation of God, and an heavy aggravation of our sinne; and, on the one part, doth grieve the godly, discourage their hearts, and weaken their hands; on the other part, doth harden them who are already engaged, to persist in their unnaturall and bloody practices—heartneth others, who have not hitherto avowed their malignancy, openly to declare themselves—and is laid hold upon by the disaffected, who lye in wait to finde occasion, as fitting to work the people to an unwillingnesse of undergoing necessary burthens imposed for publick good.

Although the Lord hath shewn unto us great and sore troubles, and our heart may be broken with reproach, shame, and dishonour, put upon us by the vilest among men; yet hath he made known unto us the power of his working amidst these manifold troubles, bringing forward the much desired work of uniformity in worship and government to a greater perfection then was expected, (as your Honours and we did see the other day with joy of heart,) which is a testimony from heaven, that the Lord hath not left us in the fiery furnace, but dwelleth still in the midst of the burning bush, and should rouze up our drouping spirits to follow God fully, and quicken our slownesse to hasten and "help the Lord against the mighty." In delay, there is perill of strengthening the arme of the intestine enemy, making faint the hearts of our neighbours and friends, and disabling us for reaching help unto those who are wrestling, against much opposition, to perfect the work of reformation. The reproach under which we lye almost buried, should be so farre from retarding proceedings, that it

should intend the spirit into a higher degree of desire, and expedite the hand to speedier action for vindicating our own name, and "that Name which is above all names," from the daily "reproach of the foolish."

May it therefore please your Honours, in the zeal of the Lord, to proceed with some speedy course of justice against such persons as are known to have joyned themselves, either actually in arms, or by their counsell, supplies, encouragements, have strengthened the hands of the bloody enemies, whereby a cause of the controversie shall be removed, the land cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, the cruell and crooked generation disheartned, the fainting hearts of the godly refreshed, and their feeble knees strengthened; and cheerfully and unanimously to resolve upon, and put in execution, all lawfull and possible wayes of speedy and active pursuing and extirpating these barbarous and unnaturall enemies within the kingdom; whereby your thankfulness to God for promoting his owne work, and your endeavours of uniformity, shall be testified—your sense of the dishonour of this nation, and of the danger of delay expressed—and your conscience of the oath of God upon you manifested. We are confident of your Honours' conscience and care, onely we exhort you in the Lord to unite your spirits, and accelerate your counsels and endeavours; and pray the Lord of Hosts to prosper your enterprises, according to the engagement of his name, interest of his work, and necessity of his people, to his own glory, the establishment of the King's throne in righteousness, the comfort of his saints, and the conversion or confusion of enemies. "Be of good courage, and behave your selves valiantly, for our people, and for the cities of our God." "Arise, and the Lord be with you."

Overtures propounded by the Committee appointed by this Venerable Assembly, for ordering of the Bursars of Theologie, and maintaining of them at the Schools of Divinitie.

I. That every bursar have yearly payed him for his maintenance L.100 at the least.

II. That the said maintenance be taken forth of the Kirk penalties, according to the intention of the first act for maintaining of bursars.

III. That every Presbyterie, consisting of twelve kirks in number, maintain a bursar yearly at the University.

IV. And where the Presbyteries are fewer in number, that they joyne with other Presbyteries, to make up their number; and the superplus of the number to be ordered and disposed by the Presbyteries and Synods; and that their books bear records thereof.

V. That the Kirks of these Presbyteries be proportionally stented, according to the number of the Communicants in each Parochin.

VI. That the said maintenance be collected by the Moderatour of every Presbyterie by equall divided portions, and the one-half to be brought into the Winter Synod, and given to the said bursars, and the other half at the Summer Synod, to be sent unto them; and that the severall Synods take an exact compt hereof, and see that all be rightly done, and that their books bear the report hereof to the Generall Assembly.

VII. That the time of bursars' abode at the Schools of Divinity exceed not foure years; which being expired, or in case before the expiring of the said time any be removed, either by death, or by some calling to a particular charge, another be presented to the said benefit.

VIII. That in case any prove deficient in payment of the said maintenance for the time to come, that it shall be carefully exacted by the Synods, and sent over to the Generall Assembly, to be disposed upon by them as they shall finde expedient, that no person may have benefit in their slacknesse and neglect.

IX. That all bursars of Theologie bring sufficient testimonies yearly from the Universities where they are bred, of their proficiencie and good behaviour; and that they be also ready to give a proof of their labours at the severall Synods, if it shall be re-

quired. And if they be found deficient, that they be denuded of the said benefit, and others more hopefull placed in their rooms.

The Generall Assembly approves these Overtures above written, and ordains the same to be observed in all time coming. And that Presbyteries (who have not already done it) begin and enter to the maintaining of their bursars, in manner foresaid, in this present year 1645. And recommends to Presbyteries to make choice of such for the burse as are of good report, inclined to learning, and have past their course of Philosophie; and to try their qualification before they send them to the Universities.

The Opinion of the Committee for keeping the greater Uniformitie in this Kirk, in the practice and observation of the Directory in some Points of Publick Worship.

I. It is the humble opinion of the Committee for regulating that exercise of reading and expounding the Scriptures read upon the Lord's day, mentioned in the Directory, that the Minister and people repair to the Kirk half an hour before that time at which ordinarily the Minister now entreth to the publick worship; and that that exercise of reading and expounding, together with the ordinary exercise of preaching, be perfected and ended at the time which formerly closed the exercise of publick worship.

II. In the administration of Baptisme it will be convenient that that sacrament be administred in face of the Congregation, that what is spoken and done may be heard and seen of all, and that it be administred after the sermon, before the blessing.

III. In the administration of the Lord's Supper it is the judgement of the Committee:—

1. That congregations be still tried and examined before the communion, according to the bygone practice of this Kirk.

2. That there be no reading in the time of communicating, but the minister making a short exhortation at every table, that thereafter there be silence during the time of the communicants' receiving, except onely when the minister expresseth some few short sentences, suitable to the present condition of the communicants in the receiving, that they may be incited and quickned in their meditations in the action.

3. That distribution of the elements among the communicants be universally used; and for that effect, that the bread be so prepared that the communicants may divide it amongst themselves, after the minister hath broken and delivered it to the nearest.

4. That while the tables are dissolving and filling there be alwayes singing of some portion of a Psalmc, according to the custome.

5. That the communicants both before their going to, and after their coming from the table, shall only joyne themselves to the present publick exercise then in hand.

6. That when the communion is to be celebrate in a paroch, one minister may be employed for assisting the minister of the paroch, or at the most two.

7. That there be one sermon of preparation delivered in the ordinary place of publick worship upon the day immediatly preceding.

8. That before the serving of the tables there be only one sermon delivered to those who are to communicate, and that in the kirk where the service is to be performed. And that in the same kirk there be one sermon of thanksgiving after the communion is ended.

9. When the parochiners are so numerous that their paroch kirk cannot contain them, so that there is a necessity to keep out such of the paroch as cannot conveniently have place, that in that case the brother who assists the minister of the paroch may be ready, if need be, to give a word of exhortation in some convenient place appointed for that purpose, to those of the paroch who that day are not to communicate; which must not be begun untill the sermon delivered in the kirk be concluded.

10. That of those who are present in the kirk where the communion is celebrate

none be permitted to go forth whill the whole tables be served and the blessing pronounced, unlesse it be for more commodious order, and in other cases of necessity.

11. That the minister who cometh to assist have a special care to provide his own paroch, lest, otherwise, while he is about to minister comfort to others his own flock be left destitute of preaching.

12. That none coming from another paroch shall be admitted to the communion without a testimoniall from their own minister; and no minister shall refuse a testimoniall to any of his paroch who communicates ordinarily at their own paroch kirk, and are without scandall in their life for the time. And this is no wayes to prejudice any honest person, who occasionally is in the place where the communion is celebrate; or such as by death, or absence of their own minister, could not have a testimoniall.

IV. It is also the judgement of the committee, that the ministers bowing in the pulpit, though a lawful custome in this Kirk, be hereafter laid aside, for satisfaction of the desires of the reverend Divines in the Synod of England, and for uniformity with that Kirk, so much endeared to us.

The Assembly, having considered seriously the judgement of the committee above written, doth approve the same in all the articles thereof, and ordains them to be observed in all time hereafter.

Sess. 16, February 10, 1645, post meridiem.—Act of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, approving the Propositions concerning Kirk Government and Ordination of Ministers.

The Generall Assembly, being most desirous and solicitous, not only of the establishment and preservation of the form of kirk government in this kingdome, according to the Word of God, Books of Discipline, Acts of Generall Assemblies, and Nationall Covenant, but also of an uniformity in kirk government betwixt these kingdomes, now more straitly and strongly united by the late Solemne League and Covenant; and considering, that as in former times there did, so hereafter there may arise, through the neernesse of contagion, manifold mischiefs to this Kirk from a corrupt form of government in the Kirk of England: Likeas the precious opportunity of bringing the Kirks of Christ, in all the three kingdoms, to an uniformity in kirk government, being the happinesse of the present times above the former; which may also, by the blessing of God, prove an effectuall meane, and a good foundation to prepare for a safe and well-grounded pacification, by removing the cause from which the present pressures and bloodie wars did originally proceed. And now, the Assembly having thrice read, and diligently examined the propositions (hereunto annexed) concerning the Officers, Assemblies, and Government of the Kirk; and concerning the Ordination of Ministers, brought unto us as the results of the long and learned debates of the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, and of the treaty of uniformity with the Commissioners of this Kirk there residing; after mature deliberation, and after tymous calling upon, and warning of all who have any exceptions against the same, to make them known, that they might receive satisfaction, doth Agree to, and Approve the propositions aforementioned, touching kirk government and ordination; and doth hereby authorize the Commissioners of this Assembly, who are to meet at Edinburgh, to agree to and conclude, in the name of this Assembly, an uniformitie betwixt the Kirks in both kingdoms in the aforementioned particulars, so soon as the same shall be ratified, without any substantiall alteration, by an ordinance of the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England; which ratification shall be timely intimate and made known by the Commissioners of this Kirk residing at London. Provided alwayes, that this act shall be no wayes prejudiciall to the further discussion and examination of that Article which holds forth, that the Doctor or Teacher hath power of the administration of the Sacraments as well as the Pastor; as also of the distinct rights and interests of Presbyteries and People in the Calling of Ministers—but that it shall be free to debate and discusse these points, as God shall be pleased to give further light.

The propositions of Government and Ordination, mentioned in the preceeding act, are not to be here printed; but after the ratification thereof by the Parliament

of England, they are to be printed by warrant of the Commissioners of this Assembly.

Sess. 18, February 12, 1645, post meridiem.

The Generall Assembly, after mature deliberation, having found it most necessary that this whole nation be timely warned and duly informed of their present dangers, and the remedies to be used, and duties to be done, for preventing and removing thereof; doth ordain this Warning to be forthwith printed and published, and sent to all the Presbyteries in this kingdom, as also to the Presbyteries that are with our armies. —And that each Presbyterie, immediately after the receipt hereof, take speedy course for the reading of it in every congregation within their bounds, upon the Lord's day, after the forenoon's sermon, and before the blessing; and that they give account of their diligence herein to the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, who have hereby power and warrant to try and censure such as shall contemne or slight the said Warning, or shall refuse or neglect to obey this ordinance.

A Solemne and Seasonable Warning to the Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burrows, Ministers, and Commons of Scotland; as also to our Armies without and within this Kingdom.

The cause of God in this kingdom, both in the beginnings and progresse of it, hath been carried through much craft and mighty opposition of enemies, and through other perplexities and dangers, God so disposing, for the greater glory of his manifold and marvellous wisdome and his invincible power, and for our greater tryall.

These dangers, both from without and from within, together with the remedies thereof, have been from time to time represented and held forth, in the many publick supplications of this Kirk and kingdom to the King, and in their many declarations, remonstrances, letters, acts, and other publick intimations; particularly, by a necessary Warning published by the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly in January 1643; and by the remonstrance of the same commissioners to the Convention of Estates in July thereafter, concerning the dangers of religion, and the remedies of these dangers; which warning and remonstrance at that time had, by the blessing of God, very good and comfortable effects. And now, the Generall Assembly itself, being by a speciall providence, and upon extraordinary occasions, called together, while God is writing bitter things against this land in great letters, which he that runs may read—and knowing that we cannot be answerable to God nor our own consciences, nor the expectation of others, if from this chief watch-tower we should give no seasonable warning to the city of God; while we think of these things, “for Sion's sake we will not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake we will not rest;” trusting that God will give, though not to all, yet to many, a seeing eye, a hearing ear, and an understanding heart; for “who is wise, and he shall understand these things, prudent, and he shall know them; for the wayes of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein,” and “the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand.”

That which we principally intend, is to hold forth (so farre as the Lord gives us light) how this nation ought to be affected with their present mercies and judgements; what use is to be made of the Lord's dealings, and what is required of a people so dealt with.

Had we been timely awaked, and taken warning, either from the exemplary judgements of other nations, or from God's threatnings by the mouths of his servants amongst our selves; or from our owne former visitations, and namely, the sword, threatned and drawn against us, both at home and from abroad, but at that time, through the forbearance of God, put up in the sheath again, we might have prevented the miseries under which now we groane. But the cup of trembling before taken out of our hands, is again come about to us, that wee may drink deeper of it; and although, when these bloody monsters, the Irish rebels, together with some degenerate, unnaturall, and perfidious countrey-men of our own, did first lift up their

heads, and enter this kingdome in a hostile way, it was looked upon as a light matter, and the great judgement which hath since appeared in it, not apprehended; yet now we are made more sensible, that they are "the rod of God's wrath, and the staffe in their hand," which hath stricken us these three times, is "his indignation." He "hath shewed his people hard things, and made us to drink the wine of astonishment." Take we, therefore, notice of the hand that smiteth us; "for affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. There is no evill in the city" nor countrey "which the Lord hath not done;" he it is that "formeth the light, and createth darknesse; who maketh peace, and createth evill;" he it is that hath given a charge to the sword, "so that it cannot be still;" he it is that hath his other "arrows ready upon the string to shoot at us," the pestilence and famine.

In the next place, let us apply our hearts to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to understand the language of this present judgment, and God's meaning in it; for though the Almighty "giveth not an accompt of any of his matters," and hath "his way in the sea, and his path in the deep waters," which cannot be traced; yet he is pleased, by the light of his Word and Spirit, by the voice of our own consciences, and by that which is written and ingraven upon our judgement, as with the point of a diamond and a pen of iron, to make known in some measure his meaning unto his servants. "God hath spoken once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth not;" therefore, now hath he made this rod to speak aloud the third time, that we may "hear the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it;" that which the rod pointeth at is not any guilt of rebellion or disloyaltie in us, as the sons of Belial do slander and belye the Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdoms, which we are so farre from repenting of, that we cannot remember or mention it without great joy and thankfulness to God, as that which hath drawn many blessings after it, and unto which God hath given manifold and evident testimonies; for no sooner was the Covenant begun to be taken in England, but sensibly the condition of affairs there was changed to the better; and though a little before, the enemy was coming in like a flood, yet as soon as the Spirit of the Lord did lift up the standard against him, from that day forward the waters of their deluge did decrease.

And for our part, our forces sent into that kingdom, in pursuance of that Covenant, have been so mercifully and manifestly assisted and blessed from heaven, (though in the mids of many dangers and distresses, and much want and hardship,) and have been so farre instrumentall to the foyling and scattering of two principall armies; first, the Marquesse of Newcastle his army; and afterward, Prince Rupert's and his together; and to the reducing of two strong cities, York and Newcastle, that we have what to answer the enemy that reproacheth us concerning that businesse, and that which may make iniquitie it self to stop her mouth. But which is more unto us than all victories, or whatsoever temporall blessing, the reformation of religion in England, and uniformity therein between both kingdoms, (a principal end of that Covenant,) is so far advanced, that the English Service-Book, with the Holy-Dayes, and many other ceremonies contained in it, together with the Prelacy, the fountain of all these, are abolished, and taken away by ordinance of Parliament, and a Directory for the Worship of God in all the three kingdoms agreed upon in the Assemblies, and in the Parliaments of both kingdoms, without a contrary voice in either; the government of the Kirk by Congregational Elderships, Classical Presbyteries, Provincial and National Assemblies, is agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, which is also voted and concluded in both Houses of the Parliament of England: And what is yet remaining of the intended uniformitie is in a good way; so that, let our lot fall in other things as it may, "the will of the Lord be done." In this we rejoyce, and will rejoyce, that our Lord Jesus Christ is no loser, but a conquerour; that his ordinances take place, that his cause prevaieth, and the work of purging and building his temple goeth forward, and not backward. Neither yet are we so to understand the "voice of the rod" which lyeth heavy upon us, as if the Lord's meaning were to pluck up what he hath planted, and to pull down what he hath builded in this kingdom, to have no more pleasure in us, to remove our candlestick, and to take his kingdom from us; nay, before that our God cast us off, and the "glory depart from Israel," let him rather consume us by the sword, and the famine, and the pestilence, so that he will but keep his own great

name from reproach and blasphemy, and own us as his people in covenant with him. But "now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing," we will beleeve "that we shall yet see the goodnesse of the Lord in the land of the living:" We will not cast away our confidence of a blessed peace, and of the removing of the scourge and casting it in the fire, when the Lord hath by it performed "his whole work upon Mount Sion and Jerusalem," much more will wee be confident of the continuance of the blessings of the Gospel, "that glory may dwell in our land." "This is the day of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it:" And the time is coming, when a new song shall be put in our mouths, and we shall say, "This is our God; we have waited for him, and he hath saved us." Though the Lord smite us, it is the hand of a father, not of an enemy; he is not consuming us, but refining us, that we may come forth as gold out of the fire. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despaire; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but not destroyed." We know assuredly there is more mercy in emptying us from vessel to vessel, then in suffering us to settle on our lees, whereby our taste should remain in us, and our sent not be changed.

These things premised, we come to the true language of this heavy judgement, and to the reall procuring causes thereof. "For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel." God is hereby shewing to great and small in this land their work and their transgression, that they have exceeded. "He openeth also their eare to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity." We leave every congregation in the land, every family in every congregation, and every person in every family, to examine their own hearts and wayes, and to mourn for congregation-all, domesticall, and personall sinnes: Cursed shall they be who have added fuell to the fire, and now bring no water to extinguish it, who had a great hand in the provocation, and bear no part in the humiliation.

Let every one commune with his own conscience, and repent of his, even his wickednesse, and say, What have I done? We shall here touch only the nationall sinnes, or at least more publick ones then those of a family or congregation, which we also intend for chief causes of a publick fast and humiliation. If, among our nobles, gentry, and barons, there have been some studying their own private interests more then the publick, and "seeking their own things more then the things of Christ, or oppressing and defrauding the poorer sort and the needie, because it was in the power of their hand;" and if, among our ministrie there have been divers time-servers, "who have not renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, whose hearts have not been right before God, nor stedfast in his Covenant," who have been secretly haters of the power of godlinesse, and of mortification; shall not God search all this out? "who will bring to light the hidden things of darknesse, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." In these also leaving all men to a judging and searching of themselves, there are many other provocations which are apparent in all or many of this nation, from which, "though they wash with nitre, and take much sope," yet they cannot make themselves clean. "Because of these the land mourneth," and at these the sword striketh.

As, first, The contempt, neglect, and disesteem of the glorious Gospel; our unbelief, unfruitfulnesse, lukewarmnesse, formality, and hardnesse of heart, under all the means of grace; our not receiving of Christ in our hearts, nor seeking to know him and glorifie him in all his offices. The power of godlinesse is hated and mocked by many to this day, and by the better sort too much neglected, and many Christian duties are not minded; as, "the not speaking of our own words, nor finding of our own pleasure upon the Lord's day;" holy and edifying conference, both on that day, and at other occasions; the instructing, admonishing, comforting, and rebuking one another, as Divine Providence ministreth occasion. In many families, almost no knowledge nor worship of God to be found; yea, there are among the ministers who have strengthened the hearts and hands of the profane more then of the godly, and have not taken "heed to the ministrie which they have received of the Lord to fulfill it."

Next, God hath sent the sword to avenge the quarrell of his broken Covenant; for, besides the defection of many of this nation under the Prelats from our first nationall Covenant, a sinne not forgotten by God, if not repented by men as well as forsaken; our latter vows and Covenants have been also foully violated, by not contributing

our uttermost assistance to this cause, with our estates and lives ; by not endeavouring with all faithfulness, the discovery, triall, and condigne punishment of Malignants and evil instruments ; yea, by complying too much with those who have not onely born armes, and given their personall presence and assistance, but also drawn and led on others after them in the shedding of our brethren's blood ; therefore is our sinne made our punishment, and " we are filled with the fruit of our own wayes." These horns now push the sides of Judah and Jerusalem, because the carpenters, when they ought and might, did not cut them off ; and yet to this day the course of justice is obstructed. The Lord himself will execute justice if men will not. But, above all, let it be deeply and seriously thought of, that our Covenant is broken by the neglect of a reall reformation of our selves and others under our power ; let every one ask his own heart what lust is mortified in him, or what change wrought in his life since, more then before the Covenant ? Swearing, cursing, profanation of the Lord's day, fornication, and other uncleannesse, drunkennesse, injustice, lying, oppression, murmuring, repining, and other sorts of prophanesne, still abound too much both in the countrey and in our armies ; yea, there is no reformation of some members of publick judicatories, which is a great dishonour to God, and a foul scandall to the whole nation.

Thirdly, We have not glorified God according to the great things which he hath done for us, nor made the right use of former mercies ; since he loved us, (a nation not worthy to be beloved,) he hath made us precious and honourable, but we have not walked worthy of his love : We " waxed fat and kicked," " forsaking God who made us, and lightly esteeming the rock of our salvation." And this great unthankfulness filleth up our cup.

Fourthly, Notwithstanding of so much guiltinesse, we did send forth our armies, and undertake great services presumptuously, without repentance, and making our peace with God, like the Children of Israel, who, trusting to the goodnesse of their cause, minded no more, but " which of us shall goe up first."

It is now high time, under the feeling of so great a burden, both of sinne and wrath, to humble our uncircumcised hearts, to put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope, to wallow our selves in ashes, to clothe our selves with our shame as with a garment ; to justifie God's righteous judgements, to acknowledge our iniquitie, to make our supplication to our Judge, and to seek his face, that he may pardon our sinne, and heal our land. The Lord roareth, and shall not his children tremble ? The God of glory thundereth, and " the Highest uttereth his voice, hailstones and coales of fire ;" who will not fall down and fear before him ? The fire waxeth hot, and burneth round about us, and shall any sit still and be secure ? The storm bloweth hard, and shall any sluggard be still asleep ? This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy ; who will not take up a lamentation ? Let the watchmen rouse up themselves and others, and strive to get their own and their people's hearts deeply affected, and even melted before the Lord : Let every one turn from his evill way, and cry mightily to God, and give him no rest till he repent of the evill, and smell a savour of rest, and say, " It is enough." He hath not said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. Wee do not mourne as they that have no hope, but we " will bear the indignation of the Lord, because wee have sinned against him, untill he plead our cause, and execute judgement for us." And what though our candles be put out ? so that our sun shine : What though our honour be laid in the dust ? so that God work out his own honour, yea, our happinesse out of our shame. In vain have we trusted to the arm of flesh ; in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. No flesh must glory before him, but " he that glorieth must glory in the Lord."

These duties of humiliation, repentance, faith, amendment of life, and fervent prayer, though the principal, yet are not all which are required at the hands of this nation, but men of all sorts and degrees must timely apply themselves to such other resolutions and actions, as are most suteable and necessary at this time ; which that all may the better understand, and be excited and encouraged to act accordingly, let it be well observed, that the present state of the controversie and cause is no other but what hath been formerly professed before God and the world, that is, the reformation and preservation of religion, the defence of the honour and happinesse of the

King, and of the authority of the Parliament, together with the maintenance of our lawes, liberties, lives, and estates. We are not changed from our former principles and intentions, but these who did fall off from us to the contrary party have now made it manifest, that these were not their ends when they seemed to joyn with us; "Therefore are they gone out from us, because they were not of us." And as our cause is the same, so the danger thereof is not lesse, but greater then before, and that from two sorts of enemies. First, from open enemies, we mean those of the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant faction, who have displayed a banner against the Lord and against his Christ in all the three kingdoms, being "set on fire of hell," and by the speciall inspiration of Satan, who is full of fury, because he knowes he hath but a short time to reigne. The cockatrice before hatched is now broken forth into a viper. The danger was before feared, now it is felt—before imminent, now incumbent—before our division, now our destruction is endeavoured—before the sword was fourbished and made ready, now the sword "is made fat with flesh, and drunk with bloud," and yet it hungreth and thirsteth for more. The Queen is most active abroad, using all means for strengthening the Popish, and suppressing the Protestant party; insomuch, that Malignants have insolently expressed their confidence, that her journey to France shall prove a successfull counsell, and that this island, and particularly this kingdome, shall have a greater power to grapple with, before the next summer, then any which yet we have encountred with. The Irish rebels have offered to the King to send over a greater number into both the kingdomes. The hostile intentions of the King of Denmark, if God be not pleased still to divert and disable him, do plainly enough appear from his own letters, sent not long since to the estates of this kingdome. In the mean time, the hellish crue, under the conduct of the excommunicate and forefaulted Earle of Montrose, and of Alaster MacDonald, a Papist and an outlaw, doth exercise such barbarous, unnaturall, horrid, and unheard of cruelty, as is above expression; and (if not repressed) what better usage can others, not yet touched, expect from them, being now hardened and animated by the succeſse which God hath, for our humiliation and correction, permitted unto them; and if they shall now get leave to secure the Highlands for themselves, they will not onely from thence infest the rest of this countrey, but endeavour a diversion of our forces in England, from the prosecution of the ends expressed in the Covenant of the three kingdoms, toward which ends, as their service hath been already advantageous, so their continuance is most necessary.

The second sort of enemies from which our present dangers arise, are secret Malignants and Dis-Covenanters, who may be known by these and the like characters—their slighting or censuring of the Publick Resolutions of this Kirk and State—their consulting and labouring to raise jealousies and divisions, to retard or hinder the execution of what is ordered by the publick judicatories—their slandering of the Covenant of the three kingdoms, and expedition into England, as not necessary for the good of religion or safety of this kingdome, or as tending to the diminution of the King's just power and greatnesse—their confounding of the King's honour and authority, with the abuse and pretence thereof, and with commissions, warrants, and letters, procured from the King by the enemies of this cause and Covenant, as if we could not oppose the latter without encroaching upon the former—their whetting of their tongues to censure and slander those whom God hath honoured as his chief instruments in this work—their commending, justifying, or excusing the proceedings of James Grahame, some time Earle of Montrose, and his complices—their conversing or intercommuning, by word or writ, with him, or other excommunicate Lords, contrary to the nature of that ordinance of Christ, and to the old Acts of Generall Assemblies—their making merry, and their insolent carriage, at the news of any prosperous succeſse of the Popish and Malignant armies in any of these kingdomes—their drawing of parties and factions, to the weakening of the common union—their spreading of informations that uniformitie in religion and the presbyteriall government is not intended by the Parliament of England—their endeavours, informations, and sollicitations, tending to weaken the hearts and hands of others, and to make them withhold their assistance from this work.

Let this sort of bosome enemies, and disaffected persons, be well marked, timely dis-

covered, and carefully avoided, lest they infuse the poyson of their seducing counsels into the mindes of others; wherein let ministers be faithfull, and Presbyteries vigilant and impartial, as they will answer the contrary to God, and to the Generall Assembly, or their commissioners.

The cause and the dangers thereof being thus evidenced, unlesse men will blot out of their hearts the love of religion and the cause of God, and cast off all care of their countrey, lawes, liberties, and estates, yea, all naturall affection to the preservation of themselves, their wives, children, and friends, and whatsoever is dearest to them under the sun, (all these being in the visible danger of a present ruine and destruction,) they must now or never appear actively, each one stretching himself to, yea, beyond his power. It is no time to dally, nor go about the businesse by halves, nor by almost, but altogether zealous: "Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently, or dealeth falsly in the Covenant of God." If we have been so forward to assist our neighbour kingdomes, shall we neglect to defend our own? Or shall the enemies of God be more active against his cause than his people for it? God forbid. If the work, being so far carried on, shall now miscarry and fail in our hands, our own consciences shall condemne us, and posterity shall curse us; but if we stand stoutly and stedfastly to it, the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in our hands, and all generations shall call us blessed.

Let ministers stir up others, by free and faithfull preaching, and by admonishing every one of his duty, as there shall be occasion; and if it shall be the lot of any of them to fall under the power of the enemy, let them, through the strength of Christ, persevere in their integrity, choosing affliction rather than sin, glorifying God, and not fearing what flesh can do unto them.

Let our armies beware of ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, living godly, soberly, and righteously, avoyding all scandalous carriage, which may give occasion to others to think the worse of their cause and Covenant; and remembring that the eyes of God, angels, and men, are upon them: Finally, renouncing all confidence in their own strength, skill, valour, and number, and trusting only to the "God of the armies of Israel," who hath fought, and will fight for them.

Let all sorts, both of high and low degree in this kingdome, call to minde their Solemne Covenants, and pay their vows to the Most High; and, namely, that article of our first Covenant, which obligeth us not to stay nor hinder any such resolution as by common consent shall be found to conduce for the ends of the Covenant, but by all lawfull means to further and promove the same; which lyeth as a bond upon people's consciences, readily to obey such orders, and willingly to undergo such burdens as by the publick and common resolution of the Estates of Parliament are found necessary for the prosecution of the war; considering that the enemy cannot be suppressed without a competent number of forces, and forces cannot be kept together without maintenance, and maintenance cannot be had without such publick burdens; which, however, for the present not joyous but grievous, yet it shall be no grief of heart afterwards, even unto the common sort, that they have given some part of their necessary livelihood for assisting so good a work. It is far from our thoughts that the pinching of some should make others superfluously to abound. It is rather to be expected of the richer sort that they will spare and defalk, not only the pride and superfluity both of apparell and diet, but also a part of their lawfull allowance in these things, to contribute the same as a free-will offering, beside what they are obliged to by law or publick order, after the example of godly Nehemiah, who, for the space of twelve years, while the walls of Jerusalem were abuilding, did not eat the bread of the governour, that he might ease by so much the people's burthens and bondage.

In our last Covenant there is another article, which (without the oblivion or neglect of any of the rest) we wish may be well remembred at this time, namely, that we shall assist and defend all that enter into this League and Covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof, and shall not suffer our selves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion, or terror, to be divided and withdrawne from this blessed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give our selves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in this cause: According to which article, men's reality and integrity in the Covenant will be manifest

and demonstrable, as well by their omissions as by their commissions; as well by their not doing good as by their doing evil: "He that is not with us is against us, and he that gathereth not with us scattereth." Whoever he be that will not, according to publick order and appointment, adventure his person, or send out these that are under his power, or pay the contributions imposed for the maintenance of the forces, must be taken for an enemy, Malignant, and Covenant-breaker, and so involved both into the displeasure of God and censures of the Kirk, and no doubt into civil punishments also, to be inflicted by the State.

And if any shall prove so untoward and perfidious, their iniquities shall be upon themselves, and they "shall bear their punishment." Deliverance and good success shall follow those who, with purpose of heart, cleave unto the Lord, and whose hearts are upright toward his glory. When we look back upon the great things which God hath done for us, and our former deliverances out of several dangers and difficulties, which appeared to us insuperable, experience breeds hope; and when we consider, how, in the midst of all our sorrows and pressures, the Lord our God hath given us a naile in his holy place, and hath lightened our eyes with the desirable and beautiful sight of his own glory in his temple, we take it for an argument that he hath yet "thoughts of peace," and a purpose of mercy toward us; "though for a small moment he hath forsaken us, yet with great mercies he will gather us." He hath lifted up our enemies, that their fall may be the greater, and that he may cast them downe into desolation for ever. Arise, and let us be doing; "the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Act against Lykwakes.

Whereas the corrupt custome of lykwakes hath fostered both superstition and profanities through the land, this present Assembly discharges the same in time coming; and appoints Presbyteries to take speciall care for trying and censuring the transgressors of this act within their severall bounds.

Act recommending to Sessions to have the printed Acts of Assemblie.

The Generall Assembly, considering how necessar it is that every session in a parish have the Acts of the Assembly for their use, doth therefore seriously recommend to every parish and session to buy the printed Acts of the Assembly: And ordains Presbyteries to crave account hereof from every minister, before their going to Provinciaall Assemblies: And likewise, that every Provinciaall Assembly crave account from Presbyteries in their trials, if every session be so provided, and that they try the diligence of Presbyteries and ministers used for that effect.

Sess. Ult., February 13, 1645, post meridiem.—Act for censuring the Observers of Yule-day, and other superstitious dayes, especially if they be Schollars.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration the manifold abuses, profanities, and superstitions, committed on Yule-day, and some other superstitious dayes following, have unanimously concluded, and hereby ordains, That whatsoever person or persons hereafter shall be found guilty in keeping of the foresaid superstitious dayes, shall be proceeded against by Kirk censures, and shall make their publick repentance therefor in the face of the congregation where the offence is committed: And that Presbyteries and Provinciaall Synods take particular notice how ministers try and censure delinquents of this kinde, within the severall parochines. And because schollars and students give great scandal and offence in this, that they (being found guilty) be severely disciplined and chastised therefor by their masters: And in case the masters of Schools or Colledges be accessorie to the said superstitious profanities, by their connivance, granting of libertie of vacance to their schollars at that time, or any time thereafter, in compensation thereof, that the masters be summoned by the ministers of the place, to compeir before the next

ensuing Generall Assembly, there to be censured according to their trespasse; and if schollars (being guilty) refuse to subject themselves to correction, or be fugitives from discipline, that they be not received in any other schoole or colledge within the kingdom.

Act for encouragement of Schollars to Professions in Schooles.

In respect of the paucitie of men fit and willing to professe Divinitie in the schooles, by reason that few frame their studies that way, the Generall Assembly thinks it fit, that the Provincials diligently consider and try who, within their bounds, most probably may be for a profession in the schooles, and report their names to the following Generall Assembly, that such may be stirred up and encouraged by the Generall Assembly to compose and frame their studies, that they may be fit for such places.

Act for restraining Abuses at Pennie Brydals.

The Generall Assembly, considering the great profanitie and severall abuses which usually fall forth at pennie brydals, proving fruitful seminaries of all lasciviousnesse and debaushtrie, as well by the excessive number of people convened thereto, as by the extortion of them therein, and licentiousnesse thereat, to the great dishonour of God, the scandall of our Christian profession, and prejudice of the countrey's welfare: Therefore, they ordain every Presbyterie in this kingdome to take such speciall care for restraining these abuses flowing from the causes foresaid, as they shall think fit, in their severall bounds *respectivè*; and to take a strict accompt of every minister and session of their obedience to the ordinance of the Presbyterie thereanent, at the visitation of every parish kirk in their bounds.

Act discharging Deposed Ministers to be reponed to their former places.

The Generall Assembly, considering the manifold prejudices redounding to the Kirk in generall, and private congregations in particular, through the restoring of ministers once deposed to the same places wherein they formerly served; as also, how derogatorie it would prove to the weight of that sentence of deposition; Do therefore ordain, that no minister deposed shall be restored again into that place where formerly he served.

Renovation of the Commission for the Publick Affairs of the Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that, in respect the great work of uniformitie in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected, (though by the Lord's blessing there is a good progresse made in the same,) there is a necessity of renewing the commissions granted formerly for prosecuting and perfecting that great work; doe, therefore, renew the power and commission granted for the publick affairs of the Kirk by the Generall Assembly, held in St Andrews in the year 1642, upon the fifth day of August, *post meridiem*, Sess. 12th; and by the Generall Assembly, held in Edinburgh in the year 1643, upon the 19th day of August, Sess. ult.; and by the late Generall Assembly, held at Edinburgh in the year 1644, upon the third of June, Sess. 6, to the persons afternamed, viz., Mr Andrew Ramsay, Mr Alexander Henderson, Mr Robert Douglas, Mr William Colvil, Mr William Bennet, Mr George Gillespie, Mr John Oswald, Mr Mungo Law, Mr Robert Lawrie, Mr John Adamson, Dr John Sharp, Mr George Leslie, Mr Andrew Fairfowle, Mr David Calderwood, Mr Andrew Blackhall, Mr James Fleeming, Mr Robert Ker, Mr John Macghe, Mr John Dalzell, Mr Andrew Stevenson, Mr Robert Lauder, Mr James Robertson, Mr Patrick Sibbald, Mr Robert Carson, Mr Alexander Spittal, Mr Alexander Dickison, Mr James Smith, Mr John Gibbison, Mr James Symson, Mr Ephraim Melvill, Mr Alexander Somervell, Mr Robert Eliot, Mr George Bennet, Mr Robert Blair, Mr David Forret, Mr Arthur Mortoun, Mr Samuel

Rutherford, Dr Alexander Colvill, Mr Andrew Bennet, Mr James Wedderburn, Mr Walter Greg, Mr John Moncreiff, Mr John Smith, Mr Frederick Carmichael, Mr Patrick Gillespie, Mr John Duncan, Mr James Sibbald, Mr Robert Bruce, Mr John Hume, at Eccles, Mr Mungo Dalzell, Mr Alexander Kinneir, Mr Thomas Ramsay, Mr William Turnbull, Mr James Guthrie, Mr Thomas Donaldson, Mr William Jameson, Mr David Fletcher, Andrew Dunkison, Mr Robert Murray, Mr David Weemes, Mr John Hall, Mr John Freebairn, Mr David Drummond, at Creiff, Mr George Murray, Mr Henry Guthrie, Mr Robert Wright, Mr Andrew Jaffray, Mr Bernard Sanderson, Mr Alexander Tran, Mr Thomas Chalmers, Mr Andrew Lawder, Mr Hugh Henderson, Mr John Levingstoun, Mr James Blair, Mr James Bonar, Mr John Burne, Mr John Bell, Mr Hugh Mackale, Mr Matthew Birsbane, Mr David Elphinstoun, Mr David Dickson, Mr George Young, Dr John Strang, Mr Robert Baillie, Mr Patrick Sharp, Mr Robert Birnie, Mr Evan Cameron, Mr George Symmer, at Meigle, Mr Andrew Fleck, Mr Patrick Lyon, Mr John Lindsay, Mr Sylvester Lammie, Mr George Fogo, Mr David Strachan, Mr Andrew Cant, Mr William More, Mr William Davidson, Mr John Paterson, Mr William Jaffray, Mr Thomas Mitchell, Mr George Cummin, Mr Joseph Brodie, Mr William Lawder, Mr David Rosse, Mr Ferquhard Makclennan, ministers; and Archibald Marquess of Argyll, John Earle of Crawford-Lindsay, Alexander Earle of Eglintoun, William Earle of Glencarne, John Earle of Cassils, Charles Earle of Dumfermling, James Earle of Tullibardin, John Earle of Lauderdale, James Earle of Annandale, William Earle of Lothian, James Earle of Queensberry, William Earle of Dalhousie, William Earle of Lanerik, Archibald Lord Angus, Vicount of Arbuthnet, James Viscount of Frendraught, Alexander Lord Garleis, James Lord Johnstoun, John Lord Yester, John Lord Balmerino, Alexander Lord Balcarras, John Lord Loure, John Lord Barganie, Sir Patrick Hepburn of Wauchtoun, Sir John Hope of Craighall, Sir Archibald Johnstoun of Waristoun, Sir David Hume of Wedderburn, Frederick Lyon of Brightoun, Sir Alexander Areskine of Dun, Alexander Fraser of Phillorth, Sir William Baillie of Lammingtoun, Haddin of Glenneigies, Sir Thomas Ruthven of Freeland, James Macdougall of Garthland, Sir Alexander Murray of Blackbarronie, William Drummond of Rickartoun, Sir William Scot of Hardin, Sir Andrew Ker of Greenhead, Sir William Stuart of , Sir Alexander Shaw of Sauchie, Alexander Brodie of that Ilk, Mr George Hume of Kimmerjame, Sir John Smith, Mr Alexander Colvill, Justice Depute, John Binnie, Archibald Sydsersf, Laurence Henderson, James Stuart, Gilbert Sommervell, John Semple, Mr Robert Barclay, Patrick Leslie, James Law, Mr Robert Cuninghame, George Gardin, William Glendunning, elders. And for discharging the said commission, appoints the persons aforesaid, or any ninteene of them, whereof fifteen shall be ministers, to meet at Edinburgh upon the 14th of this moneth of February, and upon the second Wednesday of May, August, November, and of February next to come, and upon any other day, or in any other place, they shall think meet; giving unto them full power and commission to do all and every thing for prosecuting, advancing, perfecting, and bringing the said work of uniformity in religion, in all his Majestie's dominions, to an happy conclusion, conforme to the former commissions granted by the said Assemblies thereanent; and, further, renews to the persons aforesaid the power contained in the act of the said Assembly, 1643, intituled, "A Reference to the Commission anent the persons designed to repair to the Kingdom of England;" as also the power contained in two severall acts of the said late Assembly, 1644, Sess. 6, made "Against secret Disaffecters of the Covenant," and "For sending Ministers to the Army;" with full power to them to treat and determine in the matters aforesaid, and in all other matters referred unto them by this Assembly, as fully and freely as if the same were here particularly expressed, and with as ample power as any commission of former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before; they being alwayes for their whole proceedings countable to and censurable by the next Generall Assembly.

Renovation of the Commission to the Persons appointed to repair to the Kingdom of England for prosecuting the Treaty of Uniformitie in Religion.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that the treaty of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected, though by the Lord's blessing there is a good progresse made in the same, Do, therefore, renew the power and commission granted to the persons formerly nominate by the two preceding Assemblies, and by their Commissioners sitting at Edinburgh, for prosecuting the said treatie of uniformitie with the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and the Reverend Assembly of Divines there, or any committees appointed by them; giving unto them full power to do all and every thing which may advance, perfect, and bring the said treatie to an happy conclusion, conforme to the former commissions granted to them thereanent.

The Generall Assemblie's Answer to the Right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Kirk of England.

Right Reverend, and welbeloved in the Lord Jesus,

Amidst the manifold troubles in which this kingdome hath been involved, and under which it still laboureth, we greatly rejoyced when it was testified unto us by our reverend brethren, and under your hands in your letter, and these papers by them presented to us from you, what progresse you had made in the much desired work of uniformitie; and acknowledge that the same hath comforted us concerning our work and toile of our hands, and seemeth to us as an olive branch, to prognosticate the abating of the waters which overflow the face of the earth.

When we consider that you have walked in pathes unusuall, which have not been haunted by travellers there as the publick way, though pointed out as the good old way by the reformed Kirks, we do not wonder that you have carefully adverted, in every step, to set foot upon sure ground. When we behold that strong and high tree of Episcopacie so dæply rooted by continuance of time, not lopped of the branches, and the "stumpe of the root left in the earth, with a band of iron and brasse," but pluckt up by the roots; we do confesse that the carpenters, though prepared, have a hard task, requiring time to hew it down and root it up. And when we call to minde how much the Service-Book hath been cryed up, as the only way of God's worship, how many thereby have had their wealth, and how difficill it is to forgoe the accustomed way, we admire the power and wisdom of the good God who hath prospered you in your way, and led you this length, through so many straits, and over so many difficulties, in so troublous a time.

We do for our part not only admit and allow, but most heartily and gladly embrace the Directory of Worship, as a common rule for the kirks of God in the three kingdoms, now more straitly and firmly united by the Solemne League and Covenant; and we do all, in one voice, blesse the Lord, who hath put it in the hearts, first, of the reverend, learned, and pious Assembly of Divines, and then of the Honourable Houses of Parliament, to agree upon such a Directory as doth remove what is none of Christ's, and preserve the purity of all his ordinances, together with uniformity and peace in the Kirk; only we have thought necessary to declare and make known that the clause in the Directory for the administration of the Lord's Supper, which appointeth the table to be so placed that the communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it, is not to be interpreted as if, in the judgement of this Kirk, it were indifferent for any of the communicants not to come to and receive at the table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the elements by the ministers to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves; in which particulars, we still conceive and beleve the order and practice of our own Kirk to be most agreeable and sutable to the Word of God, the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the nature of that heavenly feast and table. Nevertheless, in other particulars, we have resolved and do agree to do as ye have desired us in your letter—that is, not to be tenacious of old customs, though lawfull in themselves, and not condemned in this Di-

rectory, but to lay them aside for the nearer uniformitie with the Kirk of England, now nearer and dearer to us than ever before; a blessing so much esteemed, and so earnestly longed for among us, that rather than it faile on our part, we do most willingly part with such practices and customs of our own as may be parted with safely, and without the violation of any of Christ's ordinances, or trespassing against scripturall rules or our solemne Covenants.

We do, in like manner, agree to and approve the propositions touching kirk government and ordination; and have given power to our commissioners who are to meet in Edinburgh, to agree to and conclude in our name an uniformitie therein, betwixt the kirks in both kingdoms, so soon as the same shall be, without any substantiall alteration, ratified by an ordinance of the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, according to our act of approbation sent to our commissioners with you.

As for the returning of our commissioners, though the counsel and assistance of our reverend brethren might be of good use to us in these difficult times, and their particular stations and employments importune the stay of these who are come unto us, and the returne of these who stay with you; yet, preferring the publick good, and looking upon the profit that may redound unto all by their continuing with you, we have satisfied your desire, and renewed their commission; praying God they may (as we are confident they shall) prove answerable to our trust, and to your expectation.

Concerning one Confession of Faith and Forme of Catechisme, we apprehend no great difficultie; and to that which remains to be perfected in the matter of kirk government we do beleieve, and both you and we know by experience, that there is no word impossible with our God. "He that hath begun a good work among you, will also perform it" of his good pleasure. Go on, in the Lord your strength, and "the Spirit of truth lead you in all truth; the God of all grace and peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant," and by him "hath called us unto his eternall glory," "make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you," and by you, and among you, "that which is well pleasing in his sight," "stablish, strengthen, settle you," "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, by the Moderator of the Assembly.

Edinburgh, Feb. 13, 1645.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTIE,
THE HUMBLE REMONSTRANCE OF
THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY OF THE KIRK OF SCOTLAND,
MET AT EDINBURGH THE 13TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 1645.

As our record is on high, and our consciences within us bear us witnesse, so the many former supplications and remonstrances to your Majestie from this Kirk and kingdome, our solemne Covenants, and the whole course of our proceedings from time to time, in the prosecution of this cause, do make known to the world, and we trust also to your own conscience, our loyaltie and faithfull subjection, and how far our intentions are from the diminution of your Majestie's just power and greatnesse; and, although the successe of many of our humble addresses to your Majesty hath been such as did frustrate our desires and hopes, yet this hath not blotted out of our hearts our loyaltie, so often professed before God and the world; but it is still our souls' desire, and our prayer to God for you, that your self and your posterity may prosperously reigne over this your ancient and native kingdome, and over your other dominions: And now, as we have published a solemn and free Warning to the Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burrows, Ministers, and Commons of this kingdome, concerning the present affliction of this nation, and their sins procuring the same; so, when we call to minde, that God accepteth not the persons of men, and that the great-

est are not to be winked at in their sins, we assure our selves that the best and most reall testimony which we can give at this present, of the tendernesse and uprightness of our affection to your Majestie's true happinesse, is this our humble and faithfull representation of your Majestie's great and growing dangers, and the causes thereof; of which, if we should be silent, our consciences would condemne us, and "the stoncs themselves would immediatly cry out."

The troubles of our hearts are enlarged, and our fears increased in your Majestie's behalf, perceiving that your people's patience is above measure tempted, and is like a cart pressed down with sheaves, and ready to break, while, as beside many former designs and endeavours to bring desolation and destruction upon us, (which were—and we trust all of that kinde shall be—by the marvellous and mercifull providence of God discovered and disappointed,) our countrey is now infested, the blood of divers of our brethren spilt, and other acts of most barbarous and horrid cruelty exercised, by the cursed crew of the Irish rebels, and their complices in this kingdome, under the conduct of such as have commission and warrant from your Majestie. And, unlesse we prove unfaithfull both to God and to your Majestie, we cannot conceale another danger, which is infinitely greater than that of your people's displeasure: Therefore, we, the servants of the Most High God, and your Majestie's most loyall subjects, in the humility and grief of our hearts, fall down before your throne, and in the name of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, who shall judge the world in righteousness, both great and small, and in the name of this whole nationall Kirk, which we represent, we make bold to warn your Majestie freely, that the guilt which cleaveth fast to your Majesty and to your throne is such as, (whatsoever flattering preachers or unfaithfull counsellours may say to the contrary,) if not timely repented, cannot but involve yourself and your posterity under the wrath of the ever living God, for your being guiltie of the shedding of the blood of many thousands of your Majestie's best subjects—for your permitting the masse, and other idolatry, both in your own family and in your dominions—for your authorizing, by the Book of Sports, the profanation of the Lord's day—for your not punishing of publick scandals, and much profanenesse in and about your court—for the shutting of your eares from the humble and just desires of your faithfull subjects—for your complying too much with the Popish party many wayes, and, namely, by concluding the cessation of armies in Ireland, and your embracing the counsels of those who have not set God nor your good before their eyes—for your resisting and opposing this cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God, your own honour and happinesse, and the peace and safetie of your kingdomes—and for what other causes your Majesty is most conscious, and may best judge and search your own conscience, (nor would we have mentioned any particulars, if they had not been publike and knowne.) For all which it is high time for your Majesty to fall down at the footstool of the King of Glory, to acknowledge your offence, to repent timely, to make your peace with God through Jesus Christ, (whose blood is able to wash away your great sinne,) and to be no longer unwilling that the Son of God reign over you and your kingdoms in his pure ordinances of church government and worship. These things if your Majesty do it shall be no grief of heart unto you afterward; a blessing is reserved for you, and you shall finde favour with God, and with your people, and with all the churches of Christ: But if your Majesty refuse to hearken to this wholesome counsell, (which the Lord forbid,) we have discharged our own consciences; we take God and men to witnesse that we are blamelesse of the sad consequences which may follow, and we shall wait upon the Lord, who, "when he maketh inquisition for blood, will not forget the cry of the humble." In the mean while, beseeching your Majesty to take notice that we are not staggering or fainting through diffidence of the successe of this cause and Covenant of the three kingdoms, unto which, as God hath already given manifold testimonies of his favour and blessing, so it is our stedfast and unshaken confidence that this is the work and cause of God, which shall gloriously prevail against all opposition, and from which, with the assistance of the grace of God, we shall never suffer our selves to be divided or withdrawn, but shall zealously and constantly, in our severall vocations, endeavour with our estates and lives the pursuing and promoting thereof.

That which we have concluded concerning uniformity in religion between both

kingdoms, is to be humbly offered to your Majestie from the Commissioners of this kingdom for your royall consent and ratification. Although your Majestie was not pleased to vouchsafe us the presence of your Commissioner, according to the supplication of the commissioners of the preceding Generall Assembly, yet we have proceeded with as much respect to your Majestie's honour, and as much remembrance of our duty, as if your royall person had been present in the mids of us: And we shall still continue our prayers for you, that God would graciously incline your heart to the counsels of truth and peace, and grant unto your Majestie a long and happy reign, that we may live under you a peaceable and quiet life, in all godlinesse and honestie.

The Assemblie's Answer to their Commissioners at London.

Reverend and beloved Brethren,

These sweet fruits of your long continued labours in the work of the Lord entrusted to you, brought to us at this time by these two of your number, whom you were pleased to send, were received by us with no small joy and rejoycing, as being, in great part, the satisfaction of our souls' desire, in that so much longed for, so much prayed for happy uniformitie of these kirks and kingdoms; and an evident demonstration to us that the Lord hath not, even in this time of his seen and felt displeasure, so covered himself with the cloud of his anger, that our prayers should not passe through.

The great and main difficulties through which the Lord hath carried this work, as we do acknowledge, ought mainly to be made use of for the praise and glory of his power, who is the great worker of all our works for us; so your overcoming of them is to us no small demonstration of your zeal, wisdom, and faithfulness, which, without great injurie, both to the Lord the prime worker, and to you his instruments, we cannot but acknowledge, hath been much manifested in the whole managing of this work in your hands.

The full answer to all the particulars you write of in your letters, we leave to the relation of those that come from you, and are now appointed to return to you; and as with much thankfulness we acknowledge your fidelity in what ye have done already, so we have again renewed your commission for the continuance of your employment there, for the perfecting of the work so happily begun; for the furthering whereof, as we shall not be wanting in our prayers to God for his blessing upon your labours, so, for your help and assistance, we have appointed a commission to sit at Edinburgh, to which at all occasions you may have your recourse, as the exigence of the work shall require.

How satisfactory that Directory of Worship, presented to us by our brethren from you, was to us, we leave it rather to their relation at their return, being ear and eye witnesses to the manifold expressions of our joy and gladnesse, then offer to represent it to you in a letter. The act herewith sent, and ordained to be prefixed unto the Directory, will sufficiently declare our hearty approbation of it. Our judgement also concerning the propositions of Government and Ordination, and our earnest desire to have the work of uniformity promoved and perfected in that particular also, will appear to you by the other act which herewith you will receive. Our zeal and desire to have that work fully closed with so much harmonie as becometh the work of God, will appear to you in our resolution and answer to that particular, in the point of excommunication, concerning which you write.

These particular differences hinted at in the Assemblie's letter, for uniformitie with that Kirk so much endeared to us, we have resolved to lay aside, and have taken course for preserving harmonie amongst our selves, whereof our brethren will give you more particular account. Anent your desire of Mr Alexander Henderson his attending the treatie, we are confident ere this you have received our resolution.

Amidst the many difficulties wherewith it pleaseth the Lord to presse us, as we thought it necessar to publish and send forth a Warning to all sorts of persons in this Kirk and kingdom, concerning the present affliction of this nation, and their sins procuring the same; so we thought it incumbent to us in duty, as the best testimony

which we can give at this present to his Majesty, to remonstrate unto him faithfully the great and growing dangers his Majesty is now under, and the causes thereof. This remonstrance we have sent to you, to be presented to his Majesty, by such means, and at such time, as you who are there upon the place shall judge fittest.

And now, dear brethren, go on with cheerfulness in the work of the Lord. Let no discouragement or opposition make your heart to faint, or your hands wax feeble. Perswade your self the Lord's hand shall still be made known toward his servants, and his indignation against his enemies. Remember the work is his, who useth not to begin, but also to make an end, and is abundantly able to supply all your need, according to the riches of his glory. Be confident, therefore, of this thing, that he who hath begun this good work by you, will also, in due time, accomplish it to his own praise. To his gracious assistance we heartily recommend you.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, by the Moderator of the Assembly.

Postscript.—It is earnestly desired that the Directorie for Worship be sent to Ireland, and that you recommend to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament to think upon the best way for the establishment and practice of it in that kingdom. And that the like course may be taken with the government, and other parts of the uniformity, so soon as they shall be agreed upon.

Edinburgh, Feb. 13, 1645.

Recommendation to Presbyteries to consider Matters formerly referred to them.

The Generall Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to consider these matters, referred to their consideration by preceding Assemblies; and to report their judgement therein to the next Assembly.

The Generall Assembly appoints the meeting of the next Assembly to be at Edinburgh, the first Wednesday of June, in the year 1646.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, MET AT EDINBURGH, JUNII 3, 1646.

Sess. 2, Edinburgh, Junii 4, 1646.—The King's Letter to the Assembly, presented by Mr Robert Douglas, Minister at Edinburgh.

CHARLES R.

Right trusty and wel-beloved, we greet you well. Having lately written to our Houses of Parliament at Westminster, and the Commissioners from our kingdom of Scotland at London, and likewise to the Committees of Estates of that our kingdom, shewing our great sense and grief for the sad effects which have flowed from the unhappy differences betwixt us and our subjects, with our reall resolutions to comply with the desires of our Parliaments of both kingdoms, and those entrusted by them for settling of truth and peace in all our dominions: And now being informed of your meeting, we have thought fit hereby (since we could not conveniently send a Commissioner) to give you the same assurances; and withal, that it shall be our constant endeavour to maintain religion there as it is established in doctrine, worship, and church government, and leave no good means unassayed for settling an universal peace in that our native and ancient kingdom, with the reformation of religion, and settling peace in England and Ireland: And after the return of an answer to our late message to our Houses of Parliament here, we shall more particularly acquaint

you or your Commissioners with our further resolutions. In the mean time, we seriously recommend our selves and the distracted condition of our kingdoms, to your most earnest prayers to God in our behalf, expecting from you faithfulness in your severall charges and callings, with that loyaltie and obedience which becometh the ministers of the Gospel. We bid you very heartily farewell. From Newcastle, the 28th of May, 1646.

Direct.—For our right trustie and wel-beloved, the Moderatour and other Members of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of our Kingdom of Scotland.

Sess. 4, Junii 6, 1646, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Registers and Acts of Provinciall Assemblies.

The Assembly recommends to Provinciall Assemblies that hereafter they cause read all their acts before the dissolving of every Assembly; and that their registers be written formally, and in a good hand-writing, with the severall leafes or pages thereof marked by ciphers, according to their number.

Sess. 7, Junii 11, 1646, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Publike Satisfaction of Married Persons for Fornication committed before Marriage.

The Generall Assembly, understanding that in many places the publike scandals of fornication committed before marriage are not taken notice of and removed by publike confession, according to the order of this Kirk; therefore, for remedie thereof, do ordain, that all married persons under publike scandall of fornication committed before their marriage, (although the scandal thereof hath not appeared before the marriage,) shall satisfie publicly for that sin committed before their marriage, their being in the estate of marriage notwithstanding, and that in the same manner as they should have done if they were not married.

Sess. 10, Junii 13, 1646, ante meridiem.—Ordinance for Excommunication of the Earle of Seafort.

The Generall Assembly, having taken to their serious consideration that perfidious band made and contrived lately in the North, under the name of An humble Remonstrance against our Nationall Covenant, and the League and Covenant of the Three Kingdoms; which tendeth to the making of division and fomenting of jealousies within this and between both kingdoms, to the prolonging of these unnaturall warrs, to the impeding of the intended uniformitie in religion, and to the subversion of all the happie ends of our Covenants. And finding that George Earle of Seafort hes not only most perfidiously himself subscribed the said wicked band, contrary to his solemne oaths in the Covenants aforesaid, and most arrogantly owned the same, under his owne hand-writing, in his letters to the Committee of Estates, and to the Commissioners of the preceding Assemblie; but also hes seduced and threatned others to subscribe that divisive band, and to joyne with him in prosecution of his treacherous and wicked designes, therein masked with the pretences of religion and libertie, boasting also the pursuance of that his remonstrance against all deadly the opposers thereof, whether King or Parliament. And having also considered another wicked and treacherous band of union which the said Earle formerly entred into with that excommunicate rebell James Grahame, after the sentence of forfeiture and the dreadfull sentence of excommunication were pronounced against him, obligeing himself therein, under solemne oaths, to joyne with that forfeited rebell against this kirk and kingdome, and to oppose all their publike resolutions for pursuance of the happie ends of our said Covenants. All which, with his vile reproachfull aspersions, and most false calumnies against this Kirk and State, and their publike and lawfull endeavours and resolutions, with his other wicked and perfidious practices, at length discovered in the proclamation of the Committee of Estates, and the declaration of

the Commission of the Assembly against the said perfidious band and remonstrance, being gravely pondered and considered; together with his base treachery to the Estates, being intrusted by them with ample commission, and encouraged and enabled for discharging thereof, with mony, ammunition, and arms, in a good measure; notwithstanding whereof, contrary to that great trust reposed in him, it is notor that not only he did not joyne with the forces raised for the defence of this kingdome, but rather, on the contrary, actually joyning himself and his forces with that excommunicate rebel, James Grahame, and these unnatural bloody rebels, his followers, did beleager Innernesse, a towne garrisoned by the Estates for the defence of that part of the country. And the Assembly having also found that fair means have been used for reclaiming of the said Earle from that wicked and perfidious course, by publike declarations and proclamations, and particular letters sent to himself from those that had power in that behalf; and that notwithstanding thereof, and of summons direct against him, to answer to the premisses, often called, he doth not appear, but still remains obstinate in his wicked courses; and, after mature deliberation, having found his frequent fearfull and grosse perjuries, his perfidious and wicked conspiracies, by band and oath, with the publike enemies of this kirk and kingdom, and his other treacherous and wicked practises; so contemptuously and pertinaciously persisted into, to be haynous offences against God, and high contempt of all ecclesiastical and civil authority: Therefore, the Assembly, moved with the zeal of God, do, without a contrary voice, decerne and ordain the said George Earle of Seafort to be summarly excommunicate, and declared to be one whom Christ commandeth to be holden by all and every one of the faithfull as an ethnik and publicane, and appoints the sentence of excommunication to be pronounced by Mr Robert Blair, Moderator, in the East Kirk of this citie, upon the next Lord's day, being the 14th of this moneth; and that thereafter publike intimation be made thereof upon a Sabbath day, before noone, in all the kirks of this kingdom, so soon as advertisement shall come unto them.

Enormities and Corruptions observed to be in the Ministry, with the Remedies thereof.

ENORMITIES.

The first and main sin, reaching both to our personall carriage and callings, we judge to be, not studying how to keep communion and fellowship with God in Christ, but walking in a naturall way, without imploying of Christ, or drawing vertue from him, to inable us unto sanctification, and preaching in spirit and power.

IN OUR LIVES.

1. Much fruitlesse conversing in companie, and complying with the sins of all sorts; not behaving our selves as becomes the men of God.
2. Great worldlinesse is to be found amongst us, minding and speaking most about things of this life, being busied about many things, but forgetting the main.
3. Slighting of God's worship in their families, and therefore no cordiall urging of it upon others; yea, altogether a wanting of it in some, if it be credible.
4. Want of gravity in carriage and apparell, dissolutenesse in haire, and shaking about the knees, lightnesse in the apparrell of their wives and children.
5. Tippling and bearing companie in untimous drinking in tavernes and ale-houses, or any where else, whereby the ministerie is made vile and contemptible.
6. Discountenancing of the godly, speaking ill of them, because of some that are unanswerable to their profession.
7. The Sabbath not sanctified after sermons, which maketh people think that the Sabbath is ended with the sermon.
8. There are also to be found amongst us who use small and minced oaths.
9. Some so great strangers to Scripture, that except in their publike ministerie, though they read many things, yet they are little conversant in the Scripture, and in meditation thereof—a dutie incumbent to all the people of God.

IN OUR CALLINGS.

1. Corrupt entry into the ministrie in former times, and following the course of defection, though forsaken, yet never seriously repented; as also present entering into the ministry as to a way of living in the world, and not as to a spirituall calling.

2. Helping in and holding in of insufficient and suspected men, who favour the things of this life, and keeping the door straiter on them whom God hath sealed then upon these who have lesse evidence of the power of grace and holinesse.

3. Partiality in favouring and speaking for the scandalous, whether ministers or other persons, teaching them how to shift and delay censures.

4. Silence in the publike cause, not labouring to cure the disaffection of people, not urging them to constancie and patience in bearing of publike burdens, nor to forwardnesse in the publike cause, whereby Malignants are multiplied; yea, some are so grosse herein, that even in publike fasts little or nothing is to be heard from them sounding this way.

5. Some account it a point of wisdom to speak ambiguously; some incline to justify the wicked cause, uttering words which favour of disaffection, and all their complaining of the times is in such a way as may steal the hearts of people from liking of good instruments in this work, and consequently from God's cause; yea, some reading publike orders are ready to speak against them in their private conference.

6. Idlenesse, either in seldome preaching, as once in the Lord's day—or in preparation for publike duties, not being given to reading and meditation; others have but fits of paines, not like other tradesmen, continually at their work.

7. Want of zeal and love to the conversion of souls, not being weightd with the want of successe in reclaiming of sinners, nor searching in themselves the cause of not profiting, preaching *ex officio*, not *ex conscientia officii*.

8. Self-seeking in preaching, and a venting rather of their wit and skill then a shewing forth of the wisdom and power of God.

9. Lifelesnesse in preaching, not studying to be furnished by Christ with power, and so the ordinance of God reacheth not to the conscience; and heereto belongeth the not applying of the doctrine unto the auditory and times.

10. The indiscreet curing of the indiscretion of pious people and ministers, whereby godlinesse hath gotten a deep wound, and profanitie hath lifted up the head, contrary to that wise and gracious order set forth in the Generall Assemblie holden at Edinburgh, 1641.

11. Little care to furnish our armie, either abroad or at home, with ministers; one of our grievous sins, and causes of our calamity.

12. Last, it is to be feared that ministers in secret are negligent to wrestle in prayer for a blessing to be poured out upon their labours, contenting themselves with their publike performances.

REMEDIES.

1. First, That Presbyteries make great conscience to have all vacant places within their several bounds filled with godly and able men, where ever they be to be found; and that under pretence of being a helper, or second to another, none be taken in but such as are able for the same charge.

2. Whereas it is known, that private tryall in Presbyteries are for the most part perfunctorious, the brethren are hereby exhorted to be more serious and faithfull heerein, as they will be answerable to Christ, the Chief Shepherd; and, in a way previous thereto, that brethren be free in loving admonition one of another secretly, from time to time; and that whosoever keeps not the Presbyterie or Synod, after grave admonitions, may come under further censures.

3. That accuracie be used at visitation of kirks, and that the elders, one by one, (the rest being removed,) be called in, and examined, upon oath, upon the minister's behaviour in his calling and conversation.

4. That course be taken to divide congregations in parts, and, by the help not only

of elders in their severall parts, but of neighbors also, the evils and neglects of persons and families may be found out and remedied.

5. That every minister be humbled for his former failings, and make his peace with God, that the more effectually he may preach repentance, and may stand in the gap, to turne away the Lord's wrath; runing between the porch and the altar, sighing and crying for all the abominations of the land.

6. Speciall care would be had that all ministers have their conversation in heaven, mainly minding the things of God, and exercising faith for drawing life out of Jesus Christ, the fountain of life, arming themselves thereby with power against the contagion and wickednesse of the world.

7. Care would be had of godly conference in Presbyteries, even in time of their refreshment; and the Moderator is to look to it that good matter be furnished thereto.

8. It is also very necessary for every minister that would be fruitfull in the work of the Lord, to bring home the Word of God to his own heart and conscience by prayer and meditation, both before and after publike ordinance.

9. Use would be made of the roll of the parish, not onely for examination, but also for considering the severall conditions and dispositions of the people, that accordingly they may be admonished, and particularly prayed for by the ministers in secret.

10. It is very expedient that ministers have more communing among themselves, for their mutuall stirring up and strengthening of their hands in the Lord's work, and rectifying of these who are not incorrigible.

11. That ministers in all sorts of companie labour to bee fruitfull, as the salt of the earth seasoning them they meet with, not only forbearing to drink healths, (Satan's snare, leading to excesse,) but reproving it in others.

12. All ministers would be carefull to cherish the smoaking flax of weak beginnings in the wayes of God, and ought couragiously to oppose all mockers and revilers of the godly.

13. As at all times, so specially now, when the Lord is calling us all to an account, it becomes the ministers of Christ, with all diligence and faithfulness, to improve their ministerie to the utmost, to be instant in season and out of season; yea, even frugally to employ their time in private, in reading of and meditating on Scripture, that the Word of God may dwell plentifully in them.

14. That the providing the armies with ministers be preferred to any congregation, and these who are appointed to attend the same and are deficient, be, without delay, severelie censured, according to the act of the Generall Assembly; and that all ministers, not only in publike pray for our armies, specially these that are to encounter with the bloody enimie within the land, but also continually bear them up before the Lord, that their lives being reformed, their hearts and hands may be strengthened, and their undertaking at last blessed of God with successe.

15. That beside all other scandals, silence or ambiguous speaking in the publike cause, much more detracting and disaffected speeches be seasonable censured; and to this effect, all honest-hearted brethren would firmlie unite themselves in the Lord, the younger honouring the elder, and the elder not despising the younger.

16. And, finallie, both for the corruption of the ministerie, and remedies thereof, we refer the brethren to the act of the Generall Assemblie at Eūinburgh, 1596, revived in the late Assemblie at Glasgow, 1638, to be found in the printed act concerning the same.

The Generall Assembly ordains the enormities above specified to be tryed and restrained, and that the remedies thereof for that purpose be seriously observed and practised; recommending, especially to Presbyteries and Provinciall Assemblies, that use be made of the same in visitation of kirks and tryall of Presbyteries.

Approbation of the Proceedings of the preceding Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, having heard the report of the committee appointed to consider and examine the proceedings of the commissioners of the late Generall As-

sembly, holden at Edinburgh in the year 1646; and after serious consideration thereof, finding that the whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions of the said commissioners, contained in the register subscribed by Mr Andrew Ker, their clerk, and by Mr Robert Ramsay, Moderator to the said committee, do declare much wisdom, diligence, vigilancie, and commendable zeal; and that the said commissioners have orderly and formally proceeded in every thing, according to their commission: Do, therefore, ratifie and approve the said whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions, of the commissioners of the said Assembly.

Sess. 11, June 15, 1646, post meridiem.—Act for Joyning of the Presbyteries in Orkney and Zetland to the Provincial of Cathnes.

The Generall Assembly, considering that the Presbyterie of Kirkwall, in Orkney, and the Presbyterie of Scalloway, in Zetland, have never met in any Provincial Assembly, wherethrough great abuses and disorders are there committed: Therefore, the Assembly hereby joyns the said two Presbyteries to the Provincial of Cathnes and Sutherland, and appoints all the ministers and elders of the said Presbyteries hereafter to meet at the said Provincial Assembly, and to have place to reason and vote therein as members of the said Provincial. And sicklike, ordains the said two Presbyteries to be of subordinate jurisdiction to the said Provincial Assembly; declaring hereby, that the said Provincial shall consist of the Presbyteries of Cathnes, Sutherland, Orkney, and Zetland, in all time coming. And appoints them to meet only once in the year, in respect of their great distance and interjection of seas; and that the first meeting be at Thurso, in Cathnes, upon the third Tuesday of August next, and thereafter as shall be appointed by the said Provincial Assembly.

Sess. 14, June 17, 1646, post meridiem.—Act concerning Expectants Preaching in Publike.

The Generall Assembly discharges any person to preach in publike under the name and notion of an expectant, or under any other pretence whatsoever, except such as shall be tryed and found qualified according to the acts of the Generall Assembly; recommending to Presbyteries and Provincials to take speciall notice thereof, and to censure the transgressors accordingly.

Act for Censuring the Complyers with the Publike Enemies of this Kirk and Kingdom.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their serious consideration the great and scandalous provocation and grievous defection from the publike cause, which some have beene guiltie of, by complying with the rebels, the publike enemies of this Kirk and kingdom—and judging it a dutie incumbent to them to bring such notorious offenders to publike satisfaction, that the wrath of God may be averted, and the publike scandall removed; Do, therefore, require, discern, and ordain, that such as after lawfull tryall shall be found to have been in actuall rebellion, and to have carried charge with the rebels—to have accepted commissions for raising horse or foot unto them—to have been seducers of others to joyn in that rebellion—to be the penners or contrivers of James Grahame's proclamation for indicting a pretended Parliament, or of any other his proclamations or declarations—to have beene prime instruments in causing publish the said proclamations and declarations; that all and every one of such offenders shall humbly acknowledge their offence upon their knees, first before the Presbyterie, and thereafter before the congregation upon a Sabbath, in some place before the pulpit; and in the mean time, that they be suspended from the Lord's Supper; and in case they do not satisfie in manner foresaid, that they be processed with excommunication. And likewise ordains that such as shall be found to have procured protections from the rebels—to have execute their orders—to have invited them to their houses—to have given them intelligence—to have drank James Grahame's health, or to be guilty of any other such grosse degrees of compliance, shall acknowledge their offences publicly before the congregation, and be suspended

from the communion ay and whill they doe the same. And further, decernes and ordains, that all persons in any ecclesiastick office, guiltie of any degrees of compliyanee before mentioned, shall be suspended from their office and all exercise thereof, for such time as the quality of the offence and condition of the offenders shall be found to deserve: And the Assembly hereby declares, that the Presbyteries have a latitude and libertie to agreedge the censures above specified, according to the degrees and circumstances of the offences; and gives, in like manner, the same latitude and libertie to the Commissioners of this Assembly for Publike Affairs, who have also power to try and censure the offenders in manner above exprest, and to take account of the diligence of Presbyteries thereintill.

Act concerning James Graham's Proclamation.

The Generall Assembly, having considered a copie of a proclamation, published by order of that excommunicat traitor James Graham, for indicting of a pretended parliament, and finding the same to be full of blasphemies against the Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdoms, and of vile aspersions of treason, rebellion, and sedition, most falsly and impudently imputed to the Estates, and most faithfull and loyall subjects of this kingdome; Doe, therefore, declare, that such as have been prime instruments of the publishing of that or the like proclamation and declaration, deserve the highest censures of the Kirk, unlesse they make humble confession of their offence publicly, in such manner as is prescribed by this Assembly; and humbly recommends to the Committee of Estates to take some course for their exemplary civill punishment, and that some publike note of ignominie be put upon that proclamation, as their Honors shall think meet.

Sess. Ult. Junii 18, 1646, ante meridiem.—Act against loosing of Ships and Barks upon the Lord's Day.

The Generall Assembly, understanding how much the Lord's day is profaned by skippers and other seafaring men, do, therefore, discharge and inhibite all skippers and sailers to begin any voyage on the Lord's day, or to loose any ships, barks, or boats, out of harbery or road upon that day; and who shall doe in the contrary hereof shall be censured as profaners of the Sabbath; recommending to Presbyteries, and others whom it may concerne, to see both the acts of Assembly and Parliament, made for censuring and punishing profanation of the Lord's day, to be put in execution against them.

Act anent Children sent without the Kingdom.

Whereas divers children have been sent without the kingdom to be bred abroad, and have been, or in time coming may be, exposed to the temptations of seducers, and drawn away from the truth established and professed within this Church, to error of Poperie, or other sects and heresies: Therefore, the Assembly ordains, that the parents or friends of children and minors shall, before they send them without the kingdom, first acquaint the Presbytery where they reside, that they may have their testimoniall directed to the Presbytery or classe within the kingdom of France, or England, or Ireland, and at the time of these children's return from any of the said kingdoms, to report ane testimoniall from the Presbytery or Synode where they lived without the kingdom, of their breeding there, and to shew the same to the Presbytery within the kingdom who gave them a testimoniall at their way-going. Likeas, the Assembly ordains all Presbyteries to try if any children have been sent to Popish schooles or colledges without the kingdom; and if any be found, that their names be given to the Presbytery or commissioners of the Assembly, that the same may be presented to the Honourable Lords of Secret Councill or Committee of Estates, that their Lordships may be humbly desired by their authority to recall them, that after return to this kingdom a course may be taken, according to the former ordinances of Generall Assemblies for their breeding in the true religion.

Overtures presented to the Assembly.

I. That correspondence be kept among Presbyteries constantly by letter, without prejudice of personall correspondence when need requires, whereby one Presbyterie may understand what many are doing, and they may be mutually assisting each to other.

II. That for the better breeding of young men to the ministerie, who are not able to furnish themselves in charges to attend in the universities, that the Presbyteries where they reside appoint some to direct their studies.

III. That it be recommended to all the Universities to condescend upon the best overtures for the most profitable teaching of grammar and phylosophy; and as they may meet at the commission of the Generall Assembly to make the matter ripe for the next Assembly.

The Assembly approves these overtures, and recommends accordingly.

IV. That to the intent the knowledge of God in Christ may be spread through the Highlands and Islands, (for in lack whereof the land hath smarted in the late troubles,) these courses be taken: 1. Let an order be procured, that all gentlemen who are able, at least send their eldest sons to be bred in the inland. 2. That a ministerie be planted amongst them, and for that effect, that ministers and expectants who can speak the Irish language be sent to imploy their talents in these parts, and that the kirks there be provided as other kirks in this kingdome. 3. That Scots schools be erected in all parishes there, according to the Act of Parliament, where conveniently they can be had. 4. That ministers and ruling elders that have the Irish language be appointed to visit these parts.

The Assembly approves this overture, and recommends this purpose to further consideration, that more overtures may be prepared thereanent against the next Assembly.

V. That for keeping the Universitie pure, and provoking the Professors of Divinitie to greater diligence, each professor in the Universities of this Church and kingdom bring with him, or send with the commissioner who comes to the General Assembly, ane perfect and well written copie of his dictates, to be revised by the Generall Assembly, or such as they shall appoint for that work ilk year.

The Assembly continues the determination of a constant and perpetuall order herein untill the next Assembly; but, in the mean time, desires the Professors of Divinity to present to the next Assembly their dictates of Divinity, wherof the Professors present are to give intimation to the Professors absent.

VI. The great burdens intrants undergoes when they enter the ministry, which holds many of them long at under, would crave the Assemblie's judgement and authority, that ministers' manes and stipends may be all made free to the intrant.

The Assembly refers and recommends to the Commissioners for Publike Affairs to seek redresse in this matter from the Honourable Estates of Parliament, and to consider of some fitting overtures to be presented to their Honours for that effect.

Renovation of the Commission for the Publike Affairs of the Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that, in respect the great work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestic's dominions is not yet perfected, (though by the Lord's blessing there is a good progresse made in the same,) there is a necessity of renewing the commissions granted formerly for prosecuting and perfecting that great work; Doe, therefore, renew the power and commission granted for the publike affairs of the Kirk by the Generall Assemblies, held in St Andrews in the year 1642, and in Edinburgh, 1643, 1644, and 1645, unto the persons following, viz., Masters Alexander Henderson, Robert Douglas, William Colvil, William Bennet, George Gillespie, John Oswald, John Adamson, William Dalgleish, David Calderwood, James Fleeming, Robert Ker, John Dalzell, James Wright, John Knox,

Adam Penman, Robert Lichtoun, Alexander Dickeson, Patrick Fleeming, John Hay, Richard Dickeson, Thomas Vasse, David Drummond, Alexander Sonervill, Robert Eliot, Robert Blair, James Bruce, Robert Traile, Samuel Rutherford, Alexander Colvill, Walter Greg, Alexander Balfour, George Thomson, John Moncreiff, John Smith, Patrick Gillespie, John Duncan, James Sibbald, Alexander Casse, John Hume, Alexander Kinneir, Walter Swintoun, Robert Knox, William Penman, James Guthrie, Thomas Donaldson, William Jameson, Thomas Wilkie, John Knox, Robert Murray, John Freebairn, Robert Wright, David Auchterlonie, William Maier, Samuel Austein, John Leirmont, Andrew Lawder, James Irving, Alexander Turnbull, James Bonar, William Adair, John Neve, Patrick Colvill, Matthew Birsbane, John Hamiltoun, Allan Ferguson, Robert Ramsay, George Young, David Dickson, Robert Baillie, James Nasmith, John Lindsay, John Weir, Evan Cameron, James Affleck, John Robison, Andrew Eliot, Silvester Lambie, Laurence Skinner, William Rate, David Campbel, Andrew Cant, William Douglas, David Lindsay, Gilbert Anderson, Alexander Garioch, William Jaffray, Thomas Law, William Campbell, Walter Stewart, ministers; and Archibald Marquesse of Argyle, John Earle of Crawford-Lindsay, William Earle Marshall, William Earle of Glencairn, John Earle of Cassils, Charles Earle of Dumfermling, James Earle of Tullibardine, Francis Earle of Bacleugh, John Earle of Lauderdale, William Earle of Lothian, William Earle of Lanerk, Archibald Lord Angus, John Lord Balmerino, Robert Lord Bursleigh, John Master of Yester, Sir Patrick Hepburn of Waughtoun, Sir John Hope of Craighall, Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, Sir David Hume of Wedderburn, Sir Robert Innes of that Ilk, Sir William Baily of Lamington, Sir John Muncreiffe of that Ilk, James Macdougall of Garthland, Patrick Cockburn of Clarkington, Sir Hugh Campbell of Cesnock, Sir William Cunningham of Cunninghamhead, John Hume of Blackader, Sir James Dundas of Arniston, Alexander Forbes, Tutor of Pitsligo, Mr George Winham of Libberton, David Weemes of Fingask, Mr Francis Hay of Balhousie, Alexander Brodie of that Ilk, Mr Alexander Colvil of Blair, George Dundas of Dudiston, William Moor of Glanderston, Sir James Nicolson of Colbrandspath, John Edgar of Wedderlie, William Hume of Lenthill, James Ruchhead, Laurence Henderson, and James Stuart, Bailies of Edinburgh, George Porterfield, Provost of Glasgow, William Hume there, Robert Arnot, Provost of Perth, John Semple, Provost of Dumbarton, John Kennedy, Provost of Air, Mr David Weemes, George Gardine, John Johnstoun, Thomas Paterson, Thomas White, John Sleigh, elders. Giving unto them full power and commission to do all and every thing for prosecuting, advancing, perfecting, and bringing the said work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions to a happy conclusion, conform to the former commissions granted by preceding Assemblies thereanent: And to that effect, appoints them, or any seventeen of them, whereof thirteen shall be ministers, to meet at Edinburgh the 19th of this moneth, and thereafter upon the second Wednesdays of August, November, February, and May, next to come, and upon any other day and in any other place they shall think meet. And, further, renews to the persons before named the power contained in the act of the said Assembly, 1643, intituled, "A Reference to the Commission anent the Persons designed to repair to the Kingdom of England;" as also the power contained in two severall acts of the said Assembly, 1644, Sess. 6, made "Against secret Disaffectors of the Covenant," and "For sending Ministers to the Armie;" with full power to them to treat and determine in the matters aforesaid, and in all other matters referred unto them by this Assembly, as fully and freely as if the same were here particularly expressed, and with as ample power as any commission of former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before; they being alwayes for their whole proceedings comptable to and censurable by the next Generall Assembly.

Renovation of the Commission for prosecuting the Treaty for Uniformity in England.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that the treatie of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected; therefore, renews the power and commission granted by preceding Assemblies for prosecuting that treatie,

unto these persons after named, viz., Mr Alexander Henderson, Mr Robert Douglas, Mr Samuel Rutherford, Mr Robert Baillie, Mr George Gillespie, ministers; and John Earle of Lauderdale, John Lord Balmerino, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston, elders; authorizing them with full power to prosecute the said treatie of uniformity with the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and the Reverend Assembly of Divines there, or any committees appointed by them; and to do all and every thing which may advance, perfect, and bring that treatie to an happy conclusion, conform to the former commission given thereanent.

The Assemblie's Answer to the King's Majestie.

May it please your Majestie,

Having received your Majestie's letter with thankfulness, we thought it our dutie to send some of our number to wait upon your Majestie, and present our humble desires more particularly then at this time could be expressed by writ; and we are confident your Majestie will interpret our freedome and plain dealing by them to be a reall testimonie of our unfained affection, who have constantly laboured to approve our selves in all fidelity to our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and in all loyaltie to your Majestie; and are resolved to walk still after the same rule, in our severall stations and vocations, continuing our prayers for you, that God may multiply all sorts of mercies upon your royall person and posterity, and more and more incline your heart to the speedie following of the counsels of truth and peace, and grant unto your Majestie a long and happy reign, that we may live under you a peaceable and quiet life, in all godlinesse and honesty.

Subscribed, in name of the Nationall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, by
the Moderator.

Edinburgh, Junii 18, 1646.

The Assemblie's Letter to the Right Honorable the Lords and Commons in the Parliament of England, assembled at Westminster.

Right Honourable,

The report of the great things which the Lord hath done for your Honours hath gone forth into many lands, and it becometh us least of any, either to smother or extenuate the same. We desire to be enlarged in the admiration of the power and mercie of God the author, and to diminish nothing of that praise that is due unto you as instruments. When the Lord set your Honours upon the bench of judgment, both the Kirk and Commonwealth of England were afflicted with intestine and bosome evils, the cure whereof could not but be very difficult, because they were not only many, but, for the most part, universal and deeply rooted, sheltred under the shadow of custome and law, and supported with all the wisdom and strength of the Malignant and Prelaticall partie, who rather chose to involve the land in an unnaturall and bloody warre, then to fail of their ambitious and treacherous designs against religion, the priviledges of Parliament, and the lawes and liberties of the kingdom; neither hath that miserable crew been wanting to their owne ends, but for many years together hath desperately pursued their resolutions in arms, and was likely to have prevailed, if the Lord had not put himself in the breach, and furnished you with much patience, wisdom, courage, and constancy, in the midst of many difficulties and distresses, and at last, with so glorious and triumphing a successe, that the enemy hath fallen every where before you, and there is none left to appear against you. These things, as they be the matter of our refreshment and of your glory, so doe they lay a strong obligation upon your Honours to walk humbly with your God, and to improve the power he hath put into your hands, for the advancement of the Kingdom of his Son, and bringing forth of the head-stone of his house. The slow progresse of the work of God hath alwayes been the matter of our sorrow, which is now increased by the multiplication of the spirits of error and delusion, that drowne many souls into per-

dition, and so strengthen themselves, that they shall afterward be laboured against with more pains then successe, if a speedy and effectuall remedie be not provided. And, therefore, as the servants of the living God, who not onely send up our supplications daily for you, but have hazard our selves in your defence, we do earnestly beseech your Honours, in the bowels of Jesus Christ, to give unto him the glory that is due unto his name, by a timous establishing all his ordinances in the full integritie and power thereof, according to the League and Covenant. As long as the Assembly of Divines was in debate, and an enemy in the fields, we conceived that these might be probable grounds of delay, which being now removed out of the way, we do promise to our selves, from your wisdom, faithfulness, and zeale, the perfecting of that which was the main ground of our engagement, and a chief matter of consolation unto us, in all our sad and heavy sufferings from the hand of a most cruell enemy. We know that there is a generation of men who retard the work of uniformity, and foment jealousies betwixt the nations, studying, if it were possible, to break our bands asunder; but we trust, that he that sits in the heavens will laugh, and that the Lord shall have them in derision, that he shall speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure, and notwithstanding of all that they can do, set his King upon his holy hill of Sion, and make these nations happy in the sweet fruits of unity in truth and peace. The Searcher of hearts knows that we desire to hold fast the band of our Covenant as sacred and inviolable; being perswaded that the breach of so solemne a tie could not but hasten down upon our heads a curse and vengeance from the righteous Judge of the world, and involve these kingdoms in sader calamities then they have yet seen; and we abhor to entertain any other thought of you; nay, we are confident that your Honours will seriously indeavour the prosecution of all these ends designed in the Covenant, and the bringing these nations unto the nearest conjunction, both in judgement and affection, especially in these things that concern religion, which, without all controversie, is the readiest and surest way of attaining and securing the peace and prosperity of both kingdoms.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly, by the Moderator.

Edinburgh, Junii 18, 1646.

The Assemblies Letter to the Right Honorable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Councill of the City of London.

Your late and seasonable testimony given to the truth of the Gospel, and your affection to the peace of the kingdoms, manifested in your humble Remonstrance and Petition to the Honorable Houses of Parliament, hath so revived the remembrance of your former faith and zeal, and proclaimed you the worthy seed of so noble ancestors in that famous city, as we cannot but acknowledge, with all thankfulness, the grace of God bestowed on you, and stirre you up to take notice how, since you were precious in the Lord's sight, you have been ever honourable; the Lord hath loved you, given men for you, and people for your life. What an honour was it in the dayes of old, when the fire of the Lord was in Zion, and his furnace in your Jerusalem, (even in Queen Marie's dayes,) that there were found in you men that loved not their lives unto the death? What a glory in after times, when Satan had his throne, and Antichrist his seat in the midst of you, that there were still found not a few that kept their garments clean? But the greatest praise of the good hand of God upon you hath been in this, that amidst the many mists of errour and heresie which have risen from the bottomlesse pit, to bespot the face and darken the glory of the Church, (while the Bride is a making ready for the Lamb,) you have held the truth, and most piously endeavoured the setting of Christ upon his throne. We need not remember how zealous you have been in the cause of God, nor how you have laid out your selves and estates in the maintenance thereof, nor how many acknowledgements of the same you have had from the Honourable Houses, nor how precious a remembrance will be had of you in after ages, for your selling of all to buy the pearl of price. We only at this time do admire, and in the inward of our hearts do blesse the Lord for your right and deep apprehensions of the great and important matters

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of Christ in his royall crown, and of the kingdoms in their union, while the Lord maketh offers to bring our ship (so much afflicted and tossed with tempest) to the safe harbour of trueth and peace. Right memorable is your zeal against sects and sectaries; your care of reformation, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best reformed Churches; your earnest endeavours and noble adventures for preserving of the rights and priviledges of Parliament, and liberties of the kingdoms, together with his Majestie's just power and greatnesse; and your high profession, that it is not in the power of any humane authority to discharge or absolve you from adhearing unto that our (so solemnely sworn) League and Covenant, or to enforce upon you any sense contrary to the letter of the same; besides your other good services done unto the Lord and to us, in the strengthening of the hands of the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and of our Commissioners, in their asserting of the government of Christ, (which, the more it be tried, will be ever found the more precious truth,) and vindicating of the same from the usurpation of man, and contempt of the wicked. These all, as they are so many testimonies of your pietie, loyaltie, and undaunted resolution to stand for Christ, so are they, and shall ever be, so many obligations upon us, your brethren, to esteem highly of you in the Lord, to bear you on our breasts before him night and day, and to contribute our best endeavours, and to improve all opportunities for your encouragement. And now, we beseech you in the Lord, Honorable and wel-beloved, go on in this your strength, and in the power of his might who hath honoured you to be faithfull: "Stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free;" and in the pursuance of this truth, we are confident, as you have, so you will never cease to study the peace and neerer conjunction of the kingdoms, knowing that a three-fold cord is not easily broken. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved and honoured you, and given you everlasting consolation and good help through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly, by the Moderator.

Edinburgh, Junii 18, 1646.

The Assemblies Letter to the Right Reverend the Assembly of Divines in the Kirk of England, assembled at Westminster.

Much Honoured and Right Reverend,

Amongst other fruits of this our precious liberty, after such dissipation by sword and pestilence, to meet again, we account it not the least to have the opportunity of making a publike declaration of our earnest affection to all our brethren of that nation, and especially your selves of the Reverend Assembly at Westminster. When we were lately in a very low condition, we may say that our own sufferings and fears, although imbittered with the sense of the Lord's displeasure against our lukewarmnesse and unfaithfulnesse, yet they did not so take up our heart but that room was left to congratulate with the Lord's people there in all their successes, and to condole with them in all their dangers; and if at any time any here seemed to be more jealous then godly jealousy would allow, we know not how it can be imputed to any thing else, but to the vehemencie of ardent affection, and impatient desire to have our brethren there and us joyned neerer to Christ, and neerer to one another in all his ordinances, and especially in Presbyteriall government, so well warranted by the Word, and approved by experience of our owne and other reformed Churches, wherein your long and unwearied endeavours have been blessed with a large increase, which hath yet proved still a seed unto a further and more glorious expected harvest. There could not be wished by mortall men a fairer opportunity then is cast in your laps, being invited and charged by so high an authority, to give so free and publike a testimony to those truths, which formerly many of the Lord's precious ones, by tongue and pen, by tears and blood, have more privately asserted. The smallest of Christ's truths (if it be lawfull to call any of them small) is of greater moment then all the other businesses that ever have been debated since the beginning of the world to

this day; but the highest of honours and heaviest of burdens is put upon you, to declare out of the sacred records of divine truth what is the prerogative of the crown and extent of the scepter of Jesus Christ—what bounds are to be set between him ruling in his house, and powers established by God on earth—how and by whom his house is to be governed—and by what wayes a restraint is to be put on these who would pervert his truth, and subvert the faith of many. No doubt, mountains of oppositions arise, and gools of difficulties open up themselves in this your way; but you have found it is God that girdeth you with strength, and maketh your way perfect and plain before you, who hath delivered, and doth deliver, and will yet deliver. We need not put you in minde that as there lyeth at this time a strict tye on all, so in a speciall manner both you and we are engaged to interpose our selves between God and these kingdomes, between the two nations, between the king and the people, for averting of deserved wrath, for continuing and increasing of a well-grounded union, for procuring as far as in us lyeth a right settling of religion and church government; that when we shall sleep with our fathers, the posterity here and abroad may be reaping the fruits of our labours.

We are fully assured of your constant and sedulous promoting of this blessed work, and of the Lord's assisting and carrying you on therein; and are confident that your late experience and present sense of the great danger and fearfull confusion flowing from the rise and growth of sects and sectaries not suppressed, hath stirred up in your hearts most fervent desires and carefull endeavours for remedying the same, wherein we exhort you to continue and abound, knowing that your labours shall not be in vain in the Lord, to whose rich grace we commend you and the work in your hands.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly, by the Moderator.

Edinburgh, Junii 18, 1646.

Recommendation to Presbyteries and Provinciall Assemblies.

I. The Assembly recommends to severall Presbyteries and Provinciall Assemblies to consider the interests of particular congregations, in the calling and admission of ministers, with all these questions that usually fall out upon that occasion; and to report their opinions to the next Assembly, with some fit overtures for preventing all contests in that matter.

II. The Assembly recommends to Presbyteries and Provinciall Assemblies to consider all the matters referred by preceding Assemblies to the consideration of Presbyteries, and to report their opinions therein to the next Assembly.

Act for a Publike Fast before the next Assembly.

The Assembly, having considered an Act of the Assembly, 1644, Sess. Ult., enjoining a publike fast to be kept in all the kirks of the city where the General Assembly holds, upon the first day of the meeting of the Assembly; and finding some inconveniences therein, therefore, at this time, untill the matter be further considered, appoints a publike fast and humiliation for the Lord's blessing to the meeting of the next Assembly, to be universally observed in all the congregations of this Kirk, upon the Sabbath next except one preceding the said next Assembly; the exercises for the members of the Assembly at their first meeting being still observed, according to the ancient and laudable practise of this Kirk, this appointment notwithstanding.

The Assembly appoints the meeting of the next Generall Assembly to be at Edinburgh upon the first Wednesday of August, 1647.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, CONVEENED
AT EDINBURGH, 1647.

Sess. 2, August 16, 1647, post meridiem.—Act allowing the Half of the Ministers in the Presbyterie of Zetland only, with their Ruling Elders, to keep the Provincial Assembly.

The General Assembly, understanding that the whole members of the Presbyterie of Zetland, adjoynd to the Provincial of Caithnes and Sutherland upon weighty considerations by the preceding Assembly, cannot be present at the meetings of that Provincial, without great prejudice to the particular congregations within that Presbyterie, and many other inconveniences—that isle being of great distance from land, and the passage from and to the same being uncertaine and dangerous; Doe, therefore, declare and ordaine, That the whole ministers and elders of the Presbyterie of Zetland shall not be tyed hereafter to come to the meetings of their said Provincial; but that the half of the number of the ministers, with their ruling elders, shall be onely obliged to keep the meetings of the said Provincial Assembly in time coming.

*Sess. 15, August 20, 1647, ante meridiem.—A Declaration and Brotherly Exhortation of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to their Brethren of England.**

The conscience of our dutie to God obliging us to give a testimony to his truth, and to the kingdom of his Sonne Jesus Christ, now so much resisted and opposed by many, and so little owned by others—the laudable custome and example of correspondency between neighbouring churches, exhorting, encouraging, and (in case of publike scandal) admonishing in love one another, as well as single brethren ought to admonish one another in love, in the case of private offence—our nearer relation and more special affection to our brethren of England, making us to sympathize with them in their danger and affliction as our own, both kingdomes being united as one entire body in one Covenant, for pursuing the common cause and ends therein xpressed—yea, common reason and experience itself teaching us that we have no cause to conceive our religion, the liberties of this Church, or our selves, to be in a condition of safety when ever the enemies of our religion and liberties are growing to a prevalency in the neighbour kingdom. Any one of these considerations, much more all of them together, cry aloud upon us to break our silence in this present juncture of affaires; yet we hope to expresse our selves both concerning the present dangers and present duties, as in a conscionable and brotherly freedome, so in a fair and inoffensive way; for we have no pleasure nor purpose to provoke any person or party whatsoever, nor to encrease, but to endeavour the allaying and composing of the present unhappy differences. If any shall offend at our discharging our conscience and doing our duty, yet we shall rather chose to take our hazard of that, then of displeasing God by neglect of duty. But we hope better things then to be misunderstood or misinterpreted by such as desire a candide interpretation of their own actions or expressions.

First of all, whatsoever the present discouragements, difficulties, or dangers are, or whatsoever for the future they may be, we cannot but commemorate, to the glory of God, and we doubt not it shall be remembred to his glory in the Church throughout all ages, how great a salvation his mighty hand and outstretched arme hath wrought for these three kingdomes—how he stirred up the spirits of his people in this kingdom ten yeares ago, to begin to shake of the yoke of Prelaticall tyrannie, and of Popish ceremonies obtruded upon us, contrary to the lawes of God and men—how he led us on from so small beginnings, and from one degree to another, till we were united in a National Covenant—how he gave us a banner to be displayed for the truth, and so blessed us in the prosecution of that Covenant, that the King's Majesty was graciously pleased, upon the humble petitions of his loyal subjects in this nation, to indict a General Assembly and Parliament, for healing the grievances of Church and State respectively, as likewise to grant his royal consent for confirming and ratifying by acts of Parliament our National Covenant, and the government and liberties of this Church. After which the new troubles raised against us by the malice and

* Drawn up by Mr George Gillespie.—Ed. 1843.

treachery of our enemies did occasion the first expedition of this nation into England, (upon which followed the calling of the Parliament there, and the large treaty,) and, in the issue, the return of that army was with an olive branch of peace, and not without the beginnings of a reformation in England; in which work, while the Parliament was interrupted and opposed, and a bloody war begun with great successe on that side which opposed the Parliament and the begun reformation, from whence also did accrew great advantage to the Popish party, (whereof the cessation of arms concluded in Ireland may be in stead of many testimonies,) commissioners were sent hither from both Houses, earnestly inviting and perswading to a nearer union of the kingdomes, and desiring assistance from this nation to their brethren in that their great distresse; and this, by the good hand of God, produced the Solemne League and Covenant of the three kingdomes, to the terrour of the Popish and Prelatical party, our common enemies, and to the great comfort of such as were wishing and waiting for the reformation of religion, and the recovery of just liberties. And although, for the conjunction of the kingdomes in Covenant and armes, (being a speciall means tending to the extirpation of Popery, and strengthening the true reformed religion,) this kingdome hath been invaded and infested by the bloody Irish rebels, aided and strengthened by some degenerate and perfidious countrey men of our owne; although, also, in England there were not wanting incendiaries, who, hating and envying nothing more then the union of the kingdomes in such a Covenant, were very vigilant to catch, and active to improve, all occasions of making divisive motions, and creating nationall differences; yet God hath been graciously pleased to break our enemies' strength at home, when it was greatest, and to guide us through these jealousies and differences, fomented by disaffected persons, between the kingdomes; so that, in stead of a splitting upon these rocks, (the thing hoped for by our enemies,) there was a peaceable and friendly parting; since which time God hath further blessed our army at home, to the expelling of the enemy out of our own borders. Nor can we passe in silence the happy progresse which hath been made in the reformation of the Church of England. He that hath brought the children to the birth, can also give strength to come forth; and he whose hand did cast out Prelacie and the Book of Common Prayer, (although strongly rooted in standing lawes,) and who inclined the Parliament of England to owne no other church government but the Presbyterial, (though it be not yet fully settled according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches,) can as easily incline, when he thinks good, both the king and them, and the body of that kingdome, to a thorow and perfect reformation. He that made the Assemblies and Parliaments of both kingdomes to agree upon one Directory for the Publike Worship of God, can also, when he will, make an agreement in the other parts of uniformitie, Confession of Faith, Form of Church Government, and Catechisme; in all which there hath been also a good progresse made in the reverend and learned Assemblie of Divines through the good hand of God so long upon them.

Having now seen so much of God, both in the beginning and progresse of this his great work, and his hand having done so wondrous things for his people in their greatest extremities of danger; and having discovered and defeate the plots of enemies, making them fall even by their own counsels, these things we resolve to keep still fixed in our hearts, and as memorials before our eyes, that remembring the works of the Lord, and the years of the right hand of the Most High, we may neither want matter of praises and thanksgivings, nor experience to breed hope. Although the building of the house of the Lord in England be not yet after so long expectation finished, and now also the work ceaseth, yet we doe from our hearts blesse the Lord for the laying of the foundation, and for so much progresse as hath been made in the work; having still confidence in the Almighty, to whom nothing is impossible or too hard, that every mountaine which doeth or shall stand in the way shall become a plaine, and that the head-stone shall be brought for with shoutings of joy, "Grace, grace unto it."

Nevertheless, we are also very sensible of the great and imminent dangers into which this common cause of religion is now brought by the growing and spreading of most dangerous errors in England, to the obstructing and hindering of the begun reformation, as namely, (beside many others,) Socinianisme, Arminianisme, Anabaptisme,

Antinomianisme, Brownisme, Erastianisme, Independency, and that which is called (by abuse of the word) Liberty of Conscience, being indeed liberty of error, scandal, schisme, heresie, dishonouring God, opposing the truth, hindering reformation, and seducing others; whereunto we adde those Nullifidians, or men of no religion, commonly called Seekers: Yea, we cannot but look upon the dangers of the true Reformed religion in this island as greater now then before, not onely for that those very principles and fundamentals of faith which, under Prelacy, yea, under Popery itself, were generally received as uncontroverted, are now, by the scepticisme of many sectaries of this time, either oppugned or called in question; but also, because in stead of carrying on the reformation towards perfection, that which hath been already built is in part cast down, and in danger to be wholly overthrown through the endeavours of sectaries to comply with many of the Prelaticall and Malignant, and even the Popish party; and their joyning hand in hand, and casting in their lots, and interweaving their interests together in way of combination against the Covenant and Presbyteriall government; yea, the unclean spirit which was cast out, is about to enter againe, with seven other spirits worse then himselfe, and so the latter end like to be worse then the beginning.

We are extremely sorry that we have cause to aggravate these evils from the crying sin of breach of Covenant, whereof if we should hold our peace, yet, according to the Word of the Lord, other nations will say, and many among them do say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this people? and what meaneth the heat of this great anger? and they answer one another, "Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord their God." We would not be understood as if we meant either to justifie this nation, or to charge such a sin upon all in that nation. We know the Covenant hath been in divers particulars broken by many in both kingdomes—the Lord pardon it and accept a sacrifice; and we doe not doubt but there are many seven thousands in England, who have not onely kept themselves unspotted, and retained their integrity in that businesse, but doe also mourne and groane before the Lord for that sin of others; yet we should but deny our own sense and betray the truth, if we should not resent so great a sinne and danger, as is the breach of a solemne Covenant, sworn with hands lifted up to the Most High God; which breach, however varnished over with some colourable and handsome pretexts, one whereof is the liberty and common right of the free people of England, as once Saul brake a covenant with the Gibeonites, "in his zeal to the Children of Israel and Judah;" yet God could not then, and cannot now, be mocked; yea, it is too apparent and undeniable, that among those who did take the Covenant of the three kingdomes, as there are many who have given themselves to a detestable indifferency or neutralitie, so there is a generation which hath made defection to the contrary part, persecuting, as far as they could, that true Reformed religion, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, which by the Covenant they ought to preserve against the common enemies—hindering and resisting the reformation and uniformity which by the Covenant ought to be endeavoured—preserving and tolerating those cursed things which by the Covenant ought to be extirpate, heresie and schisme—encroaching upon, yea offering violence unto the rights, priviledges, and authority of magistracie—protecting and assisting such as by the Covenant ought to have been brought to condigne triall and punishment—and persecuting those who by the Covenant ought to be assisted and defended—endeavouring also a breach in stead of a firme peace and union between the kingdomes, so that there is not any one article of the Solemne League and Covenant which hath not been sinfully and dangerously violated before God, angels, and men. Now, if a Covenant for the preservation and reformation of religion, the maintenance and defence of liberties, was justly thought a fit and excellent mean, not only to strengthen and fortifie the kingdomes against the common enemy of the true Reformed religion, publike peace, and prosperity; but also, "to acquire the favour of Almighty God towards the three kingdomes of England, Scotland, and Ireland," as is expressed in the Ordinance of the Lords and Commons for the taking of the Covenant, dated February 2, 1643; surely, then, the authors and chief instruments of the breach of that Covenant are to be looked upon as those who strengthen the hands of the common enemy, and provoke the wrath of Almighty

God against these kingdomes: Yea, if this Covenant was the "soveraigne and only meanes of the recovery" of these embroiled bleeding kingdoms, as is expressed in the Exhortation of the Assembly of Divines to the taking of the Covenant, approved and ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, the despising, refusing, and casting aside of that remedy must needs render the disease much more desperate. And if by the Declaration of both kingdomes joyned in arms, *anno* 1643, such as would not take the Covenant were declared "to be publike enemies to their religion and countrey, and that they are to be censured and punished as professed adversaries and Malignants," who seeth not now a strange falling away from these first principles and professions among these who either magnifie and cry up, or at least connive at and comply with such as have not taken the Covenant, yea, are known enemies to it, and cry down such as are most zealous for it?

In this case, while in the neighbour kingdom, the staves of beauty and bands, covenant and brotherhood, are broken by many, the horne of Malignants and sectaries exalted, the best affected born down, reformation ebbing, heresie and schisme flowing; it can hardly be marvelled at, by any person of prudence and discretion, if we be full of such feares and apprehensions as use to be in those who dwell near a house set on fire, or a family infected, especially being taught, by the sad experience of these Prelatical times, how easily a gangrene in the one-half of this island may spread through the whole; knowing also the inveterate and insatiable malice of the enemies of this cause and Covenant against this Church and kingdome; which we cannot be ignorant of, unlesse we would shut our eyes and stop our ears.

Our present purpose leadeth us to touch somewhat of the proceedings of the army in England this summer, so far as religion is therein concerned. As we are confident divers have gone along with them in the simplicity of their hearts—and we presume not to judge the thoughts and intentions of any, it being God's owne prerogative to bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and to make manifest the counsels of the hearts—so it cannot be denied, that upon these passages and proceedings hath followed the interrupting of the so much longed-for reformation of religion, of the settling of Presbyteriall government, and of the suppressing of heresies and dangerous errors, (which works the Parliament had taken in hand,) the retarding and delaying the relief of Ireland, the sowing of the seeds of another war in England, the strengthening of the hand of the Malignant and Episcopall party, the weakening and wounding both of magistracy and ministry; in all which, whether the army be blamelesse and innocent from ministring occasion to so great evils, or whether there be not cause for them to repent and do the first works, and to practise more of that love, moderation, and meeknesse of spirit, and of that zeal against Malignants and Prelatical persons, which they have from the beginning professed, and the want whereof (when suspected in others) they did so much censure; or whether there be such a thing among them as adjoining with those against whom, and against those with whom the Covenant was taken;—we leave them in all these to the search and examination of their own consciences, that they may stand or fall unto God. For our part, we cannot conceive how the proposals of that army for settling of a peace, do in point of religion consist with the Solemn League and Covenant, or with the propositions of peace formerly agreed upon by both kingdomes; there being so considerable omissions of divers materiall desires contained in those former propositions, concerning the abolition of Prelacy—concerning the injoyning of the taking of the Covenant by all his Majestie's subjects, under such penalties as the Parliaments should agree upon—concerning the settling of religion in England and Ireland according to the Covenant, in such manner as both Houses of Parliament shall agree on, after advice had with the Assembly of Divines concerning the settling of uniformity between the Churches of God in both kingdomes, according to the Covenant, in such manner as shall be agreed on by both Houses of the Parliament of England, and by the Church and kingdome of Scotland, after advice had with the divines of both kingdomes—also concerning an act of Parliament to confirm the calling and sitting of the Assembly of Divines: All which, with some other particulars concerning religion, expressed in the former propositions, if they should now be omitted in the settling of a peace, the progresse already made, not only in the Assembly of Divines, but in the Houses of Parliament in set-

ling Presbyteriall government, with the Confession of Faith, yea, the Directory of Publike Worship, (though agreed upon by the Assemblies and Parliaments of both kingdomes,) shall be but so much lost labour. But, beside these omissions, it may be justly doubted, whether there be not in these proposals of the army somewhat for Episcopacy and against the Covenant; for we cannot understand the eleventh proposall in any other sense, but that it supposeth the continuance of the ecclesiasticall office of Bishops or Prelats, as well as of any other church officers, and taketh no more from the Prelats but coercive power or jurisdiction, extending to civil penalties, which, indeed, belongeth to no ecclesiasticall officers. In the twelfth proposall, we do not see how it can avoid or shun the toleration of Popery, superstition, heresie, schisme, profaness, or whatsoever works of darknesse shall be practised by such as dispise the publike worship of God in the Church, and have the most unlawfull and wicked meetings else where, under a profession of religious duties, exercises, or ordinances. From the thirteenth proposall, we can make no other result, but that in stead of enjoining the taking of the Covenant, under such penalties as the Parliaments in their wisdom shall agree upon, the former ordinance of Parliament, enjoining the taking of it is desired to be repealed; and then what may be the danger of those that have taken, or shall take, an oath of that kinde, not enjoyed nor ratified by authority, we leave it to be judged by those who know best the lawes of that kingdome.

One thing more we cannot passe, that whereas, in the armie's declaration or representation to the Parliament, dated June 14, 1647, they mention their brethren of Scotland as having proceeded in the vindication and defence of their just rights and liberties, much higher then that army hath done; we are necessitated to say this much for clearing of these proceedings in this nation reflected upon. They of this Church and kingdom who joyned together and associated themselves in this cause, first by humble petitions, and afterwards by covenant, were so far from slighting or breaking that Covenant which was taken, that it was the special visible character by which the friends of the cause were distinguished from the enemies thereof, and they were so far from crying down the ministry and ecclesiasticall Assemblies, or from disobeying any orders or commands of Parliament, that a Generall Assembly of the Church and a Parliament were two chief heads of their petitions and desires at that time, when they had neither; and when they had obtained a Generall Assembly and Parliament, they chearfully submitted to both respectively.

And now the dangers of religion in this island being so great, as there hath been lately a solemne humiliation throughout this land, upon occasion of these great and growing dangers; so, we cannot but still look upon them as matters of frequent prayer and humiliation to our selves, as well as our brethren in England, there being much sin in both kingdomes procuring all this evill, and justly deserving these and heavier judgements. And as we desire, in the first place, to be humbled for our own sins, and the sins of this nation, so we trust our brethren will be willing to be put in minde of the necessity of their humiliation and repentance for the nationall sins of that kingdome; which we shall wish rather to be sadly considered by them then expressed by us. One thing we are confident of, that God hath had a speciall controversie against his people of old, for the sin of a broken Covenant, and unwillingnesse to be reformed and purged according to the word of the Lord; and that till these sinnes were acknowledged and repented his controversie did not take an end. We are no lesse confident, that the godly and well-affected will, in tendernes of conscience, timely search out, weigh well, mourn for, and study to remove, all the causes of the Lord's present controversie against that nation. What the Honourable Houses of Parliament have to be humbled for, and to reform or amend, they have been (and we trust still are) put in minde by such as are ambassadours to them in Christ's stead, at their solemne humiliations. For our part, as we have alwayes mentioned them in our prayers, with thanksgivings also in their behalfe, so we now must humbly beseech the Lord to direct and blesse them, and in their present difficulties to keep them by his grace from all sinfull compliance, especially from establishing iniquity by a law; to shew them why he contendeth with them, that the true cause of his controversie may be removed, and that the glory of his name, the kingdome, crown, and scepter of his Son Jesus Christ, with his word, lawes, ordinances, trueth,

ministers, may be yet more set by in their eyes, that they also may finde a further performance of the word of the Lord: "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee;" and "Them that honour me, I will honour."

We shall now, by the mercies of God, and in the bowels of Jesus Christ, earnestly beseech all those, of whatsoever quality or condition, in England, who have entred into the same League and Covenant with us, and especially the Houses of Parliament, the city of London, and Assembly of Divines, that, with sound humiliation, fervent prayer, and making sure their peace with God, they may joyne all care, faithfulness, and zeal, to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering, against the many heresies and errors of these times; that they may, according to their places and callings, endeavour to the utmost of their power to prevent or hinder the laying aside or slighting of the Covenant, the re-establishment of Episcopacy, and the toleration of Popery, Prelacy, heresie, schisme, superstition, or prophannesse, and not suffer themselves, directly or indirectly, by whatsoever combination, perswasion, or terrour, to be divided and withdrawn from that blessed union and sacred Covenant, either to the contrary side, or to a neutrality in this cause, which so much concerneth the glorie of God, the good of the kingdomes, and the honour of the King; but all the dayes of their lives zealously and constantly continue therein, against all opposition, and promote the same according to their power, against all lets and impediments whatsoever; which things both they and we have solemnly, and in the sight of God, sworn unto. And as we desired them to rest confident of the constancy of their brethren in this nation, in adhering to that Covenant, in all the articles thereof, which we shall, by the grace of Christ, (without which we are nothing,) sincerely, really, and constantly, pursue and promote, so far as concerneth our places and callings—using our utmost endeavours towards the suppression of those errors which have so dangerously hurt religion in this island; so, we expect confidently the like of our brethren in England united in Covenant with us, and that what ever they may have cause to fear, or be called to suffer, yet the Lord will so strengthen them by his grace, as that they may be able to say, "All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy Covenant." And here is the wisdom and patience of the saints, to choose affliction rather than iniquity, to do duty in the worst of times, and to trust God with events, and in so doing, to hope to the end, and wait upon the Lord, untill he plead their cause, and execute judgement for them; so shall they be more purified, and not made blacker, (as, alas! some are,) but whiter in times of tryall.

More particularly, we do desire that Presbyteriall government may be settled and put in practise throughout that kingdom, according to the Word of God and example of the best reformed churches; for without this we know no other proper and effectuell remedy against the present dangers of religion there, or for purging the Church from scandals, which are destructive either to sound doctrine or to godlinesse; and herein we are confident the experience of all the reformed churches will bear witness with us. Nor do we doubt but in England also time and experience will more and more commehd; not only the beautifull order, but the great utility, yea, necessity of this government, and dispell all the clouds of aspersions and prejudices which it lieth under among such as know it not, who ought, therefore, to beware of speaking evill of the things they understand not. Yet we would not have our zeal for Presbyteriall government misunderstood, as if it tended to any rigour or domineering over the flock, or to hinder and exclude that instructing in meeknesse them that oppose themselves, which the apostolicall rule holds forth; or as if we would have any such to be intrusted with that government as are found not yet purged, either from their old profannesse, or from the Prelaticall principles and practises, which were but to put a piece of new cloath unto an old garment, and so to make the rent worse; or to put new wine into old bottles, and so to lose both wine and bottles. Yea, who knows whether this may not be one of the causes (and not the least) why the present reformation succeeds the worse, even because of so little repentance, either for the profannesse or Prelaticall errors and corruptions of divers who have acted in it; nevertheless, the right hand of fellowship is to be given to all such as bring forth fruits meet for repentance, whatsoever their former errors or failings were. And to our

great joy, we understand that there are many learned, able, godly, and prudent ministers in that kingdome, fit to be employed in that government, together with such able and pious men as are to be joyned with them in the capacity of ruling elders. It shall be a part of our prayers, that the Lord of the harvest may send forth many more labourers in that kingdome, where the harvest is so great and the labourers so few proportionably; and in the meane while, that such as he hath already thrust out may not be unemployed, as to the point of discipline and government.

Nor, lastly, doth our zeal for the Covenant and Presbyteriall government abate or diminish any thing at all from our loyalty and duty to the King's Majesty, although incendiaries and enemies spare not to reproach this Church and kingdome with disloyaltie. Yet such calumnies will easily be repudiate by all who will examine the whole course of the publike proceedings in this nation in reference to the King, and particularly the Declaration of the Parliament of this kingdome, dated January 16, 1647. Wherefore, passing all such calumnies, which cannot but be hatefull to God and good men, we do clearly and candidly professe, that the Covenant and Presbyteriall government are so far from hindering or excluding our duty to the King, that it is thereby very much strengthened and supported; for our giving to God what is God's, doth not hinder us, but help us, to give unto Cæsar what is Cæsar's. And we earnestly wish his Majestie's royall heart may be graciously inclined to the just desires of his good subjects in both kingdomes, and to that happy settlement of truth and peace, religion and righteousness, which may be as well for the establishment of his own throne as for the good of his people.

Now the Prince of Peace himself grant his afflicted people, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, a safe and well grounded peace, bring light out of the present darkness, and order out of all these confusions—give unto all who are waiting for the consolation of Israel "good hope through grace, comfort their hearts, stablish them in every good word and work,"—make his cause to triumph at last over all opposition, and the enemies foot to slide in due time; and so put a new song of praise in the mouths of his people. Amen.

Sess. 19, August 24, 1647, ante meridiem.—Act for observing the Directions of the Generall Assembly for Secret and Private Worship, and mutuall Edification, and for censuring such as neglect Familie Worship.

The Generall Assembly, after mature deliberation, doth approve the following rules and directions for cherishing piety, and preventing division and schisme, and doth appoint ministers and ruling elders in each congregation to take special care that these directions be observed and followed; as likewise, that Presbyteries and Provinciall Synods enquire and make tryall whether the said directions be duly observed in their bounds, and to reprove or censure (according to the quality of the offence) such as shall be found to be reproveable or censurable therein. And to the end that these directions may not be rendered ineffectuall and unprofitable among some, through the usuall neglect of the very substance of the duty of family worship, the Assembly doth further require and appoint ministers and ruling elders to make diligent search and enquiry in the congregations committed to their charge respectively, whether there be among them any family or families which use to neglect this necessary duty; and if any such family be found, the head of that family is to be first admonished privately to amend this fault; and, in case of his continuing therein, he is to be gravely and sadly reprov'd by the session; after which reproof, if he be found still to neglect family worship, let him be, for his obstinacy in such an offence, suspended and debarred from the Lord's Supper, as being justly esteemed unworthy to communicate therein till he amend.

*The Directions of the Generall Assembly for Secret and Private Worship, and mutuall Edification, for cherishing Piety, for maintaining Unitie, and avoiding Schisme and Division.**

Besides the publike worship in congregations, mercifully established in this land in

* These directions were drawn up by Mr Robert Blair.—Ed. 1843.

great purity, it is expedient and necessary that secret worship of each person alone, and private worship of families, be pressed and set up; that with nationall reformation the profession and power of godlinesse, both personall and domestick, be advanced.

I. And, first, for secret worship, it is most necessar that every one apart and by themselves be given to prayer and meditation, the unspeakable benefit whereof is best known to them who are most exercised therein. This being the meane whereby, in a special way, communion with God is entertained, and right preparation for all other duties obtained; and, therefore, it becometh not only pastors within their severall charges to presse persons of all sorts to performe this duty morning and evening, and at other occasions, but also it is incumbent to the head of every family to have a care that both themselves and all within their charge be daily diligent herein.

II. The ordinar duties comprehended under the exercise of pietie, which should be in families when they are convened to that effect, are these: First, Prayer and praises performed, with a special reference as well to the publike condition of the Kirk of God and this kingdome as to the present case of the family, and every member thereof. Next, Reading of Scriptures, with catechizing in a plaine way, that the understandings of the simpler may be better enabled to profit under the publike ordinances, and they made more capable to understand the Scriptures when they are read; together with godly conferences, tending to the edification of all the members in the most holy faith, as also admonition and rebuke upon just reasons from these who have authoritie in the family.

III. As the charge and office of interpreting the holy Scriptures is a part of the ministeriall calling, which none (howsoever otherwise qualified) should take upon him in any place, but he that is duly called thereunto by God and his Kirk; so in every family where there is any that can read, the Holy Scriptures should be read ordinarily to the family; and it is commendable that thereafter they confer, and by way of conference make some good use of what hath been read and heard; as, for example, if any sin be reprov'd in the word read, use may be made thereof to make all the family circumspect and watchfull against the same; or if any judgement be threatned, or mentioned to have been inflicted in that portion of Scripture which is read, use may be made to make all the family fear lest the same or a worse judgement befall them, unlesse they beware of the sin that procured it; and, finally, if any duty be required, or comfort held forth in a promise, use may be made to stirre up themselves to imploy Christ for strength to enable them for doing the commanded duty, and to apply the offered comfort; in all which the master of the family is to have the chif hand, and any member of the family may propone ane question or doubt for resolution.

IV. The head of the family is to take care that none of the family withdraw himself from any part of family worship; and seeing the ordinar performance of all the parts of family worship belongeth properly to the head of the family, the minister is to stirre up such as are lasie, and traine up such as are weak to a fitnessse for these exercises. It being alwayes free to persons of qualitie to entertain one approven by the Presbyterie for performing family exercise; and in other families where the head of the family is unfit, that another constantly residing in the familie, approven by the minister and session, may be employed in that service, wherein the minister and session are to be countable to the Presbyterie. And if a minister by divine Providence be brought to any family, it is requisite that at no time he convene a part of the family for worship secluding the rest, except in singular cases, specially concerning these parties, which (in Christian prudence) need not, or ought not to be imparted to others.

V. Let no idler who hath no particular calling, or vagrant person, under pretence of a calling, be suffered to perform worship in families, to or for the same; seeing persons tainted with errours, or aiming at division, may be ready (after that maunier) to creep into houses, and lead captive silly and unstable souls.

VI. At family worship a speciall care is to be had that each family keep by themselves; neither requiring, inviting, nor admitting persons from divers families, unlesse it be these who are lodged with them, or at meal, or otherwise with them, upon some lawfull occasion.

VII. Whatsoever hath been the effects and fruits of meetings of persons of divers families in the times of corruption or trouble, (in which cases many things are commendable, which otherwise are not tolerable,) yet when God hath blessed us with peace and the purity of the Gospel, such meetings of persons of divers families (except in the cases mentioned in these directions) are to be disapproved, as tending to the hinderance of the religious exercise of each family by itself, to the prejudice of the publike ministry, to the renting of the families of particular congregations, and (in progresse of time) of the whole kirk, besides many offences which may come thereby, to the hardning of the hearts of carnall men, and grief of the godly.

VIII. On the Lord's day, after every one of the family apart, and the whole family together, have sought the Lord (in whose hands the preparation of men's hearts are) to fit them for the publike worship, and to blesse to them the publike ordinances, the master of the family ought to take care that all within his charge repair to the publike worship, that he and they may joyne with the rest of the congregation; and the publike worship being finished, after prayer, he should take an account what they have heard, and thereafter to spend the rest of the time which they may spare in catechising and in spirituall conferences upon the Word of God; or else (going apart) they ought to apply themselves to reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that they may confirme and increase their communion with God; that so the profit which they found in the publike ordinances may be cherished and promoted, and they more edified unto eternall life.

IX. So many as can conceive prayer ought to make use of that gift of God; albeit these who are rude and weaker may begin at a set form of prayer; but so as they be not sluggish in stirring up in themselves (according to their daily necessities) the Spirit of prayer, which is given to all the children of God in some measure. To which effect they ought to be the more fervent and frequent in secret prayer to God, for enabling of their hearts to conceive, and their tongues to expresse, convenient desires to God for their family. And, in the mean time, for their greater encouragement, let these materials of prayer be meditated upon, and made use of as followeth:—

Let them confesse to God how unworthy they are to come in his presence, and unfit to worship his Majestie; and therefore earnestly ask of God the Spirit of prayer.

They are to confesse their sins, and the sins of the family, accusing, judging, and condemning themselves for them, till they bring their souls to some measure of true humiliation.

They are to pour out their souls to God, in the name of Christ, by the Spirit, for forgiveness of sins, for grace to repent, to believe, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, and that they may serve God with joy and delight in walking before him.

They are to give thanks to God for his many mercies to his people, and to themselves, and especially for his love in Christ, and for the light of the Gospel.

They are to pray for such particular benefits, spirituall and temporall, as they stand in need of for the time, (whether it be morning or evening,) as health or sicknesse, prosperitie or adversitie.

They ought to pray for the Kirk of Christ in general—for all the reformed kirks, and for this kirk in particular—and for all that suffer for the name of Christ,—for all our superiours, the King's Majesty, the Queene, and their children—for the magistrates, ministers, and whole body of the congregation whereof they are members, as well for their neighbours absent in their lawfull affaires, as for those that are at home.

The prayer may be closed with an earnest desire, that God may be glorified in the comming of the kingdome of his Son, and in the doing of his will; and with assurance that themselves are accepted, and what they have asked according to his will shall be done.

X. These exercises ought to be performed in great sinceritie without delay, laying aside all exerciscs of worldly businesse or hinderances, notwithstanding the mockings of Atheists and profane men; in respect of the great mercies of God to this land, and of his severe corrections wherewith lately he hath exercised us. And,

to this effect, persons of eminency (and all elders of the kirk) not only ought to stir up themselves and their families to diligence herein, but also to concurre effectually, that in all other families where they have power and charge the said exercises be conscionably performed.

XI. Besides the ordinary duties in families, which are above mentioned, extraordinary duties, both of humiliation and thanksgiving, are to be carefully performed in families, when the Lord by extraordinary occasions (private or publike) calleth for them.

XII. Seeing the Word of God requireth that we should consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, therefore, at all times, and specially in this time, wherein profanitie abounds, and mockers, walking after their own lusts, think it strange that others run not with them to the same excesse of riot, every member of this Kirk ought to stir up themselves, and one another, to the duties of mutuall edification, by instruction, admonition, rebuke, exhorting one another to manifest the grace of God, "in denying ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and in living godly, soberly, and righteously in this present world," by comforting the feeble-minded, and praying with or for one another; which duties respectively are to be performed upon speciall occasions offered by divine providence; as namely, when under any calamity, crosse, or great difficultie, counsel or comfort is sought, or when an offender is to be reclaimed by private admonition, and if that be not effectually, by joyning one or two more in the admonition, according to the rule of Christ, "that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established."

XIII. And because it is not given to every one to speak a word in season to a wearied or distressed conscience, it is expedient that a person (in that case) finding no ease after the use of all ordinary means, private and publike, have their addresse to their own pastour, or some experienced Christian; but if the person troubled in conscience be of that condition, or of that sex, that discretion, modestie, or fear of scandall, requireth a godly, grave, and secret friend to be present with them in their said addresse, it is expedient that such a friend be present.

XIV. When persons of divers families are brought together by divine providence, being abroad upon their particular vocations, or any necessary occasions, as they would have the Lord their God with them whithersoever they go, they ought to walk with God, and not neglect the duties of prayer and thanksgiving, but take care that the same be performed by such as the company shall judge fittest; and that they likewise take heed that "no corrupt communication proceed out of their mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers."

The drift and scope of all these directions is no other but that, upon the one part, the power and practice of godlinesse among all the ministers and members of this Kirk, according to their severall places and vocations, may be cherished and advanced, and all impietie and mocking of religious exercises suppressed; and, upon the other part, that under the name and pretext of religious exercises, no such meetings or practices be allowed, as are apt to breed error, scandall, schisme, contempt or misregard of the publike ordinances and ministers, or neglect of the duties of particular callings, or such other evils as are the works not of the Spirit, but of the flesh, and are contrary to truth and peace.

Act against such as withdraw themselves from the Publike Worship in their own Congregation.

Since it hath pleased God of his infinite goodnesse to blesse his Kirk within this nation with the riches of the Gospel, in giving to us his ordinances in great purity, liberty, and withall a comely and well-established order: The Assembly, in the zeal of God, for preserving order, unitie, and peace in the Kirk, for maintaining that respect which is due to the ordinances and ministers of Jesus Christ, for preventing schisme, noysome errors, and all unlawfull practices, which may follow on the people's withdrawing themselves from their own congregations, doth charge every

minister to be diligent in fulfilling his ministerie—to be holy and grave in his conversation—to be faithfull in preaching, declaring the whole counsell of God—and as he hath occasion from the text of Scripture, to reprove the sins and errours, and presse the duties of the time, and in all those to observe the rules prescribed by the Acts of Assembly; wherein if he be negligent, he is to be censured by his own Presbytery. As also, ordains every member in every congregation to keep their own paroch kirk, to communicate there in the Word and Sacraments; and if any person or persons shall hereafter usually absent themselves from their own congregations, except in urgent cases, made known to and approved by the Presbytery, the ministers of these congregations whereto they resort shall, both in publike by preaching, and in private admonition, shew their dislike of their withdrawing from their own minister; that in so doing, they may witnesse to all that heare them their due care to strengthen the hands of their fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord, and their detestation of any thing that may tend to separation, or any of the abovementioned evils; hereby their own flock will be confirmed in their stedfastnesse, and the unstable spirits of others will be rectified. Likeas, the minister of that congregation from which they do withdraw shall labour, first by private admonition, to reclaim them; and if any, after private admonition given by their own pastour, do not amend, in that case the pastour shall delate the foresaid persons to the session, who shall cite and censure them as contemners of the comely order of the Kirk; and if the matter be not taken order with there, it is to be brought to the Presbytery: for the better observing whereof, the Presbyteries at the visitation of the severall kirks, and Provinciaill Assemblies in their censure of the severall Presbyteries, shall enquire hereanent; which inquirie and report shall be registrate in the Provinciaill books, that their diligence may be seen in the General Assembly.

Sess. 22, August 26, 1647, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission of the preceding Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, after mature deliberation, do ratifie and approve the whole Acts and Conclusions of the Commissioners of the preceding Assembly for Publike Affaires now tryed and examined; declaring that they have proceeded therein with much zeal, wisdome, vigilance, and according to their Commission.

Sess. 23, August 27, 1647, ante meridiem.—Approbation of the Confession of Faith.

A Confession of Faith for the Kirks of God in the three kingdomes, being the chiefest part of that uniformity in religion, which, by the Solemne League and Covenant, we are bound to endeavour; and there being accordingly a Confession of Faith agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Kirk of Scotland; which Confession was sent from our Commissioners at London to the Commissioners of the Kirk met at Edinburgh in January last, and hath been in this Assembly twice publicly read over, examined, and considered; copies thereof being also printed, that it might be particularly perused by all the members of this Assembly, unto whom frequent intimation was publicly made to put in their doubts and objections, if they had any; and the said Confession being, upon due examination thereof, found by the Assembly to be most agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk; and, lastly, it being so necessary and so much longed for that the said Confession be, with all possible diligence and expedition, approved and established in both kingdoms, as a principal part of the intended uniformity in religion, and as a special means for the more effectual suppressing of the many dangerous errours and heresies of these times: The Generall Assembly doth, therefore, after mature deliberation, Agree unto and Approve the said Confession, as to the truth of the matter, (judging it to be most orthodox, and grounded upon the Word of God;) and also as to the point of uniformity, agreeing, for our part, that it

be a common Confession of Faith for the three kingdomes. The Assembly doth also blesse the Lord, and thankfully acknowledge his great mercy, in that so excellent a Confession of Faith is prepared, and thus far agreed upon in both kingdomes; which we look upon as a great strengthening of the true reformed religion against the common enemies thereof. But lest our intention and meaning be in some particulars misunderstood, it is hereby expressly declared and provided, that the not mentioning in this Confession the severall sort of ecclesiasticall officers and assemblies shall be no prejudice to the truth of Christ in these particulars to be expressed fully in the Directory of Government. It is further declared, that the Assembly understandeth some parts of the Second Article of the Thirty-One Chapter only of Kirks not settled or constituted in point of government; and that although in such kirks a synod of ministers and other fit persons may be called by the magistrate's authority and nomination, without any other call, to consult and advise with about matters of religion; and although likewise the ministers of Christ, without delegation from their churches, may of themselves, and by vertue of their office, meet together synodically in such kirks not yet constituted, yet neither or these ought to be done in kirks constituted and settled; it being alwayes free to the magistrate to advise with synods of ministers and ruling elders, meeting upon delegation from their churches, either ordinarily, or being indicted by his authority occasionally and *pro re nata*, it being also free to assemble together synodically, as well *pro re nata* as at the ordinary times upon delegation from the churches, by the intrinsical power received from Christ, as often as it is necessary for the good of the Church so to assemble, in case the magistrate, to the detriment of the Church, withhold or deny his consent; the necessity of occasionall Assemblies being first remonstrate unto him by humble supplication.

Sess. 25, August 28, 1647, post meridiem.—Act for Revising the Paraphrase of the Psalmes brought from England, with a Recommendation for Translating the other Scripturall Songs in Meeter.

The Generall Assembly, having considered the report of the committee concerning the Paraphrase of the Psalmes sent from England, and finding that it is very necessary that the said paraphrase be yet revised; therefore, doth appoint Master John Adamson to examine the first forty Psalmes, Master Thomas Craufurd the second forty, Master John Row the third forty, and Master John Nevey the last thirty Psalmes of that Paraphrase; and in their examination they shall not only observe what they think needs to be amended, but also to set downe their own essay for correcting thereof; and, for this purpose, recommends to them to make use of the travels of Rowallen, Master Zachary Boyd, or of any other on that subject, but especially of our own Paraphrase, that what they finde better in any of these works may be chosen; and, likewise, they shall make use of the animadversions sent from Presbyteries, who, for this cause, are hereby desired to hasten their observations unto them, and they are to make report of their labours herein to the Commission of the Assembly for Publike Affaires, against their first meeting in February next. And the Commission, after revising thereof, shall send the same to Provincial Assemblies, to be transmitted to Presbyteries, that by their further consideration the matter may be fully prepared to the next Assembly; and because some Psalmes in that Paraphrase sent from England are composed in verses which do not agree with the common tunes, therefore, it is also recommended that these Psalmes be likewise turned in other verses which may agree to the common tunes; that is, having the first line of eight syllabs, and the second line of six, that so both versions being together, use may be made of either of them in congregations as shall be found convenient. And the Assembly doth further recommend, that Mr Zachary Boyd be at the paines to translate the other Scriptural songs in meeter, and to report his travels also to the Commission of Assembly, that, after their examination thereof, they may send the same to Presbyteries to be there considered untill the next Generall Assembly.

Act recommending the Execution of the Act of Parliament at Perth, for uplifting Pecuniall Paines to be employed upon Pious Uses, and of all Acts of Parliament made against Excommunicate Persons.

The Generall Assembly doth seriously recommend and ordaine, that Presbyteries diligently endeavour, that the ninth Act of the Parliament holden at Perth *anno* 1645, concerning the uplifting of pecuniall paines to be employed upon pious uses, may be put to due execution within their severall bounds; and also, that the Acts of Parliament against excommunicate persons, especially the twentieth Act of the Parliament in March last, be also carefully execute; and that they cause use all diligence to that effect, and account hereof shall be required in Provinciaall and Generall Assemblies.

Sess. 26, August ult. 1647, ante meridiem.—Act discharging the importing, venting, or spreading of erroneous Books or Papers.

The Generall Assembly, considering how the errors of Independency and Separation have (in our neighbour kingdome of England) spread as a gangræn, and do daily eat as a canker, in so much that exceeding many errors, heresies, schismes, and blasphemies, have issued therefrom, and are sheltered thereby; and how possible it is for the same evils to invade and overspread this Kirk and kingdome, (lying within the same island,) by the spreading of their erroneous books, pamphlets, lybels, and letters, and by conversing with them that are infected with these errors, except the same be timously prevented; Doe, therefore, in the name of God, inhibit and discharge all members of this Kirk and kingdome to converse with persons tainted with such errors; or to import, sell, spread, vent, or disperse such erroneous books or papers: But that they beware of, and abstain from books maintaining Independencie or Separation, and from all Antinomian, Anabaptisticall, and other erroneous books and papers; requiring all ministers to warne their flocks against such bookes in generall, and particularly such as are most plausible, insinuating, and dangerous: And to try carefully from time to time if any such bookes be brought into this countrey from England, or from beyond seas, (which is especially recommended to ministers on sea coasts, or towns where any stationers are,) and if any shall be found, to present the same to the Presbyterie, that some course may be taken to hinder the dispersing thereof: And hereby all Presbyteries and Synods are ordained to try and processe such as shall transgresse against the premisses, or any part of the same. And the Assembly also doth seriously recommend to civill magistrates, that they may be pleased to be assisting to ministers and Presbyteries in execution of this act, and to concur with their authority in every thing to that effect.

Act for Debarring of Complyers in the First Classe from Ecclesiastick Office.

The Generall Assembly declares and ordaines, That no person who is guilty of compliance in the first classe mentioned in the Act of the preceding Assembly, shall be received in any ecclesiasticall charge untill the evidence of his repentance before the Presbyterie and congregation be reported to the Synode to which he belongs, and to the Generall Assembly, and their consent obtained for his bearing office. And if any such person be already received unto the eldership of any particular congregation, yet he shall not be admitted to be a member of any Presbyterie, Synode, or Generall Assemblies, untill (upon the evidence of his repentance) the consent and approbation of these judicatories respectively be obtained thereto.

Act for Pressing and Furthering the Plantation of Kirks.

The Generall Assembly, considering how the work of provision, plantation, convenient dividing, dismembring, better uniting or enlarging of parish kirks, is hitherto

foreslowed, to the great prejudice of many ministers, many good people, and hindrance of the work of reformation, doth therefore ordaine, That all Presbyteries have special care that the present opportunity be diligently improved by all their members, as need is, before the Commission for Plantation of Kirks, as they would not be found censurable for neglect. And that every Presbytery send in to the next Generall Assembly the names of all their parishes, with declaration which of them have ministers, which not; what is the largenesse of the bounds; commodious or in-commodious situation of each parish kirk; what is the number of communicants; what kirks are under patrons, what not; who are the severall patrons; what is the nature and quantitie of the present provision, or possible ground of further provision for competent maintenance where the same is not sufficiently provided already: As also, what parishes are united or disunited, or bettered already, and in what measure, by the said commission; that the Generall Assembly being acquaint therewith, may doe accordingly, both for censuring neglecters and finding out overtures for better furtherance of the work for time to come. Moreover, it is hereby ordained, That the next ensuing Provinciaill Synodes crave account of the severall Presbyteries their diligence, and presse that they have it ready in writ to present to the Provinciaill Synodes in April next to come, that so all may be in readinesse, and the full account made at the next Generall Assembly.

Act for Censuring Absents from the Generall Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, considering the absence of many commissioners in this and other preceding Assemblies, and that many of those present have gone from the Assembly before the dissolving thereof; therefore, for remedie hereof in time coming, doth ordaine, that hereafter every commissioner from Presbyteries and Universities who shall be absent from the Assembly without a reasonable excuse notified to the Assembly, or who being present shall go from the Assembly before the dissolving thereof without a licence, shall be suspended by the Assembly untill the Provinciaill Synode next thereafter following.

Renovation of former Acts of Assembly for Triall and Admission of Expectants to the Ministerie.

The Generall Assembly doth hereby renew and confirme all former acts and ordinances for triall and admission of expectants to the ministry, especially the articles thereanent allowed by the Generall Assembly, 1596, and approven in the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638—the thirteenth article concerning the age of intrants to the ministry, and the twentie-fourth article concerning the triall of expectants, of an Act of the said Assembly at Glasgow, Sess. 23—and the Act of the Assembly at St Andrews, 1642, Sess. 7, concerning lists for presentations from the King, and the trial of expectants, &c.; ordaining Presbyteries to observe the same carefully in all time coming.

Sess. 28, Eodem die, post meridiem.—Renovation of the Commission for Prosecuting the Treaty for Uniformity in England.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that the treaty of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected; therefore renews the power and commission granted by preceding Assemblies for prosecuting that treaty, unto the persons after named, viz.: Master Robert Douglas, Master Samuel Rutherford, Master Robert Baillie, Master George Gillespie, Ministers; and John Earle of Lauderdale, John Lord Balmerino, and Sir Archibald Johnstoun of Waristoun, Elders, authorising them, with full power, to prosecute the said treaty of uniformity, with the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and the Reverend Assembly of Divines there, or any committees appointed by them; and to doe all and every thing which may advance, perfect, and bring that treaty to an happy conclusion, conforme to the commissions given thereanent.

Renovation of the Commission for the Publike Affaires of the Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration, that in respect the great work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected, (though by the Lord's blessing there is a good progresse made in the same,) there is a necessity of renewing the Commissions granted formerly for prosecuting and perfecting that great work; doe, therefore, renew the power and Commission granted for the Publike Affaires of the Kirk, by the Generall Assemblies held in St Andrews, 1642, and at Edinburgh, 1643, 1644, 1645, and 1646, unto the persons following, viz.: Masters Alexander Casse, Samuel Douglas, Robert Knox, William Penman, James Guthrie, Robert Cuninghame, David Fletcher, Robert Lawder, Andrew Stevenson, Robert Davidson, David Calderwood, James Fleming, Robert Ker, James Fairlie, Oliver Colt, Patrick Sibbald, Andrew Ramsay, John Adamson, Robert Douglas, William Colvill, George Gillespie, Mungo Law, Andrew Fairfoul, George Lesly, Robert Lawrie, Alexander Spittle, Alexander Dickson, John Hay, Thomas Vassie, Ephraim Melvill, Patrick Scheill, Alexander Simmervail, George Bennet, Alexander Levingstoun, Robert Murray, Alexander Rollock, William Menzies, Alexander Ireland, John Friebairn, George Murray, Henrie Guthrie, William Justice, Robert Wright, Henrie Livingstoun, James Hammiltoun, George Gladstones, Bernard Sanderson, Andrew Lawder, George Rutherford, John Levingstoun, George Hutcheson, John Bell, Hugh Mackaile, John Nevey, Matthew Brisbane, John Hammiltoun, Allan Ferguson, David Dickson, Zachary Boyd, Robert Ramsay, Robert Baillie, James Nasmith, Francis Aird, Robert Birnie, Thomas Kirkaldie, Evan Cameron, Robert Blair, Coline Adam, George Hammiltoun, Samuel Rutherford, Alexander Colvill, John Ramsay, James Martein, William Levingstoun, Thomas Melvill, John Smith, Frederick Carmichaell, Patrick Gillespie, Alexander Moncreif, John Duncan, James Sibbald, Walter Bruce, George Pittillo, Andrew Affleck, John Barclay, Thomas Peirson, William Rait, David Strachan, Andrew Cant, William Douglas, John Forbes, George Sharp, William Chalmer, Joseph Brodie, Alexander Simmer, Gilbert Anderson, William Smith, *Ministers*; and Archibald Marques of Argile, John Earle of Crawford, Alexander Earle of Eglintoun, William Earle of Glencairne, John Earle of Cassils, James Earle of Home, James Earle of Tullibairdine, Francis Earle of Bukcleuch, John Earle of Lawderdaill, William Earle of Lothian, James Earle of Finlatour, William Earle of Lanerk, James Earle of Callendar, Archibald Lord Angus, George Lord Brichen, John Lord Yester, John Lord Balmerino, James Lord Cowper, John Lord Barganie, Sir Archibald Johnstoun of Waristoun, Sir John Hope of Craighall, Arthur Areskine of Scotiscraig, Alexander Fraser of Phillorth, Frederick Lyon of Brigton, James Mackdougall of Garthland, Sir William Cockburne of Langton, Sir Andrew Ker of Greinheid, Sir Hugh Campbell of Cesnock, Sir James Levingstoun of Kilsyth, Sir Thomas Ruthven of Freeland, Sir Gilbert Ramsay of Balmayne, John Henderson of Fordell, Walter Dundas, younger of that ilk, Sir William Scot, younger of Harden, Sir Lodovick Gordoun, Master George Winrhame of Libertoun, Alexander Levingstoun of Saltcoats, John Brisbane of Bishoptoun, Sir Robert Douglas of Tilliquhillie, James Pringle of Torwoodlie, Sir James Nicolsone of Coldbrandspath, William Ker of Newtoun, William Forbes, younger of Lesly, John Kennedy of Carmucks, Robert Arbuthnot of Findowrie, Alexander Brodie of Letham, Master Robert Narne, younger of Strathurd, Master James Schoneir of Caskeberrie, James Ruchheid, Lawrence Hendersone, James Stewart, David Douglas, John Jaffray, George Porterfield, John Semple, John Kennedy, William Glendinning, Master John Cowan, John Mill, *Elders*; giving unto them full power and commission to doe all and every thing for prosecuting, advancing, perfecting, and bringing the said work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions to a happy conclusion, conform to the former Commissions granted by preceding Assemblies thereanent: And to that effect, appoints them, or any seventeen of them, whereof thirteen shall be ministers, to meet here in this city, in the afternoon at four hours, and thereafter upon the last Wednesdayes of November, February, and May next, and upon any other day, and in any other place, they shall think fit. Renewing also to the persons before named the power

contained in the Act of the Assembly, 1643, intituled, "A Reference to the Commission anent the Persons designed to repaire to the Kingdome of England;" as likewise the power contained in the Act of Assemblie, 1644, Sess. 6, "For sending Ministers to the Armie." And further, in case delinquents have no constant residence in any one Presbyterie, or if Presbyteries be negligent or overawed, in these cases the Assemblie gives to the persons before named full power of censuring compliers and persons disaffected to the Covenant, according to the Acts of Assemblie; declaring always and providing, that ministers shall not be deposed but in one of the quarterly meetings of this Commission, with full power to them to treat and determine in the matters aforesaid, and in all other matters referred unto them by this Assemblie, as fully and freely as if the same were here particularly expressed, and with as ample power as any Commission of any former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before, they being alwayes for their whole proceedings countable to and censurable by the next Generall Assembly.

*Desires and Overtures from the Commissioners of Universities, and the
Assemblie's Answer thereto.*

I. The Commissioners of Universities represents to the Assembly, First, That the Overtures of the Assembly, 1643, for the visitation of schools, and the advancement of learning, are very much neglected.

The Assembly recommends to Synods to take account of the observation of these Overtures.

II. That it were good to exhort all the Universities to be careful to take account of all their schollers on the Sabbath-day of the sermons, and of their lessons of the Catechisme.

The Assembly approves this Overture, and recommends accordingly.

III. That all the Universities be exhorted to send their commissioners instructed with answers to the Overtures agreed upon by the commissioners of Universities, and which from this meeting of their commissioners, shall be communicate to them, and this to be, when their commissioners come in Februar or March to the commission of the Kirk.

The Assemblie recommends to Universities to be carefull hereof.

IV. That the Overtures concerning the providing of Bursars for Divinity be recommended to Presbyteries and Synods, and that they report their diligence to the next Assembly.

The Assembly allows this Article, and recommends accordingly.

*Sess. Ult., September 1, 1647.—The Assemblie's Letter to their Countrey men in
Poleland, Swedland, Denmarke, and Hungarie.*

Unto the Scots Merchants and others, our countrey people scattered in Poleland, Swedland, Denmark, and Hungary, The General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland wisheth grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although this Kirk of Scotland, whiles spoiled of her liberties under the Prelatical tyrannie, had much difficultie and wrestling to preserve the true reformed religion from being quite extinguished among ourselves; yet, since the mighty and outstretched arme of the Lord our God hath brought us out of that Egypt, and hath restored to us well constituted and free national Synods, it hath been our desire and endeavour to set forward the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the purity of his ordinances, not only throughout this nation, but in other parts also, so far as God gave us a call and opportunity, and opened a way unto us. And among other things of this nature, we have more particularly taken into our serious thoughts the sad and lamentable condition of many thousands of you our countrey men, who are scattered abroad, as sheepe having no shepherd, and are, through the want of the meanes of knowledge, grace, and salvation, exposed to the greatest spirituall dangers, whether

through ignorance, or through manifold tentations, to errors and false religions, or through the occasions and snares of sinne.

We have therefore thought it incumbent to us to put you in minde of the one thing necessary, while you are so carefull and troubled about the things of the world; and although we do not disallow your going abroad to follow any lawfull calling or way of livelyhood, yet, seeing it cannot "profit a man, although he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul;" and seeing you have travelled so farre, and taken so much pains to get uncertain riches, which cannot deliver in the day of the wrath of the Lord, and which men know not who shall inherit; we doe, from our affection to the salvation of your immortall souls, most earnestly beseech and warn you to cry after knowledge, and lift up your voyce for understanding, seeking her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasures, and so play the wise merchants, in purchasing the pearl of price, and in laying up a sure foundation for the time to come, by acquainting your souls with Jesus Christ, and by faith taking hold of him whose free grace is now offered and held out to sinners, excluding none among all the kindreds of the earth who will come unto him. God forbid, that you should let slip the time and offers of grace, or neglect any warning of this kinde sent to you in the name of the Lord. We shall hope better things of you; and that knowing the acceptable time and the day of salvation will not alwayes last, but the Lord Jesus is to be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel, you will the rather bestirre yourselves timely, and with all diligence to seek the Lord while he may be found—to endeavour that you may have among you the ordinary means of grace and salvation—to pray that God would give you pastors according to his heart, who shall feede you with knowledge and understanding—to consult also and agree among yourselves, with consent of your superiors, under whom you live, (whose favour and good will, we trust, will not be wanting to you in so good and necessary a work,) for setting up the worship of God and ecclesiasticall discipline among you, according to the form established and received in this your mother Kirk, and for a way of settled maintenance to pastors and teachers; which if you do, our commissioners, appointed to meet from time to time, in the intervall betwixt this and the next Nationall Assembly, will be ready (upon your desire made known to them) to provide some able and godly ministers for you, as likewise to communicate to you our Directory for the Publike Worship of God, and our Form of Ecclesiastical Government and Discipline, together with the Confession of Faith and Catechisme.

And, in the meane time, we exhort you that ye neglect not the worship of God in secret and in your families, and that ye continue stedfast in the profession of that faith in which ye were baptised, and by a godly, righteous, and sober conversation adorn the Gospel; and with all, that distance of place make you not the lesse sensible of your countrie's sufferings, both in respect of the just judgements of God for the sinnes of the land, and in respect of the malice of enemies for the common cause and Covenant of the three kingdoms, of which happie conjunction, notwithstanding we do not repent us, but by the grace of God shall continue faithful and steadfast therein.

This letter we have thought fit to be printed and published, that it may be with the greater ease and conveniency conveyed to the many several places of your habitation or traffique. Consider what we have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Subscribed, in name of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland,

Mr ROBERT DOUGLASSE, *Moderator.*

Edinburgh, August 31, 1647.

Act concerning the Hundred and Eleven Propositions therein mentioned.

Being tender of so great an engagement by Solemn Covenant, sincerely, really, and constantly to endeavour, in our place and callings, the preservation of the Reformed

religion in this Kirk of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government—the reformation of religion in the kingdomes of England and Ireland in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed Kirks—and to endeavour the nearest conjunction and uniformity in all these, together with the extirpation of heresie, schisme, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine; and, considering withall, that one of the speciall meanes which it becometh us in our places and callings to use in pursuance of these ends, is, in zeal for the true Reformed religion, to give our publike testimony against the dangerous tenets of Erastianisme, Independencie, and which is falsely called Liberty of Conscience, which are not only contrary to sound doctrine, but more speciall lets and hinderance, as well to the preservation of our own received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, as to the work of reformation and uniformity in England and Ireland. The Generall Assembly, upon these considerations, having heard publickly read the 111 following Propositions,* exhibited and tendered by some brethren who were appointed to prepare articles or propositions for the vindication of the truth in these particulars, Doth unanimously approve and agree unto these eight generall Heads of Doctrine therein contained and asserted, viz. 1. That the Ministry of the Word and the Administration of the Sacraments of the New Testament, Baptisme and the Lord's Supper, are standing Ordinances instituted by God himself, to continue in the Church to the end of the world. 2. That such as administer the Word and Sacraments ought to be duly called and ordained thereunto. 3. That some Ecclesiasticall Censures are proper and peculiar to be inflicted only upon such as bear office in the Kirk; other censures are common, and may be inflicted both on Ministers and other Members of the Kirk. 4. That the censure of Suspension from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, inflicted because of grosse ignorance, or because of a scandalous life and conversation, as likewise the censure of excommunication, or casting out of the Kirk flagitious or contumacious offenders, both the one censure and the other is warrantable by, and grounded upon, the Word of God, and is necessary (in respect of divine institution) to be in the Kirk. 5. That as the rights, power, and authority of the Civill Magistrate are to be maintained according to the Word of God, and the Confessions of the Faith of the Reformed Kirks; so it is no lesse true and certaine that Jesus Christ, the only Head and only King of the Kirk, hath instituted and appointed a Kirk Government distinct from the Civill Government or Magistracie. 6. That the Ecclesiasticall Government is committed and intrusted by Christ to the Assemblies of the Kirk, made up of the Ministers of the Word and Ruling Elders. 7. That the lesser and inferiour Ecclesiasticall Assemblies ought to be subordinate and subject unto the greater and superiour Assemblies. 8. That notwithstanding hereof, the Civill Magistrate may and ought to suppress, by corporall or civill punishments, such as, by spreading error or heresie, or by fomenting schisme, greatly dishonour God, dangerously hurt religion, and disturbe the peace of the Kirk; which Heads of Doctrine (howsoever opposed by the authors and fomenters of the foresaid errors respectively) the Generall Assembly doth firmly beleieve, own, maintaine, and commend unto others, as solide, true, orthodoxe, grounded upon the Word of God, consonant to the judgement both of the ancient and the best Reformed kirks. And because this Assembly (through the multitude of other necessary and pressing businesse) cannot now have so much leisure as to examine and consider particularly the foresaid 111 Propositions: Therefore, a more particular examination thereof is committed and referred to the Theologicall Faculties in the four Universities of this kingdome, and the judgement of each of these Faculties concerning the same is appointed to be reported to the next Generall Assembly. In the meane while, these Propositions shall be printed, both that copies thereof may be sent to Presbyteries, and that it may be free for any that pleaseth to peruse them, and to make known or send their judgement concerning the same to the said next Assembly.

* Not that they are to be heer printed, but because they being to be printed severally, this Act is to be prefixed to them.

Desires and Overtures presented from Presbyteries and Synods, with the Assemblies Answer thereunto.

It is humbly presented to the Assembly, that the children of many of the ordinary beggars want baptisme, themselves also living in great vilenesse, and therefore desire that some remedie may be provided for these abuses.

The Assembly doth seriously recommend to Presbyteries to consider of the best remedies, and to report their opinions to the next Assembly.

That all students of philosophie at their entry, and at their lawreation, be holden to subscribe the League and Covenant, and be urged thereto; and all other persons as they come to age and discretion, before their first receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The Assembly approves this Overture.

Whereas divers ministers want manses and gleebes, and others have their gleeb so divided in parcells, or lying so farre from their charge as the ministers are thereby much prejudged; we desire that this Generall Assembly will recommend it to be helped by the Parliament or Committee for Planting of Kirks, in the best manner that their Lordships can advise.

Whereas divers kirks were incommodiously united in corrupt times, we desire that the same be now dismembered and adjoynd to other kirks, or erected in kirks by themselves alone, and when the present incumbents agrees thereto, we desire the same to be recommended to the Parliament and Committee for Plantation of Kirks: provided alwayes, that the present ministers, who have laboured and indured the heat of the day, may enjoy the benefit of such parcells as are taken from them during their life.

The Assembly doth approve these two articles, and recommends to the Commissioners for Publike Affaires to assist any interested in the particulars for prosecuting the same before the Honourable Estates of Parliament, or the Commission appointed by them for Plantation of Kirks.

Recommendation to Presbyteries and Provincial Assemblies to consider and report on Matters formerly referred to them.

The Generall Assembly doe yet againe recommend to Presbyteries and Provinciall Assemblies to consider all matters formerly referred unto them by preceeding Assemblies, and desires that their opinions concerning the same be reported in writ to the next Generall Assembly.

It is this day appointed that the next Generall Assembly shall meet at Edinburgh, the second Wednesday of July, 1648.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, CONVEENED
AT EDINBURGH, JULY 12, 1648.

Sess. 1, July 12, 1648, post meridiem.—The Letter from the Synod of Divines in England to the Generall Assembly.

Right Honourable, Right Reverend, and dearly beloved Brethren in
Jesus Christ,

As we have great cause to blesse God for the brotherly union of these two nations in the common cause of religion and liberty, and for that good hand of blessing which hath accompanied the joynt endeavours of both in the prosecution thereof; so we cannot but be sadly and deeply sensible of those many obstructions and difficulties wherewith God, in his wisdom, hath seen good to exercise his servants in both kingdoms in the carrying on of that work wherein they stand so much engaged. Hercin

he hath clearly manifested his own power, wisdom, and goodnesse, for our encouragement to trust him in the managing of his own work, and our utter inability to effect it of our selves; thereby to train us up to a more humble and faithfull dependency upon him to do all, when we by our own wisdom and strength can do nothing. Our perplexities, we must confesse, are and have been many; and yet in the midst of them all we cannot but thankfully acknowledge it as a token for good, and that which hath been, and still is, a great comfort and refreshing to our hearts, that God hath given you wisdom timely to foresee approaching dangers, but especially to behold, as the steadfastnesse of your faith, in that both formerly you have been and at present are able to trust God in straits, and to appear for him in greatest dangers, so your eminent faithfulness and integrity, in your firm adhering to your first principles, and chiefly in your constancy and zeal for the preservation and prosecution of the Solemn League and Covenant, so religiously engaged in by both kingdoms; in your vigorous pursuance whereof, with much thankfulness to God, we are very sensible, more particularly of your steering so steady and even a course between the dangerous rocks of prophanesse and Malignancie on the one hand, and of errour, schisme, heresie, and blasphemy on the other hand; as also of your constant desires and endeavours to preserve the peace and union between the two nations, so nearly and so many wayes united. In all which we humbly acknowledge the mercy and faithfulness of God, in guiding you so graciously hitherto; and through his assistance we shall still be ready to afford you the best help and encouragement of our prayers and praises to God on your behalf; having this confidence, that he who hath already vouchsafed you and us so many blessed pledges of his favour, will, in his own time and way, accomplish his own work, which so much concerneth his own glory and his people's good. To his most gracious protection and guidance in these doubtfull and dangerous times we humbly commend you and all your holy endeavours, and rest.

Subscribed in the name, and by the appointment of the whole Assembly, by us,

CHARLES HERLE, *Prolocutor.*
WILLIAM GOUGE, *Assessor.*
HENRY ROBROUGH, *Scriba.*
ADONIRAM BYFIELD, *Scriba.*

Westminster, June 7, 1648.

Direct.—To the Right Honourable, Right Reverend, the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland, or their Commissioners.

Sess. 4, July 15, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act concerning Commissions from Burghs.

It is resolved by the Generall Assembly, untill the matter concerning commissioners from burghs be further thought upon, that, in the mean time, according to the ordinary practise, no commission to the Generall Assembly be admitted from burghs, but such as shall be consented to and approved by the ministry and sessions thereof, the persons elected being always elders.

Sess. 6, July 18, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Examining of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of Assemblies.

The Generall Assembly renews and revives the Act of the Assembly holden at Bruntland, *anno* 1601, concerning the examination of the proceedings of the Commission of the Generall Assembly, tenour whereof follows: "The Assembly hath ordained, that in every Assembly to be convened in all time coming, such as shall happen to be appointed commissioners from the Generall Assembly, to endure whill the Assembly next thereafter, shall give an account of their proceedings during the whole time of their commission in the beginning of the Assembly, before any other cause or matter be handled, and their proceedings to be allowed or disallowed as the Assembly shall think expedient."

Sess. 7, July 18, 1648, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission of the preceding Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, having examined the proceedings of the commission of the preceding Assembly, especially their declarations, remonstrances, representations, petitions, vindication, and other papers, relating to the present Engagement in war, do unanimously finde, that in all their proceedings they have been zealous, diligent, and faithfull, in discharge of the trust committed to them; and, therefore, ratifie and approve the whole proceedings, acts, and conclusions, of the said commission; and particularly their papers relating to the said Engagement, and their judgement of the unlawfulness thereof; appointing Mr John Moncrieff, Moderator, *pro tempore*, to return them hearty thanks, in name of the Assembly, for their great pains, travells, and fidelity, in matters of so great concernment to the cause of God and to this Kirk, amidst so great and many difficulties.

Sess. 10, July 20, 1648, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Larger Catechisme.

The Generall Assembly, having exactly examined and seriously considered the Larger Catechisme agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with assistance of Commissioners from this Kirk, copies thereof being printed and sent to Presbyteries for the more exact tryall thereof, and publick intimation being frequently made in this Assembly, that every one that had any doubts or objections upon it might put them in; do finde, upon due examination thereof, that the said Catechisme is agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk, a necessary part of the intended uniformity in religion, and a rich treasure for increasing knowledge among the people of God; and, therefore, the Assembly, as they blesse the Lord that so excellent a Catechisme is prepared, so they approve the same as a part of uniformity; agreeing, for their part, that it be a Common Catechisme for the three kingdoms, and a Directory for catechising such as have made some proficiency in the knowledge of the grounds of religion.

Sess. 11, July 21, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act against sudden admitting Deposed Ministers to particular Congregations.

The Generall Assembly, considering the danger of sudden receiving of deposed ministers at this time when Malignancy is likely to spread; therefore, finding it necessary, untill the ends of the Solemn League and Covenant be settled and secured, to restrain the suddenness of admitting deposed ministers to particular charges, do ordain that notwithstanding any license to be granted for opening the mouths of deposed ministers, yet they shall not be actually admitted to any particular congregations without consent of the Generall Assembly; declaring, for such as have already their mouths opened before the time, that if any calling to a particular charge offer unto them before the next Assembly, it shall be sufficient for them to have the consent of the commissioners of this Generall Assembly.

Sess. 14, July 25, 1648, ante meridiem.—The Assemblie's Answer to the Paper sent from the Committee of Estates of the 24th July.

The Generall Assembly, having considered the paper of the 24th July, delivered to them from the Conference, and having compared it with the other paper of the 17th of July, presented from the Honourable Committee of Estates whereunto it relates, and with the declaration lately emitted by the Committee to the Parliament and kingdom of England, finde that it is supposed by their Lordships that we may be satisfied in point of the security of religion according to the Covenant, notwithstanding of the present Engagement in war; the Assembly do, therefore, in answer to the said paper, declare,—

That we see no possibility of securing religion, as long as this unlawfull Engagement is carried on, religion being thereby greatly endangered.

1. Because none of the just and necessary desires of the commission of the late General Assembly for securing religion have been granted or satisfied. More particularly, it was represented to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, that for securing of religion it was necessary that the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant party be declared enemies to the cause, upon the one hand, as well as sectaries upon the other, and that all associations, either in forces or counsels, with the former as well as the latter, be avoided. That his Majesty's concessions and offers concerning religion, sent home from the Isle of Wight, be declared by the Parliament to be unsatisfactory;—that before his Majesty's restitution to the exercise of his royall power, assurance be had from his Majesty, by his solemn oath; under his hand and seal, for settling religion according to the Covenant;—that their Lordships should keep themselves from owning any quarrel concerning his Majesty's negative voice;—that the managing of the publike affairs might be entrusted only to such persons as have given constant proof of their integrity, and against whom there is no just cause of exception or jealousy, and that there might be no engagement without a solemn oath, wherein the Kirk ought to have the same interest they had in the Solemn League and Covenant; all which are more particularly expressed in the papers given in by the commission of the late Assembly to the Parliament, notwithstanding the Engagement hath been carried on without satisfaction to these and the like desires, and so without giving security in the point of religion, but with great and manifest danger to the same.

2. As the happy union of the kingdoms, by the Solemn League and Covenant, hath been justly looked upon as a speciall means for preserving and strengthening the true Reformed religion in this island, so it is no lesse weakened and hurt by endeavouring a breach between these kingdoms; which, howsoever disclaimed, is yet manifest, from the reality of the publike proceedings in this Engagement, and namely, from the neglect of endeavouring a treaty between the kingdoms for preventing of war and bloodshed, as was earnestly desired—from their associating and joyning with known Malignants and incendiaries, and such as have been declared enemies to this cause—from their entering the kingdom of England with an army, upon the grounds of the declaration of the Parliament, which cannot but infer a nationall quarrel against the Parliament and kingdom of England—and from their garrisoning the frontire towns of that kingdom.

3. The Engagement is carried on by such means and ways as tend to the destroying of religion, by ensnaring and forcing the consciences of the people of God with unlawfull bands and oathes, and oppressing the persons and estates of such as have been most active and zealous for religion and the Covenant. All which is strengthened and authorized by acts of Parliament, appointing that all that do not obey, or perswade others not to obey, the resolutions of Parliament and committee, anent this Engagement, or who shall not subscribe the act and declaration of the 10th June 1648, imposed upon all the subjects, shall be holden as enemies to the cause and to religion, and have their persons secured, and their estates intromitted with.

4. The Engagement is carried on, not without great encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk, as we are ready to clear in many particulars.

Wherefore, the security of religion, and carrying on of the present Engagement being inconsistent, we do propose, for the necessary security and safety of religion, that all the dangers thereof may be taken to consideration, and amongst the rest the said Engagement, as one of the greatest, which yet being established and authorized by act of Parliament, we leave it to their Lordships to think of what remedies may be provided for redressing grievances which flow from such acts and ordinances. This we are sure of, the publike desires of the Kirk will abundantly wnesse for us that such things as were necessary for the security of religion were in due season represented, and yet not granted by them that had greater power and authority at that time, when it was much more easie to give satisfaction therein then now; so that the blame cannot lye upon the Generall Assembly or their commissioners, that religion is not secured.

Sess. 18, July 28, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act and Declaration against the Act of Parliament and Committee of Estates, ordained to be subscribed the 10th and 12th of June, and against all new Oathes or Bands in the common Cause, imposed without consent of the Church.

The Generall Assembly, taking to consideration a Declaration and Act of Parliament, of the date 10th of June 1648, highly concerning religion and the consciences of the people of God in the land, and one act of the Committee of Estates, of the date 12th of June 1648, both published in print, whereby all subjects are ordained by subscription to acknowledge as just, and oblige themselves to adhere unto the said Act and Declaration, containing an obligation upon their honours and credits; and, as they desire to be, and to be holden as lovers of their country, religion, laws, and liberties, to joyn and concur with their persons and estates in the assistance of the execution and observation of the Acts and Constitutions of this Parliament, as the most fit and necessary remedies of the bygone and present evils and distractions of this Kirk and kingdom, and for the preservation of religion, laws, and liberties, and of his Majestie's authoritie; with certification, that such as refuse or delay to subscribe the same shall be holden as enemies and opposites to the common cause, consisting in the maintenance of the true Reformed religion, of the laws and liberties of the kingdom, and of his Majestie's authority. Which subscription the Assembly cannot otherwise look upon then as a snare for the people of God, to involve them in guiltinesse, and to draw them from their former principles and vows in the Solemn League and Covenant; for that subscription were an approving of some Acts of Parliament which they have never yet seen nor known, they not being all published—were an agreeing to Acts of Parliament highly concerning religion and the Covenant, made not only without, but expressly against, the advise of the Kirk—were an acknowledging of this present Engagement in war, in all the means and ways for promoting the same, to be the most fit and necessary remedies of the bygone and present evils; whereas so many petitions to the Parliament, from committees of war, synods, presbyteries, and paroches, have made it appear that they are no way satisfied therewith in point of conscience—were an ascribing of a power to the Parliament, to declare these to be enemies to the true religion whom the Kirk hath not declared to be such, but rather friends—were an approving of an act made for the restraining the liberty of printing from the Kirk; yea, and of all the acts of the Committee of Estates, to be made in time coming, till March 1650, which by Act of Parliament are ordained to be obeyed—were an allowing of Acts for securing of the persons, and intromitting with the estates, of such as themselves shall not obey, or perswade others not to obey, resolutions concerning this Engagement, and for protecting persons under Kirk censures; and so an infringing and violating of the liberties and discipline of the Kirk, established by the laws of the land, and sworn to in the National Covenant to be defended, under the pains contained in the law of God. And in all these, such as do subscribe do binde themselves, not only to active obedience in their own persons, but to the urging of active obedience upon all others, and so draw upon themselves all the guiltinesse and sad consequences of the present Engagement; yea, such as are Members of Parliament, and have in the oath of Parliament sworn not to vote or consent to any thing but what, to their best knowledge, is most expedient for religion, kirk, and kingdom, and accordingly have reasoned against, and dissented from, divers Acts of this Parliament. These, by the subscription of this act, cannot eschew the danger of perjury, in obliging themselves to active obedience to these acts, which according to their oath they did judge unlawfull. Neither can the 38th Act of the Parliament, 1640, wherein such a kinde of band was enacted to be subscribed, be any precedent or warrant for subscribing of this act; for it plainly appears by the narrative of that act omitted in this band, how great a difference there is between the condition of affairs then and now. Then the King's Commissioner had left and discharged the sitting of the Parliament—then the Parliament, for sitting, was declared traitors, and armies in England and Ireland prepared against them—then not only the acts, but the very authority of Parliament, was called in question—then Kirk and State were united in the cause against the Malignant party—then nothing was determined in Parliament in matters of religion without, much lesse against, the advice of the Kirk: but, beside that,

it was not thought expedient by the State that that band should be pressed through the kingdom. The case now not only differs from what was then, but is in many things just contrary, as is evident to all who will compare the two together. And, therefore, the Generall Assembly, professing all tender respect to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, and Committee of Estates, but finding a straiter tye of God lying upon their consciences, that they be not found unfaithfull watchmen, and betrayers of the souls of these committed to their charge, Do, unanimously, declare the foresaid subscription to be unlawfull and sinfull. And do warn, and in the name of the Lord, charge all the members of this Kirk to forbear the subscribing of the said Act and Declaration, much more the urging of the subscription thereof, as they would not incur the wrath of God and the censures of the Kirk. And, considering how necessary it is, that, according to the eighth desire of the Commissioners of the Assembly to the Parliament, the Kirk might have the same interest in any new oathes in this cause as they had in the Solemn League and Covenant, and what dangers of contradictory oathes, perjuries, and snares to men's consciences, may fall out otherwise: therefore, they likewise enjoin all the members of this Kirk to forbear the swearing, subscribing, or pressing of any new oathes or bands in this cause, without advise and concurrence of the Kirk, especially any negative oathes or bands which may any way limit or restrain them in the duties whereunto they are obliged by Nationall or Solemn League and Covenant; and that with certification as aforesaid. And such as have already pressed or subscribed the foresaid Act and Declaration, the Generall Assembly doth hereby exhort them most earnestly in the bowels of Christ, to repent of that their defection. And ordains that Presbyteries, or in case of their negligence, or being overawed, the Provinciaill Synods, or the Commission of the Assembly, which of them shall first occur, and in case of the Synod's negligence, that the said Commission be carefull to proceed against and censure the contraveeners of the act, according to the quality and degree of their offences, as they will be answerable to the Generall Assembly; and that, therefore, this act be sent to Presbyteries to be published in the severall kirks of their bounds.

Sess. 19, Eodem die, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Shorter Catechisme.

The Generall Assembly, having seriously considered the Shorter Catechisme, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with assistance of Commissioners from this Kirk, doe finde, upon due examination thereof, that the said Catechisme is agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk; and, therefore, approve the said Shorter Catechisme, as a part of the intended uniformity, to be a Directory for catechising such as are of weaker capacitie.

Act discharging a Little Catechisme, printed at Edinburgh, 1647.

The Generall Assembly, having found in a little Catechisme, printed at Edinburgh, entituled, "The A. B. C. with the Catechisme: that is to say, an Instruction to be Taught and Learned of Young Children," very grosse errors in the point of Universall Redemption, and in the number of the Sacraments; therefore, doe discharge the venting or selling of the said Catechisme of the foresaid impression, or of whatsoever other impression the same be of, and all use thereof in schools or families; inhibiting also all printers to reprint the same, and recommends to Presbyteries to take speciall care that this act be obeyed.

*Sess. 21, Ult. July 1648, post meridiem.—A Declaration of the Generall Assembly, concerning the present Dangers of Religion, and especially the unlawfull Engagement in War against the Kingdom of England, together with many necessary Exhortations and Directions to all the Members of the Kirk of Scotland.**

It cannot seem strange to any that considereth the great trust that lyeth on us,

* It appears from Baillie's Letters, that the following persons were named a committee to draw up the above Declaration, viz., Messrs David Calderwood, Robert Row, John Smith, James Guthrie, John Livingston, John Maclelland, Robert Blair, and David Dickson.—Ed. 1843.

comparing the same with the eminent dangers wherewith the cause of God is environed in this land, if at this time we declare our sense thereof, and warn the people of God from this watch-tower of the present duties incumbent to them. Our witness is in heaven, and our record on high, that we do not this from any disrespect to the Parliament, whom we have honoured and will ever honour, and also obey, in all things which are agreeable to the Word of God, to our Solemn Covenants, and to the duties of our callings—nor from any disloyalty or undutifulnesse to the King's Majesty, to whom we heartily wish, and to his posterity after him, a happy reigne over these dominions—nor from any factious disposition, or siding with this or that party whatsoever—nor from any contentious humour about light or small matters—nor from any favour to or compliance with sectaries, against whose cursed opinions and ungodly practises we have heretofore given ample testimony, and are still obliged by Solemn Covenant to endeavour the extirpation of heresie and schism; but from the conscience of our duty when the glory of God, the kingdom of his Son, his Word, ordinances, government, covenant, ministry, consciences of people, peace and liberties of the Kirk, are encompassed and almost overwhelmed, with great and growing dangers.

How freely and faithfully the servants of God of old have rebuked sin in persons of all ranks, not sparing kings, states, nor kingdoms, the Scripture maketh it most plain to all that look thereon. Neither want we domestick examples, if we look back a little upon the behaviour of our zealous ancestours in this Kirk, who not only in their sermons severally, with great gravity and freedom reproved the sins of the time, but more especially in the Kirk judicatories, plain and downright dealing was most frequent and familiar, as appears in the Assemblies holden in June and in October 1582, in October 1583, in May 1592, in May 1594, and in March 1595. And not only the General Assembly by themselves, but also by their commissioners, faithfully and freely laboured to oppose all the steps of defection; as at other times, so in the year 1596, wherein four or five severall times they gave most free admonitions to the King, Parliament, and Councill, with a protestation at the last before God, that they were free of their blood, and of whatsoever judgement should fall upon the realm; and that they durst not, for fear of committing high treason against Jesus Christ, the only Monarch of his Kirk, abstain any longer from fighting against their proceedings with the spirituall armour granted to them of God, and mighty in him for overthrowing all these bulwarks set up against his kingdom: And in their declaration then emitted to the kingdom, they shew that it was a main design to have the freedom of the Spirit of God, in the rebuke of sin, by the mouth of his servants, restrained; and, therefore, they warne all pastours of their duty in applying doctrine and free preaching. Like as the Assembly, 24th March 1595-6, reckons up amongst the corruptions of the ministry, to be censured with deprivation if continued in, the not applying their doctrine against the corruptions of the time, which was renewed in our late Assembly at Glasgow, 1638. What hath been done since that Assembly is in recent memory, and the papers to that purpose have been published in print, and are in the hands of all. Therefore, being warranted by the Word of God, and encouraged by the forementioned examples, as after exact examination we have approven the proceedings of the Commissioners of the last Generall Assembly, and specially their declarations, desires, representations, remonstrances, supplications, vindication, and other papers, relating to the present Engagement in war, wherein they have given good proof of their fidelity, wisdom, and zeal, in the cause of God, so we finde our selves necessitate to make known unto all the people of God in this nation our sense concerning the dangers and duties of this present time.

The cry of the insolencies of this present army, from almost all the parts of this kingdom, hath been so great that it hath gone up to heaven, and if we should be silent we could not be reputed faithfull in the performance of our duty. We do acknowledge that it is incident unto all armies to be subject unto some disorders, and the ministers of the kingdom have not been deficient in former times to represent the same as they come unto their knowledge, calling for the redresse of them at their hands who had power; but the commissioners of this present Assembly from the severall provinces, have exhibited great variety of abominable scandals, and heinous

impieties, and insolencies, committed by persons employed in this service, whereof we think fitting here to give you a touch.

As if liberty had been proclaimed to the lusts of lewd men, these that have been employed in very many places of the land have used horrible extortion of moneys at their pleasure, and beside the taking of victuals as they would for their own use, they have in severall places wilfully destroyed the same, and have plundered many houses, taking all away they could, and destroying what they could not carry away. In this great oppression and spoil of goods, as the sufferers were many, so choice hath been made of those who petitioned the High and Honourable Court of Parliament for satisfaction to their consciences before the Engagement, or who were known to make conscience of the worship of God in their families, on whom they might exercise their raging wrath and unsatiable covetousnesse. Nor stayed their rage here; but as though the war had been against God, publick fasts have not only been neglected, but profaned by riotous spending and making merry—divine worship hath been in many parts disturbed—some ministers and people impeded from coming together, others scattered when they were met—some taken out of kirks in time of worship, others apprehended at their coming out at the kirk doors, and carryed away. Besides these, ministers in performing the worship of God have been menaced, contradicted, not without blasphemous oathes; yea, their persons in pulpit assaulted, not to speak of the spoiling of their goods, taking, beating, carrying away their persons, and detaining them for a time. And, finally, that which exceeds all the rest, and is more immediately and directly against God, there hath also been many cruell mockings of his worship, and horrid blasphemies; and it is not to be marvelled that such insolencies have been committed, since there hath been admitted upon this service some Papists, some bloody Irish rebels, some Non-Covenanters, and very many fugitives from Kirk discipline; finally, even those who have been upon the late rebellion, and these not only common souldiers but commanders, besides many voluntiers, who have no speciall command and trust.

Besides all these, the liberties of the Kirk have been grievously encroached upon,—

1. By emitting Declarations from the Parliament and Committee of Estates, containing severall things highly concerning religion, without the advice or consent of the Generall Assembly or their Commissioners, which was a ground of protestation to divers Members of Parliament, who have been most zealous and active in the cause.
2. The article of religion, as expressed in the Declaration of Parliament, hath in it many dangerous expressions, which are particularly instanced in the representation of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly; and the same article of religion, in the late Declaration of the Committee of Estates to England, is more unsatisfactory than the former: like as in the said late Declaration there is a totall omission of some most materiall things, pretended to in the Declaration of Parliament as satisfactory in point of securing religion, viz., the clause concerning security to be had from his Majesty, by his solemn oath, under his hand and seal, that he shall, for himself and his successors, give his royall assent, and agree to such act or acts of Parliament and bills as shall be presented to him by his Parliaments of both and either kingdoms respectively, for enjoying Presbyteriall Government, Directory of Worship, and Confession of Faith, in all his Majestie's dominions, and that his Majestie shall never make opposition to any of those, nor endeavour any change thereof; also the clause against association with any that refuse to take the Covenant is omitted. From all which it may appear in how great danger the liberties of the Kirk and even religion it self are left.
3. In the close of the Declaration of Parliament there is a new and unsound glosse put upon the Covenant and Acts of the Generall Assembly, contrary to the sense of the General Assembly itself, as is more fully expressed in the representation of the late Commission.
4. No redresse by the Parliament of certain injuries complained of to their Lordships by the Commissioners of the preceding Generall Assembly.
5. Endeavours to weaken and frustrate Kirk censures, by making provisions for securing the stipends of such as shall be censured for their concurring in or preaching for this present Engagement.
6. A misrepresentation of the proceedings of the Commission of the Generall Assembly, by the Parliament's Letter, of May 11, to the severall Presbyteries, endeavouring to incense them against the Commission of the late Assembly, and to preoccupe their Commissioners to this Assembly.
7. Whereas, there were

many petitions presented to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, from the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, Synods, and Presbyteries, against the present Engagement, as stated in the Parliament's Declaration; yet, notwithstanding of the said petitions, and notwithstanding of many free and frequent warnings given by faithfull ministers in their sermons—notwithstanding also, that it was not unknown how much the generality of the well affected in the kingdom were unsatisfied in their consciences with the grounds and way of the said Engagement, yet good people are not only left unsatisfied in their and our desires, but compelled and forced either to sin against their consciences, or to be under heavy pressures and burdens. 8. Yea, in the late band, injoynd to be subscribed by all the subjects of this kingdom, men are put to it to joyn and concur with their persons and estates in the advancement, furtherance, and assistance of the execution, obedience, and observation of the acts and constitutions of the late Parliament; and, consequently, as many as think the Engagement unlawful, shall binde themselves not only to obey for their own part against their consciences, but to inforce the same upon others who refuse; and so, not only be oppressed, but turn oppressours of others. 9. This all the subjects are required by the Act and Declaration of Parliament to subscribe, as they desire to be holden true lovers of religion; it being further affirmed in the said Act and Declaration, that the Acts and Constitutions of the late Parliament are the most fit and necessary remedies for preservation of religion; where the Parliament assume to themselves, without the advice and consent of the Assemblies of the Kirk, to judge and determine such things, wherein (if in any thing) the ecclesiastical Assemblies have undoubtedly a speciall interest, viz., who are to be holden lovers of religion, and what are the most fit and necessary remedies for preservation of religion: yea, it is ordained by the fourth act of Parliament, 1640, that for preservation of religion, Generall Assemblies rightly constitute, as the proper and competent judge of all matters ecclesiastical, be kept yearly and oftner, *pro re nata*. The Coronation Oath doth also suppose the antecedent judgement of the Kirk, as the proper and competent judge who are enemies to true religion, and who not; for his Majesty obliged himself by that oath, that he should be carefull to root out all hereticks and enemies to the true worship of God, who shall be convict by the true Kirk of God of the aforesaid crimes. 10. The General Assembly and their commissioners are now deprived of their liberty of printing, confirmed and ratified by act of Parliament, there being an inhibition to the contrary upon the printer, under the pain of death, by the Committee of Estates.

Whereas the desires of the commissioners of the last Assembly, for the safety and security of religion, and the right manner of proceeding to war, together with the supplications of Provinciaill Assemblies and Presbyteries, all tending to the composing of the present unhappy differences, and to the begetting of a right understanding, have not produced the desired and wished for effect; but, on the contrary, our just grievances being still more and more heightened, iniquity established by a law, and that law put in execution, we cannot chuse but declare and give warning to all the people of God in this land, concerning the sinfulness and unlawfulness of the present Engagement, which may be demonstrate by many reasons, as, namely—

1. The wars of God's people are called the wars of the Lord, Numb. xxi. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 15. And if our eating and drinking, much more our engaging in war, must be for God, and for his glory, 1 Cor. x. 31. Whatsoever we do in word or deed, we are commanded to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, and so for his glory, Col. iii. 17. The kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, is to be sought in the first place, and before all other things, Matth. vi. 33. It was the best flower and garland, in the former expeditions of this nation, that they were for God and for religion principally and mainly. But if the principall end of this present Engagement were for the glory of God, how comes it to passe, that not so much as one of the desires of the Kirk, for the safety and security of religion in the said Engagement, is to this day satisfied or granted? but, on the contrary, such courses taken as are destructive to religion. And if God's glory be intended, what meaneth the employing and protecting in this army so many blasphemers, persecutors of piety, disturbers of divine worship, and others guilty of notorious and crying sins? Again, how can it be pre-

tended that the good of religion is principally aimed at, when it is proposed and declared, that the King's Majesty shall be brought to some of his houses in or near London, with honour, freedom, and safety, before ever there be any security had from him, or so much as any application made to him, for the good of religion? What is this but to postpone the honour of God, the liberties of the Gospel, the safety of God's people to an humane interest, and to leave religion in a condition of uncertainty, unsettlement and hazard, while it is strongly endeavoured to settle and make sure somewhat else?

2. Suppose the ends of this Engagement to be good, (which they are not,) yet the means and ways of prosecution are unlawfull, because there is not ane equall avoiding of rocks on both hands, but a joyning with Malignants to suppress Sectaries, a joyning hands with a black devill to beat a white devil; they are bad physicians who would so cure one disease as to breed another as evil, or worse. That there is in the present Engagement a confederacy and association in war with such of the English who, according to the Solemn League and Covenant, and Declarations of both Kingdoms, 1643, can be no otherwise looked upon but as Malignants and enemies of Reformation and the cause of God, is now made so manifest before sun and moon, that we suppose none will deny it; and 'tis no lesse undeniable, that not only many known Malignants, but diverse who joyned in the late rebellion within this kingdom, are employed, yea, put into places of trust; all which how contrary it is to the Word of God, no man can be ignorant who will attentively search the Scriptures; for we finde therein condemned confederacies and associations with the enemies of true religion, whether Canaanites, Exod. xxiii. 32, and xxxiv. 12, 15; Deut. vii. 2; or other heathens, 1 Kings xi. 1, 2; such was Asa his covenant with Benhadad, 2 Chron. xvi. to ver. 10; Ahaz his confederacy with the King of Assyria, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 16 to ver. 23; or whither the association was with wicked men of the seed of Abraham, as Jehoshaphat's with Achab, 2 Chron. xviii. 3, compared with chap. xix. 2; also his association with Ahaziah, 2 Chron. xx. 35; and Amaziah's associating to himself one hundred thousand of the Ten Tribes, when God was not with them, 2 Chron. xxv. 7, 8, 9, 10. The sin and danger of such associations may further appear from Isaiah viii. 12, 15; Jer. ii. 18; Psal. cvi. 35; Hos. v. 13, and vii. 8, 11; 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15; and if we should esteem God's enemies to be our enemies, and hate them with perfect hatred, Psal. cxxxix. 21, how can we then joyn with them as confederates and associates, especially in a cause where religion is so highly concerned; and seeing they have been formerly in actual opposition to the same cause?

3. We are commanded, if it be possible, and as much as lieth in us, to have peace with all men, Rom. xii. 18; to seek peace and pursue it, Psal. xxxiv. 14. War and bloodshed is the last remedy after all the ways and means of peace have been used in vain. The intended war of the nine tribes and a half against the two tribes and half was prevented by a message and treaty of peace, Josh. xxii. The like means was used by Jephthah (though not with the like success) for the preventing of war with the King of Ammon, Judg. xi. The very light of nature hath taught heathens not to make war till first all amicable wayes of preventing bloodshed were tried; yet this war hath been driven on without observing any such method of proceeding, except by a message, wherein not so much as one breach was represented. Yea, though these two kingdoms are straitly united in Covenant, yet these who have carried on this war did not only neglect to desire a treaty, but also slight an offer of a treaty made from the Parliament of England upon the propositions of both kingdoms.

4. There are many clear and full testimonies of Scriptures against the breach and violation of covenants, although but between man and man, Psal. lv. 20; Rom. i. 31; 2 Tim. iii. 3; especially where the name of God was interposed in covenants by any of his people, Jer. xxxiv. 8, 10, 11, 18; Ezek. xvii. 18, 19. How much more the violation of a solemn covenant between God and his people, Lev. xxvi. 15, 25; Deut. xvii. 2, and xxix. 21, 24, 25; Jer. xxii. 8, 9; 1 Kings xix. 10; Dan. xi. 32; Hos. vi. 7. If, therefore, the present Engagement be a breach of our Solemn League and Covenant, then they who have before taken the Covenant, and have now joyned in this Engagement, must grant by necessary and infallible consequence, either that the Covenant itself which they took was unlawful, and such as they cannot per-

form without sin, (which yet they cannot professe,) or otherwise that the Engagement is unlawfull and sinfull, as being a breach of covenant, and so contrary to the Word of God. That the present Engagement is a breach of covenant, may appear by comparing it with each of the Articles, for it is against all the six Articles of the Covenant.

Against the first, because, instead of the preservation of the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk, there is not only a great quarrelling by those that do engage, at the present doctrine and free preaching, a disturbing of and withdrawing from the worship, and namely from the late solemn humiliation; but also a refusall of such things as were desired by the Commission of the late Assembly and Provinciaall Synods, as necessary to the preservation of the true Reformed religion; and we have just cause of fear that the reformation of religion, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, is not intended to be sufficiently maintained and preserved, when we finde such a limitation and restriction in the late Declaration of the Committee of Estates to the Parliament and kingdom of England, "That they will maintain and preserve the reformation of religion, doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, as is by the mercy of God, and his Majestie's goodnesse, established by law among us;" but as there is no such limitation in the Covenant, so we have not had such proof of his Majesty's goodnesse, as to establish by law all that hath been by the mercies of God enacted in Generall Assemblies. As to the rest of the first article, concerning the reformation of England and Ireland and the uniformity, as there was some hopefull beginings thereof, and a good foundation laid during the late war against the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant party, so the state and ground of the war being now altered, and these chosen for confederates and associates in the war who are known enemies to that reformation and uniformity, how can the Covenant be kept in that point as long as such a war is carried on?

The second article is violated, because, instead of endeavouring to extirpate Popery and superstition, without respect of persons, (as exprest in the Covenant,) there is in the late Declaration of the Committee of Estates a desire of the Queen's return, without any condition tending to the restraint of her masse or exercise of Popery. We do also conceive there is a tacit condescending to the toleration of superstition and the Book of Common Prayer in his Majesty's family; because, as it was reserved by himself in his concession, brought home by the Commissioners of this kingdom, so these concessions were never plainly declared by the Parliament to be unsatisfactory to their Lordships—howbeit it hath been often and earnestly desired. Neither can we conceive how the clause concerning the extirpation of Prelacy can consist with endeavouring to bring his Majesty with honour, freedom, and safety, to one of his houses in or about London, without any security had from him for the abolition of Prelacy, it being his known principle, (and publicly declared by himself shortly after he went to the Isle of Wight,) that he holds himself obliged in conscience, and by his Coronation Oath, to maintain Archbishops, Bishops, &c. Can it be said that they are endeavouring to extirpate Prelacy who, after such a declaration, would put in his Majesty's hand an opportunity to restore it?

As for the third article, we cannot conceive how the preserving of the priviledges of Parliament, and asserting the King's negative voice can consist; and we are sorrowfull that, under the colour of the priviledges of Parliament, the liberties of the subjects are overthrown, and the persons and estates of such as have been best affected to the cause and Covenant are exposed to most grievous injuries, crying oppressions. And whereas the duty in preserving and defending his Majesty's person and authority is, by the third article of the Covenant, qualified with and subordinate unto the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; there is no such qualification nor subordination observed in the present Engagement, but, on the contrary, it is so carried on, as to make duties to God and religion conditional, qualified, limited; and duties to the King absolute and unlimited.

The fourth article of the Covenant is so foully broken, that they who were by that article declared enemies, incendiaries, Malignants, and therefore to be brought to condigne tryall and punishment, are now looked upon as friends and associates, and are the men who get most favour and protection, and sundry of them employed in places of trust in the army and committees.

For the fifth article, instead of endeavouring to preserve peace and union, a breach is endeavoured between the kingdoms, not only by taking in and garrisoning their frontier towns, but also entering the kingdom of England with an army, and joyning with the common enemies of both kingdoms, notwithstanding of an offer of a treaty upon the propositions of both kingdoms, made by the Parliament of England to the Parliament of this kingdom. And whether the way of this Engagement can consist with the large treaty between the kingdoms, we shall wish the Honourable Committee of Estates may yet take it into their serious second thoughts.

The sixth is also manifestly broken, for we are thereby obliged to assist and defend all those that entered into this League and Covenant, in maintaining and pursuing thereof, whereas the army now entered into England is to assist and defend many who have not entered into that League and Covenant: And for those who took the Covenant in that nation, and continue faithfull in it, what they may expect from this army, may be collected not only from their carriage towards their brethren at home, but also from that clause toward the close of the late Declaration of the Committee of Estates—"And that we will do prejudice or use violence to none, (as far as we are able,) but to such as oppose us, or such ends above mentioned." It cannot be unknown that many of the English nation who are firm and faithfull to the Covenant, and Presbyterianial government, do and will, according to their places and callings, oppose some of those ends above mentioned in that Declaration; as namely, the restoring both of King and Queen without any condition or security first had from them; and so by that rule in the Declaration they must expect to be used as enemies, not as friends. That sixth article is also broken by a departing from the first principles and resolutions, and by dividing and withdrawing from those that adhere thereunto, which hath been before cleared by the Commission of the late Generall Assembly in their declaration in March, representation, and other papers, published in print.

5. We leave it to be seriously pondered by every one who is truly conscientious, whether it be any ways credible or probable, or agreeable to Scripture rules, that the generality of all that have been most faithfull and cordiall to the Covenant and cause of God should be deceived, deluded, and darkened in this businesse, and that they who, for the most part, were enemies to the work of God in the beginning, and have never brought forth fruits meet for repentance, should now finde out the will of God more then his most faithfull servants in the land. And who that fears God will believe that Malignants are for the ends of the Covenant, and that they who are most instrumentall in this reformation are against the ends of the Covenant.

All which considered, as we could not, without involving our selves in the guiltinesse of so unlawfull an Engagement, yield to the desire for the army of ministers to be sent by us to attend them; so we do earnestly exhort, and in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, charge and require all and every one of the members of this reformed Kirk of Scotland—

I. That they search narrowly into the sins which have procured so great judgements and so sad an interruption of the work of God—that they examine themselves, consider their wayes, be much in humiliation and prayer, study a reall and practicall reformation—that they also mourn and sigh for the abominations of the land, and stand in the gap to turn away the wrath. Among all these fearfull sins, the violation of the Solemn League and Covenant would not be forgotten, but seriously laid to heart, as that which eminently provoketh the Lord, and procureth his judgements to be powred forth not only upon persons and families, but also upon states and kingdoms. Covenant-breakers, though in common things, are reckoned by the Apostle in that catalogue of the abominations of the Gentiles: But among the people of God, where his great name is interposed, the breach of covenant even in meaner matters, such as the setting of servants at liberty, provoketh the Lord to say, "Behold I proclaim a liberty for you (saith the Lord) to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and I will give the men that hath transgressed my covenant;" and (not excepting, but expresly mentioning princes) he addes, "I will give them into the hands of their enemies." The history of the Gibeonites, who surreptitiously procured the covenant made to spare them, and whom Saul some ages thereafter, in his zeal to the children of Israel and Judah, sought to slay, as being cursed Canaanites, evidenceth with what ven-

geance the Lord followeth covenant-breakers, whereof there wants not in prophane history also, both forreign and domestick, examples. Therefore, let all the inhabitants of the land, of whatsoever rank, seriously ponder how terrible judgements the violation of a covenant so recently, so advisedly, so solemnly made, and in so weighty matters, may draw on, if not timouly prevented by speedy repentance.

II. That they so respect and honour authority, as that they be not the servants of men, nor give obedience to the will and authority of rulers in any thing which may not consist with the Word of God, but stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and obey God rather than men.

III. That they carefully avoid the dangerous rocks and snares of this time, whereby so many are taken and broken.

Upon the one hand, the sowre leaven of Malignancy, where ever it enters, spoileth and corrupteth the whole lump, postponing religion and the cause of God to humane interest, what ever be pretended to the contrary, and obstructing the work of reformation and propagation of religion, out of false respects and creature interest. As this hath formerly abounded in the land, to the prejudice of the cause and work of God, so of late it is revived, spreading with specious pretences of vindicating wrongs done to his Majesty. We desire not to be mistaken, as if respect and love to his Majesty were branded with the infamous mark of Malignancy; but hereby we warn all who would not come under this foul stain, not only in their speech and profession, but really and in their whole carriage, not to prefer their own and the interest of any creature whatsoever before the interest of Christ and religion. The characters of these have been fully given in former declarations, specially in the declaration of the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly in March last, which we hold as here repeated; only adding this, that they ordinarily traduce kirk judicatures, as meddling with civill affairs, which as it is no new calumny, but such as hath been cast upon the servants of God in former times, so the whole course of proceedings doth manifestly confute the same.

Upon the other hand, sectarisme hath no lesse hindered the blessed and glorious work of reformation in our neighbour kingdom, against the venome whereof, lest it approach and infect this Kirk, we have need to watch diligently, to avoid all the beginnings and dangerous appearances thereof. The many faithfull testimonies from godly ministers in severall parts of England, against the vile errors and abominable blasphemies abounding there, as they are to us matter of rejoycing before the Lord; so they ought to be looked on as warnings to all sorts of people, especially that regard religion, to beware of Satan's snares, craftily set to catch their souls. And because such gangreens creep insensibly, all that love the honour of God and welfare of religion, would seriously consider the following points, both by way of marks to discern, and meanes to escape the danger of this infection—

1. Whosoever are misprisers of the blessed work of reformation established within this land, and do not show themselves grieved for the impediments and obstructions it hath met with in our neighbour kingdom, these are even on the brink of this precipice, ready to tumble down in this gulf whensoever occasion is offered; all, therefore, that love the Lord Jesus would stir up their hearts, in the light and strength of the Lord, highly to prize and thankfully to acknowledge what the right hand of the Most High hath done among us, as also to thirst fervently after the advancing and perfecting of the Lord's work among our neighbours.

2. Disrespect to the publick ministry and ordinances is a symptome of a dangerous inclination to that disease; and, therefore, as all Christ's ministers ought to stir up themselves to walk as becometh their high and holy calling, lest they be stumbling-blocks to the people of God; so also all the people of God ought most carefully to stir up themselves unto a precious estimation of the ordinances of God, and highly to esteem the stewards thereof for their work's sake—a duty at all times needfull, but now especially, when Sathan by all means endeavours the contrary.

3. Indifferency in points of religion, and pleading for toleration to themselves or others, how far soever different among themselves, is not to be forgotten among the characters of sectaries, and, therefore, ought the more carefully to be avoided

and opposed by all who desire to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering.

4. They who are glorying in and seeking after new lights, or, under the pretext of them, are self-conceited in singular opinions, or who affect new and strange expressions, are entring into the snare, "ready to be carried about with every winde of doctrine." And, therefore, albeit we ought always, as disciples of the Lord, to set our selves as in his sight, to be taught by his Spirit according to his Word, yet in this time, so fertile of errors, it becometh all the lovers of truth to hold fast what they have received, that no man take their crown.

5. Whosoever brings in any opinion or practise in this Kirk contrary to the Confession of Faith, Directory of Worship, or Presbyterian Government, may be justly esteemed to be opening the door to schisme and sects: And, therefore, all depravers or misconstructors of the proceedings of kirk judicatories, especially the Generall Assembly, would take heed least, by making a breach upon the walls of Jerusalem, they make a patent way for sectaries to enter.

6. They who separate the Spirit from the Word, and pretend the Spirit, when they have no ground or warrant from the Word, are already taken in an evil snare: And, therefore, 'tis necessary to try the spirits, whether they are of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world; "if they speak not according to the word, it is because there is no light in them."

Besides the former, these are also marks of a sectary: If any commend and recommend to others, or spread and divulge the erroneous books of sectaries, if any allow, avow, or use conventicles or private meetings forbidden by the Acts of the Generall Assembly, 1641 and 1647, last past—if any be unwilling, and decline to reckon sectaries among the enemies of the Covenant, from whom danger is to be apprehended—and (though we disallow the abusing and idolizing of learning to the patrocinie of error, or prejudice of piety) if any contemn literature as needlesse at best, if not also hurtfull to a minister.

When we thus expresse our selves for preventing the dangers of sects and schismes, it is far from our intention to discourage any from the duties of piety and mutuall edification, according to the directions of the last Assembly, published in print, and seriously recommended by them, or to give any advantage to Malignants and prophane persons, with whom it is frequent to cast upon all those who adhere to former principles, and cannot approve the present Engagement, the odious nicknames of Sectaries and Independents. For the better discovery of such prophane mockers, we give these marks and characters: 1. They do prophanely and tauntingly abuse the name of the Spirit, under that name deriding the work of grace and sanctification. 2. They esteem and speak of exercises of conscience as fancies or fits of melancholy. 3. They mock at family worship, and the means of mutuall edification so much recommended by the last Assembly, in their directions. 4. They do usually calumniate godly ministers, and professors who follow holinesse, with the names of Sectaries, or the like odious names, without any just cause. As we account all such to be enemies to the practise and power of godlinesse, so we do exhort all the lovers of truth to hold on in the way of holinesse, through good report and ill report, being stedfast, immovable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know their labour is not in vain in the Lord.

IV. That they do not concur in nor any way assist this present Engagement, as they would not partake in other men's sins, and so receive of their plagues; but that, by the grace and assistance of Christ, they stedfastly resolve to suffer the rod of the wicked, and the utmost which wicked men's malice can afflict them with, rather then to put forth their hand to iniquity.

V. That they suffer not themselves to be abused with fair pretences and professions usuall in the mouths of those that carry on this designe, and often published in their papers, but remember that the foulest actions have not wanted specious pretences; and if they who killed the Apostles did both pretend and intend to do God good service, what marvell that they who engage against the Covenant pretend to engage for it. Neither is it to be forgotten, that after the first subscription of our Nationall Covenant, these who had the chief hand in managing publick affairs, and

had subscribed the Covenant, especially the Duke of Lenox, and Captain Jones, then Earl of Arran, in the years 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, when their designe was to subvert both the doctrine and discipline of this Kirk, yet gave great assurances, by promises and oaths, to the contrary. At the Assemblies 1598, 1599, 1600, it was declared, with many vows and attestations by the King, statesmen, and these ministers who were aspiring to Prelacy, that they intended no such thing as a change of the government of the Kirk, or an introducing of Episcopacy, yet they were really doing what they disclaimed and professed not to do. And suppose that some who have an active hand in carrying on the present publick affairs, have no design either to destroy religion or utterly to sleight it; yet the way they are on, and work they are about, as it is contrived, doth of itself, and in its own nature, tend to the endangering, if not to the utter subversion of religion; for it cannot be denied, but the very undertaking of this war sets the once suppressed Malignants on work again, and successe therein puts them in a capacity to set up, according to their principles, abolished and abjured corruptions, which will be the more hardly hindered, considering his Majesty's propension, and professed resolution that way, especially seeing his Majesty's concessions (though it hath been often desired) have never been plainly declared unsatisfactory by the Parliament. And who in reason can think that any more then his Majesty's concessions sent from the Isle of Wight will be required of him, by them who thereupon have proceeded to this Engagement. The King's negative voice, (asserted in the papers of the Commissioners of this kingdom unto England, which are owned in the late Declaration to the Kingdom of England as the sense of this kingdom,) considered in relation to religion, makes the danger yet the greater and more palpable, yea, may reach further to shake and unsettle religion established in this land; if to the premises this be added, which is not only often declared but also demanded, that his Majesty be brought to one of his houses in honour, freedom, and safety, which may infer the admitting of his Majesty to the free exercise of his royall power, before security had from him for religion, or application made to him for the same, who sees not now what hazard religion runs, certainly greater then a good intention can salve?

VI. That they do not mistake or misunderstand the nature of the true Reformed religion, and of the government of Jesus Christ, as if thereby either the prerogative of kings, priviledges of parliaments, or liberties of burghs, and other corporations, were any wayes hurt or weakened; whereas indeed religion is the main pillar and upholder of civill authority or magistracie, and it is the resisting, and not the receiving, of the government of Christ, which hath overturned civill powers. If the throne be established by righteousness, (as we are plainly taught by the Word of God,) then it is overthrowne by unrighteousnesse and iniquity.

VII. That they beware of all things which may ensnare their consciences, as evil councell, evil company, false informations, rash promises; and especially that they beware of taking any oaths, subscribing any bonds which may relate to the Covenant and cause of God, unlesse such oaths or bonds be approved by the Generall Assembly or their Commissioners for the Publique Affairs of the Kirk.

VIII. That they do not cast away their confidence nor sink into despair, because of the present dangers and difficulties, but live by faith, wait for better times, and continue stedfast, as seeing him who is invisible, firmly believing that such a course as is not of God, but against him, will come to naught.

IX. To remember that as the violation of the Covenant by some in England doth not set us free from the observation thereof; and as no laws nor authority on earth can absolve us from so solemn an obligation to the Most High God, (which not only hath been professed by this Kirk, but in a petition of the city of London, and in publique testimonies of many of the ministry of England;) so we are not acquitted and assoiled from the obligation of our Solemn Covenant because of the troubles and confusions of the times; but that in the worst of times all those duties, whereunto by Covenant we oblige ourselves, do still lie upon us; for we have sworn, (and must perform it,) concerning that cause and Covenant wherein we solemnly engaged, "that we shall all the dayes of our lives zealously and constantly continue therein, against all opposition, and promote the same according to our power, against all lets and

impediments whatsoever." And if against all lets and impediments whatsoever, then the altering of the way of opposition, or of the kinde of impediments, doth not alter the nature or tye of the Covenant, but we are obliged to all the duties therein contained.

We do also exhort and charge, in Christ's name, the Prince of pastors, all the ministers within this Kirk, that in no wayes they be accessory to this sinfull Engagement, but in all their conferences and reasoning, especially in their publick doctrine, they declare themselves freely and faithfully, as they would eschew the wrath of God, due for a violated Covenant, and as they would escape the censures of the Kirk; and let all Presbyteries be watchful within their bounds, and carefully, wisely, and zealously to inflict ecclesiastick censures.

Finally, we exhort all civill judicatories, and every one intrusted with power to manage the present affairs, that they would seriously remember the strict account they are to give before the Judge of the quick and the dead—considering deeply how fearfull a thing it is to oppresse the consciences of their brethren, either by pressing them to act where they finde no satisfactory warrant, or by putting heavy pressures upon them for not acting according to their injunctions; and especially that they offer not to insnare by new oaths or bonds those that make conscience of the great oath of their Solemn Covenant, and hitherto have proven faithfull and constant in promoting joyntly all the ends thereof.

If this our faithfull warning finde favourable acceptance, so that the grievous things already enacted be no more prosecuted and pressed, we shall blesse God, who reigns in the kingdoms and counsellors of men; but if it fall out otherwise, (as God forbid,) we have liberate our souls of the guiltinesse of this sinfull way of Engagement, and of all the miseries that shall ensue thereby upon this Kirk and kingdom; and shall lament before the Lord that our labours have not as yet had the desired successe. In the mean time, we dare not cast away our confidence, but trusting in the name of the Lord, and staying upon our God, shall, by his grace and assistance, continue steadfast in our Solemn Covenants, and faithfull in all the duties of our calling.

Sess. 22, August 1, 1648, ante meridiem.—The Generall Assemblie's Answer to the Paper sent from the Honourable Committee of Estates, of the date July 28, 1648.

The Generall Assembly, having considered the paper of the 28th of July, delivered to them from the Honourable Committee of Estates, do finde that the first part thereof, concerning the great offers made by the Parliament and Committee of Estates for the security of religion, is no other but what was fully answered in our last paper of the 25th of July, delivered to their Lordships, wherein it was plainly demonstrate, by theologicall reasons, (though their Lordships are pleased to call them politick,) that the present Engagement is inconsistent with the safety and security of religion. Next, whereas it is affirmed in their Lordships' paper that these grounds and reasons are the same, which were fully answered before, we wish it had been instanced when and where they were answered, for we know no such thing.

Another reflection upon that former paper of ours is thus expressed: "That the Generall Assembly hath proceeded to such a declaration before they had, in an ecclesiastick way, from clear testimonies out of the Word of God or convincing of our consciences, demonstrate the unlawfulness of the undertaking;" where we can see no reason why it should seem so very strange to the Honourable Committee, that the Generall Assembly hath so proceeded to a declaration of their judgement concerning this businesse; for as it hath been no unusuall thing, but very ordinary, that approved Synods, both Provinciaall, Nationall, and Oecumenicall, have declared their judgement, without publishing the particular grounds and reasons thereof from Scripture, (a work more proper for full tractates, then for synodical decrees or cannons;) so if their Lordships had been pleased to attend (for many attended not) the late Parliament sermons, mainly intended for their Lordships' information, and had, with mindes unprejudiced, hearkened thereunto, and searched into all the papers lately published in print by the commission of the last Assembly, they might have been, by

the blessing of God, convinced from the Word of God of the unlawfulness of the present Engagement.

There are three things which may justly seem to us more strange; one is, that the Declaration of Parliament having given assurance in this manner, "we are resolved not to engage in any war, before the necessity and lawfulness thereof be cleared, so as all who are well-affected may be satisfied therewith;" yet now they have engaged in war without any such clearing of the necessity and lawfulness thereof, or satisfaction given to the well-affected.

Another is, that although there are so great professions and offers in the general to satisfy what can be desired for the security of religion, yet none of those particulars desired by the late commission of the Kirk for the security of religion have been granted. We shall here only give instance in one of those desires, which was, that his Majesty's concessions and offers concerning religion, sent home from the Isle of Wight, having been found by the said commission unsatisfactory and destructive to the Covenant, might be by the Parliament declared unsatisfactory to their Lordships.

In this great point, there hath been no satisfaction given, only it was lightly touched in one clause of the Parliament's Declaration, and so ambiguously expressed as might suffer many interpretations; and although this ambiguity was clearly laid open by the commissioners of the last General Assembly in their representation, yet to this day there hath been nothing published, neither by the Parliament nor Committee of Estates, to give any clearer satisfaction, by disclaiming those offers and concessions as unsatisfactory to the Parliament; so that this (if there were no more) gives us great cause to apprehend that there is a greater mystery latent in that business then yet appeareth.

A third thing which seemeth strange to us is, that their Lordships' desire of arguments from Scripture to prove the unlawfulness of this Engagement, was not propounded to the commissioners of the last Assembly, before the emitting of the Declaration of Parliament, and before the levies, (when it had been most orderly and seasonable,) but is now propounded after publick resolutions and declarations, yea, not till those resolutions are put in actual execution.

However, seeing their Lordships do now desire proofs from Scripture for the unlawfulness of the Engagement—

We answer, that as joyning and concurring in this Engagement is unlawfull to all the well-affected in this kingdom, their consciences being altogether unsatisfied in the lawfulness thereof; and as it is unlawfull in the manner of putting it in execution, being accompanied with so many injuries, oppressions, and crying abominations, and with so much persecution of piety; so it is unlawfull in the own nature of it, and as it is stated upon the grounds of the Declarations of Parliament and Committee of Estates. And this unlawfulness of the Engagement in itself we have demonstrate in the declaration herewith communicate to their Lordships, unto which we remit them for satisfaction in that point, and do not doubt but their Lordships may be convinced thereby of the evill of their way, and that it is so far from being a pious and necessary Engagement, (as their Lordships are pleased to call it,) that it is a most unlawfull and sinfull Engagement, to be repented of and forsaken by all that have any hand in it, as they desire to make their peace with God. And we heartily wish that their Lordships' subsequent proceedings may be reall testimonies that their calling for Scripture proofs was from a reall desire to be informed and edified.

As to their Lordships' other desire, of our demonstrating from the Word of God that the Kirk hath interest in the undertakings and engagements in war, and what that interest is, we had thought this point to be without controversie in this kingdom, not only in respect of Kirk and State, their joyning and co-operating (each in their proper sphere) in the former expeditions of this kingdom into England, but also because the very conferences which have been between committees of Kirk and State, concerning this undertaking and Engagement, doth plainly suppose an interest of the Kirk in such affairs.

If their Lordships mean any politick interest in such undertakings, we claim no such thing; if the meaning be of a spirituall interest, and so far as concerneth the

point of conscience, there can be no doubt thereof made by such as do, with David, make the testimonies of the Lord their counsellors, Psalm cxix. 24; and consult with God as he used to do in undertaking war. It is also to be remembred, that Joshua and all the congregation of Israel were commanded to go out and in at the word of Eliezer the Priest, who was to aske counsell of the Lord for them, Numb. xxvii. 28. Hath not the Word of God prescribed to the Christian magistrate the rules of a lawfull war; and doth it not belong to particular ministers, much more to the Assemblies of the Kirk, to declare the minde of God from Scripture for all sorts of duties, and against all sorts of sins? And if the present war be a case of conscience, and alledged to be the most fit and necessary means for preservation of religion, who seeth not that the Kirk hath an undoubted interest in resolving and determining such a case of conscience from the Word of God? This we shall only adde, that whereas in the Parliament's Letter to the Presbyteries three instances were adduced, by way of reflection upon the proceedings of the late commission, as meddling with civill matters, in which they had no interest, the commission did, in their printed vindication, so clear from scripturall grounds their interest in such things, as their Lordships might have been easily satisfied in that point. We shall here only mention one passage containing a good and safe rule for such cases. The duties of the Second Table, as well as of the First, as, namely, the duties between king and subject, parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants; and the like being contained in, and to be taught and cleared from the Word of God, are in that respect, and so far as concerneth the point of conscience, a subject of ministeriall doctrine, and in difficult cases a subject of cognizance and judgement to the Assemblies of the Kirk.

*Sess. 23, Eodem die, post meridiem.—A Declaration and Exhortation of the Generall Assembly of the Church of Scotland to their Brethren of England.**

As the necessity of preserving a right understanding and mutuall confidence betwixt the churches of Christ in both kingdoms constrains us, so the good acceptance and the suitable affections that the declaration of the last Generall Assembly met with in England from the lovers of the Covenant and present reformation, together with the many testimonies that have of late been given unto the truth in that land, invites and encourages us to make known unto our brethren there our sense of the present condition of publick affairs, so far as concerns religion and the point of conscience.

The dispensation of God, in ruling of the nations, and in the revolutions of his providence towards them, is full of wonder in all the earth; and we, who live in this island, have cause to look upon it with speciall observation in regard of that which concerns our selves. For many generations these two kingdoms stood at odds, and were the instruments of many sufferings and calamities one to another, untill at last the Lord, having compassion upon both, did unite them under one king; which great and long desired blessing hath received such increase from our being united together in one League and Covenant, as doth adde much to the good and happinesse of both nations; therefore is it to be looked upon by all the lovers of truth and peace in these lands as a just ground of much thanksgiving and many praises unto God, even in the day of our greatest calamity and affliction, what ever befall, as we know no cause why we should forget so great a mercy or repent of so good a work.

But as the common enemies of these kingdoms studied by all means to keep them from entring into that Covenant, so hath all their power and policy now, for five years past, been employed to bring it to nought. As soon as it had being, the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant party, did bend all their forces against it; and when, by the mighty hand of God, they were scattered and brought to confusion, in their stead stood up in England a generation who have perverted the truth, and, by turning aside into errour, have obstructed the work of reformation; and, by forsaking of the Covenant and forgetting of the oath of God, have brought a great reproach upon his name, and made the enemy to blaspheme; whose unthankfulnesse and unstedfastnesse, with the many provocations of these lands, hath provoked the Lord again to

* The Committee mentioned in the note at p. 171 were also appointed to draw up the above Declaration. Mr James Guthrie appears to have been the individual who prepared the original draft.—Ed. 1843.

raise out of the dust the horn of Malignants, and to arm them with such power as is terrible to his people, and threatens his work with ruine. And, albeit we acknowledge our selves bound, and are still resolved to preserve and defend his Majesty's person and authority in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; yet it is unto us matter of very great sorrow and grief that so many in our land should so far joyn in Malignant designes, and that there should be found amongst us who have undertaken, and are now putting in execution, an unlawfull war for promoting their ends, and opposing and making void (so far as in them lies) the ends of the Covenant; neverthelesse, in this we cannot but rejoyce that they went not without a witnesse and a warning dissuading them to go.

And we desire our brethren of England to know, that as a very considerable number of the members of the Parliament did dissent from and protest against the proceedings of the major part in reference to this Engagement, so all the particular Synods and Presbyteries in this kingdom, excepting some few, who, by reason of their remotenesse and shortnesse of time, had not the opportunity, have most harmoniously joyned with and seconded the desires of the commissioners of the Generall Assembly, for preventing so unlawfull a war. And now the commissioners out of all the provinces convened in this Nationall Assembly, as after an exact examination they have unanimously approved the proceedings of the commissioners of the former Assembly against that Engagement, so have they emitted a declaration to all the people of God in this land, shewing it to be contrary to God's Word and to the Solemn League and Covenant. Neither have ministers only, by their preaching, and kirk judicatories, by their petitions and declarations, given testimony against it; but many others in this land also, by supplicating the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, for satisfaction to their consciences thereanent; and when it could not be obtained, many have chosen rather to suffer the spoiling of their goods with joy, then to sin against God by complying with an evil course. And many of the officers of our former army, who are of speciall note for their good carriage and deserving in the cause of God, have rather choosed to quit their charges then to joyn in it; nay, the well-affected, both ministers and people, as they do bear testimony against it before men, so groan under it before God. So that this character may justly be put upon it by all who shall speak of it now or in after ages:—that as it is a foul breach of the Covenant, under a pretence and profession of being for the ends of the Covenant, so, being carried on against the consciences of the people, and contrary to the most harmonious and universall testimonies of many Presbyteries and Synods, that have been given against it, it is a sinning with many witnesses. A paralell will hardly be found in this or in any other land, wherein a publick sinfull course hath been carried on with so high a hand, against the consciences of the people of God, and against so many warnings of the servants of God, and generall opposition from the judicatories of the Kirk; which yet is the less to be wondered at, because the greatest part of those who have been most active in contriving and carrying on of the same were either once open enemies, or always secret underminers, or indifferent and neutrall in the cause of God.

But, whatsoever be the falling away of such, we shall desire and do expect that our brethren in England, who continue faithfull, may rest confident of the generality of all such of this kingdom as were at first active in promoting the Covenant and work of reformation, that they are also still faithfull in adhering thereunto, and walking after their former principles, do resolve to abide stedfast, and to hold fast the bands of brotherhood and union between these kingdoms. Neither are we lesse confident of the like resolutions and affections of our brethren in England. The many testimonies which the truth and cause of Christ, the Covenant, and Presbyteriall Government, have lately received from that cloud of witnesses of the ministry in severall provinces and counties of that kingdom, after the example of the worthy ministry of the city of London, against the errours of Independency, Anabaptism, Antinomianism, Arminianism, Socinianism, Familism, Libertinism, Sceptism, Erastianism, and other new and dangerous doctrines, spread and received amongst many in that nation; as they are unto us matter of great praise and hearty thanksgiving unto God, so also an evidence of the stedfastness of many in England, and a token for good, and a wide door of hope that the Lord will perfect his work, and bring forth the headstone of his house in that land. It shall be the wisdom of each nation to

keep the golden path of truth and righteousness, betwixt the crooked and corrupt wayes of Malignants, upon the one hand, and Sectaries upon the other; and for each of the nations so to look upon another as to distinguish betwixt the prevalent part and the better part, and betwixt friends and foes.

We conceive it to be high time for both nations to search and try their ways, and turn again to the Lord, that he who hath wounded us may heal us, and he who hath broken us may binde us up. The sin of both hath been the departing from the rule of the Covenant, and that we did not trust God for the perfecting of his work, walking by the rule of piety, but took our selves to human policies, and endeavoured to carry it on by carnall and worldly means. For as Scotland did too much connive at and comply with Malignants, which is the immediate and neerest cause of all our present troubles and distractions; so England, neglecting to hold fast the truth, and to submit themselves to the government of Jesus Christ, so clearly held forth by the pious and learned Assembly of Divines, did connive at many abominable blasphemies and errours, and, complying with Sectaries, gave way to their wicked toleration. Neither is it the least part of the sin of both lands that they have more minded the outward then the inward reformation, the erecting of the outward fabrick of God's house, then the providing furniture for it, by advancing the power of the Gospel, that his glory may be seen in his temple. Because of these things is there great wrath from the Lord against these kingdoms, and his controversie shall be continued untill we really turn away from our crooked paths. Therefore, as we wish that none of this land may flatter themselves in their evill wayes, but repent and amend, so we desire our brethren of England to consider what hath been the bitter fruits of their slow progresse in and neglect of the work of reformation, and of their connivance at and complying with Sectaries, and to do no more so, but that whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven.

We trust that the Parliament of England will be wise to remember and consider the great mercies of God towards them, in delivering them from all their enemies, and the many opportunities put into their hands for advancing and establishing the work of reformation; for neglect whereof God hath now again threatened to lift up their enemies above them, that he may once more prove what they will do for his name, and for setting the order of his house. God forbid that they should run from one extreame to another, from compliance with Sectaries to compliance with Malignants, and hearken to terms of an unsafe and sinfull peace. We cannot but abhor the purposes of any who minde the subversion of monarchical government, which we heartily wish to be preserved and continued in his Majesty's person and posterity; and we do no lesse dislike the practises of those who deal so hardly with his Majesty's person, earnestly desiring that he were in the condition he was into by the advice of both kingdoms, before he was taken away by a party of Sir Thomas Fairfax army; nor are we against the restoring of the King to the exercise of his power in a right order and way. Yet, considering what great expence of blood and pains these kingdoms have been at for maintaining their just liberties, and bringing the work of reformation this length; and considering his Majesty's great aversnesse from setting reformation of religion, and his adhering still to Episcopacy, we trust that security will be demanded and had from his Majesty for religion, before he be brought to one of his houses in or neer about London, with honour, freedom, and safety. And considering of what importance the Solemn League and Covenant is unto all the interests of both kingdoms, concerning their religion, liberties, and peace, to make an agreement without establishing of it, were not only to rob these nations of the blessings they have already attained by it, but to open a door to let in all the corruptions that have been formerly in the Kirks of God in these lands, and all the abuses and usurpations that have been in the civill government, and again to divide these two kingdoms that are now so happily united and conjoynd; and, therefore, as we wish that all misunderstandings betwixt the nations, and betwixt the King and his people, may be removed, that there may be a happy and lasting peace, so that there may be no agreement without establishing and enjoyning the Covenant in all these three kingdoms; and that for this end God would give wisdom to all that are intrusted in the managing of publick

affairs, that they may seasonably discover, and carefully avoid, all snares which may be laid either by Sectaries or Malignants, or both, under colour of a treaty of peace. And we are confident, through the Lord, that all the obstructions and oppositions by which his work has been retarded and interrupted in this island, shall not only be taken out of the way, but shall turn to the advantage and furtherance of it at last. The only wise God can and will bring about his holy purposes by unlikely, yea, by contrary means; and God forbid that either our brethren of England or our selves should give way to despondency of spirit, and cast away the hopes of that so much prayed-for and so much wished-for reformation of religion, and uniformity in all the parts thereof, according to the Covenant. And now it is our heart's desire and prayer to God, that amidst the many trials and tentations of these times, none of the servants of God and witnesses of Jesus Christ may be deserted or left to themselves, to comply either with the Malignant party upon the one hand, or with Sectaries upon the other. Brethren, pray for us, and the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you.

Sess. 24, August 2, 1648, ante meridiem.—Answer to the Letter of the Reverend Assembly of Divines in England.

Right Honourable, Right Reverend, and well-beloved in our Lord,

We cease not to give thanks to the Father of our Lord Jesus, by whose strength you keep the word of his patience now in these times, when many depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits; as also, that he who hath founded Zion hath been pleased, by our Covenant sworn to the Most High God, to lay the hopefull foundation of a glorious work in these three kingdoms, to unite his people therein, as one stick in the hand of the Lord.

We cannot but acknowledge, to the honour and glory of the Lord, wonderfull in counsell and excellent in working, that he hath strongly united the spirits of all the godly in this kingdom, and of his servants in the ministry, first, in the severall Presbyteries and Synods, and now in this nationall Assembly, in an unanimous and constant adhering to our first principles, and the Solemn League and Covenant; and, particularly, in giving a testimony against the present unlawfull Engagement in war; yet it seemeth good to the Lord, who hath his fire in Zion and furnace in Jerusalem, for the purging of the vessels of his house, to suffer many adversaries to arise, with violence to obstruct and stop this great and effectuell door which the Lord hath opened unto us. But we know that he openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth; yea, he will cause them who say they are for the Covenant and are not, but are enemies thereto, and do associate with Malignants and Sectaries, to acknowledge that God hath loved us, and that his truth is in us and with us. And now, dearly beloved, seeing the Lord hath kept you together so many years, when the battel of the warrior hath been with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, the Lord also sitting as a refiner to purifie the sons of Levi, and blessing you with unity and soundnesse in the faith, we are confident you will not cease to give a publick testimony for Christ, both against sectaries and all seducers, who prophesie lies in the name of the Lord, and against Malignants and incendiaries, (the Prelaticall and Popish faction,) who now again bestir themselves to hold up the rotten and tottering throne of Antichrist, and are (whatever they pretend) the reall enemies of reformation; as also, that as the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, and his watchmen, you will give seasonable warning to the Honourable Houses of Parliament, that now (after the losse of the opportunity of so many years) they would, in their places, repair the house of the Lord, that lyeth so long desolate, and promote the work of reformation and uniformity according to the Covenant.

For if the Honourable Houses of Parliament had timely made use of that power which God had put in their hands for suppressing of sectaries, and had taken a speedy course for settling of Presbyteriall government, (a speciall and effectuell means appointed by God to purge his Church from all scandals in doctrine and practise,) then had not the insolencie of that party arisen to such a height, as to give occasion to the

Malignants of both kingdoms to justifie and blesse themselves in their old opposition to the work of reformation, and to encourage one another to new and more dangerous attempts ; neither had the Malignant party ever grown so strong in this kingdom if the sectaries had not been connived at in England, for their prime pretence (for their present rising in armes) is, that they may suppress the sectaries, and vindicate the King from that base condition unto which he is brought by that party. Yet these do not wisely nor well, who, avoiding or opposing sectarisme, split themselves upon the rock of Malignancy, and by taking that party by the hand now, do own all the cruelty, bloodshed, and other ungodly and unjust acts, which they have done since the beginning of this reformation. And as we take thankfully your testimony of our steiring so steady and even a course between the dangerous rocks of Prophanesse and Malignancy on the one hand, and of errour, schisme, heresie, and blasphemie on the other hand ; so we trust ye will not cease to give testimony against both these evils, and represent the same to the Honourable Houses of Parliament, as you shall have fit occasion ; and that you will gravely warne your dissenting brethren what a door they keep open for errors and heresies, by their tenet of Independency, whereby they leave no means of authoritative ecclesiastick suppression of errours, if an Independent congregation will please to own them. We also are confident that you will be remembrancers to that famous city of London, and the whole kingdom, of their engagement to the Lord, in the Solemn League and Covenant. Nor will we suffer our selves to believe that the well-affected in the Houses of Parliament, in the city of London, and throughout that whole kingdom, will agree or hearken to the motions of any such treaty of peace, as leaves out the best security for religion, the cause of God, and the Solemn League and Covenant. Thus desiring the continuance of your prayers to God for us, in this hour of temptation ; and promising (through his grace and strength) to continue in prayers for you, we commit you to the infinite wisdom, power, goodnesse, and faithfulness of our blessed God and Father in Christ, in whom we are,

Your very loving and affectionate Brethren to serve you,
The Ministers and Elders convened in the Generall Assembly of the
Kirk of Scotland.

August 2, 1648.

Direct.—To the Right Honourable and Right Reverend the Assembly of
Divines in England now assembled at Westminster.

Sess. 25, Eodem die, post meridiem.—*The humble Supplication of the Generall Assembly to the Right Honourable the Committee of Estates.*

Whereas the High and Honourable Court of Parliament and your Lordships were pleased to injoyne the subscription of a declaration and band, of the date June 10, 1648 ; and we having found, after such examination and tryall as is competent to the servants of God in an ecclesiastick way, that the same is a snare to the consciences of the people of God in this land, to involve them in guiltinesse, and to draw them from their former principles and vows in the Solemn League and Covenant, as doth more fully appear in our act concerning the same, herewith presented unto your Lordships : Therefore, from our zeal to the glory of God, and tender care of the souls committed unto us, and for our exoneration, as we do seriously exhort that your Lordships would be sensible of the guilt that you have already brought upon your selves and others, by injoyning and urging that subscription, so we do earnestly, and in the bowels of Jesus Christ, intreat that your Lordships would take such order and course as that it may be no further pressed upon the people of God throughout the land.

And because the people groan under the violence and oppression of officers and souldiers in their quarterings, or otherwise, throughout all the corners of the country, (which, as it hath ascended into the ears of the Lord of Hosts, so we doubt not but it is come to your knowledge,) we conceive it to be incumbent to us to represent the same to your Lordships, beseeching and obtesting you, that, as you would not desire that the Lord should visit because of these things, you would think upon an effectuall

remedy for punishing and redressing what is past, and preventing the like in time coming.

And whereas, by an act and inhibition of your Lordships, the liberty of printing, being one of the Kirk's priviledges confirmed by Parliament, is restrained, therefore we intreat that the inhibition upon the printers may be taken off.

And now, having condescended upon a declaration to all the members of this Kirk, concerning present dangers and duties, we do, in all humility, offer the same to your Lordships, (together with our answer to the paper last sent to us from your Lordships,) professing in the sight of God (whose servants we are) that we have walked herein according to the rule of his Word, and have nothing before our eyes but his glory and the well of his people; and, therefore, intreat your Lordships, that you would seriously ponder the same without prejudice, and as you desire to be comforted in the day of your accompts, to make right use of the light that is holden forth therein from God's Word.

Sess. 26, August 3, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act for censuring Ministers for their Silence, and not Speaking to the Corruptions of the Time.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their serious consideration the great scandals which have lately encreased, partly through some ministers, their reserving and not declaring of themselves against the prevalent sins of the times, partly through the spite, malignity, and insolency of others, against such ministers as have faithfully and freely reprov'd the sins of the times without respect of persons; do, therefore, for preventing and removing such scandals hereafter, appoint and ordain, that every minister do, by the word of wisdom, apply his doctrine faithfully against the publick sins and corruptions of these times, and particularly against the sins and scandals in that congregation wherein he lives, according to the act of the Generall Assembly, 1596, revived by the Assembly at Glasgow, 1638; appointing that such as shall be found not applying their doctrine to corruptions, which is the pastorall gift—cold, and wanting of spirituall zeal—flatterers, and dissembling of publick sins, and especially of great personages in their congregations—that all such persons be censured according to the degree of their faults, and continuing therein be deprived; and, according to the Act of the Generall Assembly, 1646, Sess. 10, that, beside all other scandals, silence, or ambiguous speaking in the publike cause, much more detracting and disaffected speeches, be seasonably censured. As, therefore, the errors and exorbitancies of sectaries in England are not to be passed in silence, but plain warning to be given of the danger of so near a contagion, that people may beware of it, and such as neglect this duty to be censured by their Presbyteries; so it is thought fit and appointed by the Assembly, conform to the foresaid acts, that the main current of applications in sermons may run along against the evils that prevail at home, and namely, against the contempt of the Word—against all profanesse—against the present defection from the League and Covenant—against the unlawfull Engagement in war—against the unlawfull Band and Declaration of the date of the 10th of June, ordained to be subscribed by all the subjects, and other unjust decrees established by law—against the plots and practises of Malignants—and against the principles and tenets of Erastianism, which spread among divers in this kingdom: for the better confutation whereof, it is hereby recommended to the ministry to study that point of controversie well, that they may be the more able to stop the mouths of gainsayers. 'Tis also hereby recommended to the severall Presbyteries and Provinciall Synods, that they make speciall enquiry and triall concerning all the ministry in their bounds; and if any be found too sparing, generall, or ambiguous, in the foresaid applications and reproofs, that they be sharply rebuked, dealt with, and warned to amend, under the pain of suspension from their ministry; and if, after such warning given, they amend not, that such be suspended by Presbyteries, and in case of their negligence, by the Synods, till the next Generall Assembly; but if there be any who do neglect and omit such applications and reproofs, and continue in such negligence after admonition and dealing with them, they are to be cited, and, after due triall of the offence, to be deposed—for be-

ing pleasers of men rather than servants of Christ—for giving themselves to a detestable indifferency or neutrality in the cause of God, and for defrauding the souls of people; yea, for being highly guilty of the blood of souls, in not giving them warning. Much more are such ministers to be censured with deposition from their ministry, who preach for the lawfulness, or pray for the success of the present unlawfull Engagement—or that go along with the army themselves—or who subscribe any bands, or take any oaths not approved by the Generall Assembly or their Commissioners—or by their counsel, countenance, or approbation, make themselves accessory to the taking of such bands and oaths by others. It is to be understood, that if any minister preach in defence of, or pray for successe to the sectaries in England, he is likewise to be censured by deposition; and this we adde, as a generall rule to be observed on both hands, but not as if we had found any of the ministry of this kingdom to be favourers of the sectaries in England.

And in case any minister, for his freedom in preaching, and faithfull discharge of his conscience, shall be, in the face of the congregation or elsewhere, upbraided, railed at, mocked, or threatened—or if any injury or violence be done to his person—or any stop and disturbance made to him in the exercise of his ministeriall calling, the Presbyterie of the bounds shall forthwith enter in processe with the offender, and whoever he be, charge him to satisfie the discipline of the Kirk by publick repentance; which if any do not, or refuse to do, that then the Presbyterie proceed to excommunication against him; in all which, Presbyteries and Synods are to give an account of their diligence, and the Assembly appoints this Act to be intimate in the several congregations of this Kirk.

Sess. 29, August 4, 1648, post meridiem.—Overtures concerning the Education of the Hieland Boys in the Province of Argyle.

This day, the Report following being made from the Committee concerning the Education of Hieland Boys in Argyle, viz. :—

The Committee, considering the Bill remitted by the Generall Assembly to us, concerning the Hieland Boys, (who are given up to be fourty in number, of good spirits, and approven by the Province of Argyle,) do humbly think that four of them, who are ready for the colledge, should be recommended to the Universities to get burses one in every colledge. As for the rest of the fourty, who are to be brought up at grammar schools, the Committee thinks that if the said boys should be scattered through the kingdom, they should lose the Irish language, and so the Assembly shall fail of their purpose to make them usefull for the Hiellands. And, therefore, do humbly conceive that it were fitting that every congregation pay yearly fourty shillings Scots for maintaining the said boys at schools in Glasgow, or in other places, where many of them may be together accepted of, and that the money be brought in yearly to the Generall Assembly by the commissioners of Presbyteries, and that Presbyteries augment or diminish the said proportion according to the ability of every congregation.

The Assembly, having considered the foresaid Report, approves the first overture, and recommends Colin Campbell to the University of Aberdeen, Duncan Campbell to Edinburgh, Patrick Campbell to Glasgow, Zachary Maccullum to St Leonard's Colledge in St Andrews: As also, approves the second overture, seriously recommending to Presbyteries that the said fourty shillings be collected carefully and sent to Glasgow; and the ministers of Glasgow shall appoint some sufficient man in that town to receive the said collection from Presbyteries, and to take charge of the boarding and entertainment of the saids boys in Glasgow, at schooles, and they shall send in the names of the boys, with a certificate of their proficiency, yearly to the Generall Assembly; and this collection shall only endure for the space of twelve years.

Sess. 30, August 5, 1648, ante meridiem.—Explanation of the Fifth Article of the Overtures concerning Appeals past in the Assembly, 1643.

The Generall Assembly, for clearing the sense of the fifth article of the overtures concerning appeals in the Assembly, 1643, Sess. 2, do declare, that if appellations *post latam sententiam* be not presented to the judicatory when the sentence is pronounced, the party shall then immediately after the sentence protest for liberty of appeal, as he shall see cause; and, accordingly, within ten days, shall give in his appeal in writ, under his hand, either to the judicatory or the Moderator thereof, otherwise the appeal is not to be respected.

Sess. 30, Eodem die, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act discharging Deposed or Suspended Ministers from any exercise of the Ministry, or meddling with the Stipend.

The Generall Assembly, considering that, according to the ancient practice and order of this Kirk, the censure of suspension and deposition of ministers is both *ab officio* and *à beneficio*, as is also acknowledged by the 20th Act of the Parliament, anno 1644; and that the continuance of suspended or deposed ministers in the exercise of the ministry, or in the possession of their stipend, hath been, and ought to be, accounted and censured as a great contempt of the authority and censures of the Kirk; considering also, that the continuance of deposed ministers in the possession of the stipend is a great prejudice and obstruction to the planting of the vauking kirk, and to the service of God there: Therefore, do declare and ordain, that whosoever, after the sentence of deposition pronounced against them, do either exercise any part of the ministeriall calling in the places they formerly served in, or elsewhere, or do possesse, meddle, or intromit with the stipend or other benefits whatsoever, belonging to these kirks they served at, they shall be proceeded against with excommunication; and if any suspended minister, during his suspension, either exercise any part of the ministeriall calling, or intromit with the stipend, that he be deposed, and after deposition, continuing in either of these faults, that he be processed with excommunication; but prejudice always to them of their stipend resting for bygone service, and of any recompence due for building or repairing of the manse, according to the ordinary practise. And the Assembly recommends to Presbyteries seriously to be carefull of the putting of this Act in execution.

Sess. 31, August 7, 1648, ante meridiem.—The Assemblies Declaration of the Falshood and Forgerie of a lying scandalous Pamphlet, put forth under the name of their Reverend Brother, Master Alexander Henderson, after his Death.

The Generall Assembly of this Kirk, having seen a printed paper, intituled, “The Declaration of Mr Alexander Henderson, principall minister of the Word of God at Edinburgh, and chief Commissioner from the Kirk of Scotland to the Parliament and Synod of England, made upon his deathbed;” and taking into their serious consideration how many grosse lies and impudent calumnies are herein contained; out of the tender respect which they do bear to his name, (which ought to be very precious to them and all posterity, for his faithfull service in the great work of reformation in these kingdoms, wherein the Lord was pleased to make him eminently instrumentall;) and lest through the malice of some, and ignorance of others, the said pamphlet should gain belief among the weaker sort, they have thought fit to make known and declare concerning the same as followeth:—

That after due search and tryall, they do finde, that their worthy brother, Master Alexander Henderson, did, from the time of his coming from London to Newcastle, till the last moment of his departure out of this life, upon all occasions, manifest the constancy of his judgements touching the work of reformation in these kingdoms; namely, in all his discourses and conferences with his Majesty, and with his brethren who were employed with him in the same trust at Newcastle; in his letters to the commissioners at London, and particularly in his last discourse to his Majesty, at his departing from Newcastle, being very weak and greatly decayed in his naturall

strength. When he was come from Newcastle by sea to this kingdom, he was in such a weak, worn, and failed condition, as it was evident to all who saw him that he was not able to frame any such declaration, for he was so spent that he died within eight dayes after his arrivall; and all that he was able to speak in that time did clearly shew his judgement of and affection to the work of reformation and cause of God, to be every way the same then that it was in the beginning and progresse thereof, as divers reverend brethren who visited him have declared to this Assembly, and particularly two brethren who constantly attended him, from the time he came home till his breath expired. A further testimony may be brought from a short Confession of Faith under his hand, found amongst his papers, which is expressed as his last words, wherein, among other mercies, he declareth himself “most of all obliged to the grace and goodnesse of God, for calling him to believe the promises of the Gospel, and for exalting him to be a preacher of them to others, and to be a willing though weak instrument in this great and wonderfull work of reformation, which he earnestly beseecheth the Lord to bring to a happy conclusion.” Other reasons may be added from the levity of the stile and manifest absurdities contained in that paper. Upon consideration of all which, this Assembly doth condemn the said pamphlet, as forged, scandalous, and false; and further declare the author and contriver of the same to be void of charity and a good conscience, and a grosse lyar and calumniator, led by the spirit of the accuser of the brethren.

Act for taking the Covenant at the first receiving of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and for the receiving of it also by all Students at their first entry to Colledges.

The Generall Assembly, according to former recommendations, doth ordain, that all young students take the Covenant at their first entry to colledges; and that hereafter, all persons whatsoever take the Covenant at their first receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; requiring hereby Provinciall Assemblies, Presbyteries, and Universities, to be carefull that this act be observed, and accompt thereof taken in the visitation of Universities and particular Kirks, and in the tryall of Presbyteries.

Sess. 32, Eodem die, post meridiem.—Act concerning Presbyteries maintaining of Bursars.

The Generall Assembly, understanding that the frequent recommendation of preceding Assemblies for maintaining bursars is by many Presbyteries neglected; do, therefore, ordain Synods to crave accompt thereof from Presbyteries at every Provinciall meeting, which, with the Presbyteries' answer, shall be put upon record, that so the part both of Presbyteries and Synods, and their negligence or diligence in so pious a work, may be known, by the examination of the Provinciall books, to each Generall Assembly.

Sess. 35, August 9, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act for disjoyning the Presbytery of Zetland from the Provinciall Synod of Orkney and Cathnes.

The Generall Assembly, now, after exact tryal, finding that the Presbytery of Zetland cannot meet with the Provincial of Cathnes and Orkney, to which it was adjoyned by an act of the Assembly, 1646, Sess. 2; and that the allowance and dispensation granted in the preceding Assembly, for the halfe of their number to keep the meetings of the said Provinciall, cannot be observed in respect of the great distance of that isle by sea from the land, and the dangerousness of the seas there, and of the passage through them: Therefore, after hearing the parties interested, and serious deliberation of the matter, the Assembly doth hereby disjoyn the Presbytery of Zetland from the Provincial of Cathnes and Orkney, and declares, for these reasons, that the said Presbytery is to be hereafter subordinate immediately to the Generall Assembly; for which cause, their commissioners are to be sent to each Generall Assembly the more carefully, and it is hereby recommended to them, that they send to the next

Assembly a particular information of the quality and condition of all their Kirks, according to the direction of the act of the preceding Assembly, Sess. 27, entituled, An Act for Pressing and Furthering the Planting of Kirks.

Sess. 38, Aug. 10, 1648, post meridiem.—Overtures for the Remedies of the grievous and common Sins of the Land in this present time.

The sins of the land, and the causes and occasions thereof, being considered, the following remedies of these sins were propounded:—

CIVILL REMEDIES.

For the present, untill the overtures are prepared to be presented to the Parliament, it is to be recommended to every congregation to make use of the 9th Act of the Parliament, 1645, at Perth, for having magistrates and justices in every congregation; and of the 8th Act of the said Parliament, against swearing, drinking, and mocking of piety, and all other Acts of Parliament for restraining or punishing of vice; particularly, for the better restraining of the sin of whoredom, that each magistrate in every congregation exact and make compt to the Session of fourty pounds for each fornicatour and fornicatrix, of an hundreth merks for each one of their relapse in fornication, of an hundreth pounds for each adulterer and adulteress, according to express Acts of Parliament, which is to be exacted of those who may pay it, and the discretion of the magistrate is to modifie it according to the ability or inability of each delinquent.

DOMESTICK REMEDIES.

1. Let care be taken of conscionable receiving of servants, that they have testimonials of their honest behaviour; and let all such as give testimonials take heed that these to whom they give them be free of scolding, swearing, lying, and such like more common sins, as well as fornication, adultery, drunkenness, and other grosse and hainous evils. Let the ordinary time of giving testimonials be in face of Session; and if an extraordinary exigent be, let it be given by the minister, with consent of the elder of the bounds wherein the person craving the testimoniall hath resided; if they have fallen or relapsed in scandalous sins, let their testimoniall bear both their fall and repentance.

2. Let care be had that the worship of God be practised, and discipline exercised in families, according to the Directory for Family Worship in all things, as was appointed in the Generall Assembly, 1647, especially in the minister's constant catechizing of the family, and in the performance of the duties of the Sabbath by all the members thereof.

3. Let persons to be married, and who have children to be baptized, who are very rude and ignorant, be stirred up and exhorted, as at all times, so especially at that time, to attain some measure of Christian knowledge in the grounds of religion, that they may give to the minister, before the elder of the bounds wherein they live, some accompt of their knowledge, that so they may the better teach their family and train up their children.

4. Let every family that hath any in it that can read have a Bible and a Psalm-Book, and make use of them; and where none can read, let them be stirred up to traine up their children in reading, and use any other good remedie the minister and session can fall on.

GENERALL ECCLESIASTICK REMEDIES.

1. Let the remedies which were given at Perth, 1645, and are mentioned in the Generall Assembly, 1646, anent the sins of ministers, be put in execution.

2. Let suspension from the Lord's Sacrament be more carefully executed.

3. Let persons relapse in adultery, (or above,) quadrilapse in fornication, (or above,)

or often guilty of other grosser scandals, be excommunicat somewhat more summarily nor in an ordinary processe, (except there be more nor ordinary signes, and an eminent measure of repentance made known to the Session and Presbyterie,) both for the hainousness of the sins, and continuance therein, and also for terrour to others; and these not to be relaxed from the sentence of excommunication without evidence and undeniable signes of repentance.

4. Let unpartiall proceeding be used against men of all quality, for their scandalous walking; and, in particular, for drunkennesse, swearing, and other scandalous sins. And this to be tryed at the visitation of kirks.

PARTICULAR ECCLESIASTICK REMEDIES.

AND, I. AGAINST IGNORANCE.

1. Let ministers catechise one day every week, (whereon also they may baptize and lecture or preach,) and let them preach every Lord's Day both before and after noon, according to former Acts of Generall Assemblies; let Presbyteries and Synods be very carefull of this, and let every Provinciall book contain an exact accompt thereof.

2. Let ministers examine all of every quality of whose knowledge they have no certain notice.

3. Let young persons be catechized by the minister from the time they are capable of instruction, and let them not be delayed till they be of age to communicat.

4. Let persons grosly ignorant be debarred from the communion; for the first and second time let them be debarred, suppressing their names; for the third time, expressing their names; for the fourth time, bring them to publick repentance; all this is to be understood of those that profit nothing, and labours not for knowledge; but if they be profiting in any measure, or labouring that they may profit, their case is very considerable, they ought to have more forbearance.

II. ECCLESIASTICK REMEDIES AGAINST PROPHANESSE.

1. Let ignorant and scandalous persons be put off, and kept off kirk-sessions.

2. Let every elder have a certain bounds assigned to him, that he may visit the same every moneth at least, and report to the session what scandalls and abuses are therein, or what persons have entered without testimonials.

3. Let all scandalous persons be suspended from the Lord's Supper.

4. Let the minister deal in private with them that are professing publick repentance before the elder of the bounds, thus to try the evidence of their repentance.

5. Let these who have fallen in fornication make publick profession of repentance three severall Sabbaths; who is guilty of relapse in fornication, six Sabbaths; who is guilty of trelapse in fornication, or hath once fallen in adultery, twenty-six Sabbaths; and these sins to be confessed both in one habite, viz., in sackcloth; quadrilapse in fornication and relapse in adultery, three quarters of a year; incest or murder, a year, or fifty-two Sabbaths, in case the magistrate do not his duty in punishing such crimes capitally. They that fall in fornication, or relapses therein, are first to confesse their sin before the session, and thereafter before the congregation; they that are guilty of greater degrees of that sin, and of the other sins mentioned in this article, are to confess their sin both before the Session and Presbyterie, and there to shew some signes of repentance before they be brought to the congregation.

6. Some are to be rebuked at the time of catechizing, who deserve more nor a private reproof, and yet needs not to be brought to publick repentance.

7. It will be a good remedie against Sabbath-breaking by carriers and travellers, that the ministers where they dwell cause them to bring testimonials from the place where they rested on these Lord's Dayes wherein they were from home.

8. Let all persons who flit from one paroch to another have sufficient testimonials. This is to be extended to all gentlemen and persons of quality, and all their followers, who come to reside with their families at Edinburgh, or elsewhere; and let the mini-

ster from whom they flit advertise the minister to whom they flit if (to his knowledge) they be lying under any scandall.

9. Let ministers be free with persons of quality for amendment of their faults, and (if need shall be) let them take help thereto of some of the brethren of the Presbyterie.

10. Let the Presbyteries take speciall notice of ministers who do converse frequently and familiarly with Malignants, and with scandalous and prophane persons, especially such as belong to other paroches.

11. Let privie censures of Presbyteries and Synods be performed with more accuracy, diligence, and zeal.

12. For better keeping of the Sabbath, let every elder take notice of such as are within his bounds how they keep the kirk, how the time is spent before, betwixt, and after the time of publick worship.

13. Let no minister resort to any excommunicate person, without license from the Presbyterie *nisi in extremis*; and let ministers take speciall notice of such persons as haunt with excommunicats, and processe them.

14. Frequent correspondence betwixt Presbyteries is a good remedie.

15. At the visitation of each congregation let the session-book be well visited; and, for that effect, let it be delivered to two or three brethren seven or eight dayes before the visitation, that their report of it may be in readinesse against the day of visitation.

The Assembly allows of all these overtures and remedies of the sins of the land; and ordains all of them to be carefully and conscionably put in practice.

Act for examining the Paraphrase of the Psalms and other Scripturall Songs.

The Generall Assembly appoints Rouse' Paraphrase of the Psalms, with the corrections thereof, now given in by the persons appointed by the last Assembly for that purpose, to be sent to Presbyteries, that they may carefully revise and examine the same, and thereafter send them with their corrections to the Commission of this Assembly to be appointed for Publick Affairs, who are to have a care to cause re-examine the animadversions of Presbyteries, and prepare a report to the next Generall Assembly; intimating hereby, that if Presbyteries be negligent hereof, the next Generall Assembly is to go on and take the same Paraphrase to their consideration without more delay: And the Assembly recommends to Master John Adamson and Mr Thomas Craford, to revise the labours of Mr Zachary Boyd, upon the other Scripturall songs, and to prepare a report thereof to the said Commission for Publick Affairs, that after their examination the same may be also reported to the next Generall Assembly.

Overtures concerning Papists, their Children, and Excommunicate Persons.

The Generall Assembly, considering the manifold inconveniences that follow upon the sending of the children of noblemen and others of quality to forraign countries wherein Popery is professed, especially that thereby such children are in perill to be corrupted with Popery, and so corrupt these families and persons to which they belong, whereby that wicked root of damnable idolatry, error, and heresie, may again be occasioned to spring up and trouble many, and provoke the Most High God to wrath, and to cause his Majesty to leave this land to strong delusions to believe lies; therefore, they do, in the name of God, charge and require all the Presbyteries of this kingdom to observe and practise the rules and directions which are made in former Generall Assemblies, for preventing of the said fearfull inconveniences, and, namely the overtures against Papists, non-communicants, and profaners of the Sabbath, approved in the Generall Assembly held at St Andrews, in the year of God 1642, and the act anent children sent without the kingdom, made in the Generall Assembly at Edinburgh, *anno* 1646. And that they use all diligence for putting in execution the Acts of Parliament and Secret Councell made against Papists and excommunicate persons; and that they register their diligences there-

anent in their Presbytery books, which are summarily to be recorded in the Synod books from time to time, that the Generall Assembly may see how these laudable acts are put in execution; which here are presented, with some necessary additions, in one view:—

1. That every Presbytery give a list of all excommunicate Papists they know to be within their bounds to the Commissioners of the Generall Assembly, and of all Papists, yea, of them also who professe to have renounced Popery, but yet have their children educated abroad, with the names of these children that are abroad, according to the fifth overture of the Generall Assembly, 1642.

2. That every Presbytery convene at their first meeting all known Papists within their bounds, and such as having professed to renounce Popery have their children abroad, and cause them finde sufficient caution for bringing home within three moneths such of their children as are without the kingdom, to be educated in schools and colledges at the Presbytery's sight, if they be minors: and to be wrought upon by gracious conference, and other means of instruction, to be reclaimed from Popery, if they be come to perfect age.

3. The parents, tutors, or friends of children and minors shall, before they send them without the kingdom, first acquaint the Presbytery where they reside, that they may have their testimoniall directed to the Presbytery or classe within the kingdom or dominion beyond seas whither they intend to send their children; and at the time of these children's return, that they report a testimoniall from the Presbytery or Synod where they lived without the kingdom, to the Presbytery who gave them a testimoniall at their going away, according to the act anent children sent without the kingdom, *anno* 1646.

4. That all Presbyteries give the names of such pædagogs as were abroad with the children of noblemen within their bounds, and diligently enquire whether these pædagogs do continue steadfast in the true religion, and continue in their service, or whither these pædagogs do either become corrupt in religion, or (continuing constant) are removed from their charge, and by whom they are removed; and that they signifie these things to the Generall Assembly from time to time, or their commissioners, that they may represent the same to the High Court of Parliament, Lords of Secret Counsell, or Committee of Estates, for such remedie as shall seem expedient to their Honours, for preventing of and purging the land from the plague of idolatrie.

5. That such parents, tutors, or friends, as either send away children to forraign parts infected with idolatry, without such testimonialls as aforesaid, or do not recall them who are already abroad within such time as is above prefixed, or do remove from them their Protestant pædagogs, (that they may the more easily be infected with Popery,) be processed, and, in case of not amending these things, be excommunicated.

6. That the names of such as are excommunicated for these or any other causes be sent in to the Generall Assembly from year to year, that (from thence) their names may be notified in all the kingdom, and that the Acts of Parliament and Secret Counsell may be put to execution against them, and all diligence used for that effect; and that by the effectuall dealing of the Generall Assembly, with the Parliament, Lords of Secret Counsell, or Committee of Estates, their Lordships may enact such further just and severe civill punishment on such excommunicants, for terror to others, as shall be found necessary for purging this covenanted land from all abominations.

Because persons addicted to idolatry will use all means for their own hardening in their superstitious and idolatrous way, even within the countrey; therefore, all known Papists, or persons suspect of Poperie upon probable grounds, are to finde caution before their Presbyteries for their abstinence from masse, and from the company of all Jesuits and priests, according to the second overture against Papists, made *anno* 1642; also Presbyteries are to presse them to finde such caution; and to observe what persons put their sons or daughters to such families as are tainted with Popery within the land, the same being a speciall mean to corrupt them with idolatry; and to cause such parents recall their children, or else proceed with the censures of the Kirk against them.

All which overtures, Presbyteries are seriously required and ordained to observe

diligently, with certification, that they shall be severely censured, if they shall be found remisse or negligent in any of these points, which are so necessary for keeping of the Lord's house and people unpoluted with error, idolatry, or superstition.

Sess. 39, Aug. 11, 1648, ante meridiem.—Act for Prosecuting the Treaty for the Uniformity in Religion in the Kingdom of England.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that the treaty of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected; therefore, renews the power and commission granted by preceding Assemblies, for prosecuting that treaty, unto these persons afternamed, viz., Mr Robert Dowglas, Mr Samuel Rutherford, Mr Robert Baillie, Mr George Gillespie, ministers; and John Earle of Cassils, John Lord Balmerinoch, and Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston, elders; authorizing them with full power to prosecute the said treaty of uniformity with the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and the Reverend Assembly of Divines there, or any committees appointed by them; and to do all and every thing which may advance, perfect, and bring that treaty to an happie conclusion, conform to the commissions given thereanent.

Act Renewing the Commission for the Publick Affairs of this Kirk.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their consideration that, in respect the great work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions is not yet perfected, (though by the Lord's blessing there is a good progress made in the same,) there is a necessity of renewing the Commissions granted formerly for prosecuting and perfecting that great work; do, therefore, renew the power and Commission granted for the Publick Affairs of the Kirk, by the Generall Assemblies held at Saint Andrews, 1642, and at Edinburgh, 1643, 1644, 1645, 1646, and 1647, unto the persons following, viz.: Masters John Lawder, Andrew Wood, David Calderwood, Robert Ker, John Mackghie, John Knox, John Sinclair, John Adamson, Robert Dowglas, George Gillespie, James Hamilton, Mungo Law, John Smith, Robert Lawrie, George Lesly, John Weir, Robert Eliot, Alexander Dickson, Patrick Fleeming, Thomas Vassie, Ephraim Melvill, Hew Kennedie, Kenneth Logie, Alexander Levistoun, George Bennet, David Weems, William Row, Robert Young, William Menzies, John Friebairne, John Givan, Harie Guthrie, Andrew Rind, David Auchterlony, Samuel Ousteen, Thomas Henderson, Charles Archibald, Andrew Lawder, John Leviston, John Macklellan, Alexander Turnbull, William Foulerton, George Hutcheson, John Genell, Patrick Colvill, James Ferguson, Hew Peebles, John Hamilton, Alexander Dunlope, David Ephiston, David Dickson, Robert Baillie, Robert Ramsay, Patrick Gillespie, Patrick Sharpe, James Nasmith, John Home, Evan Camron, Robert Blair, Samuel Rutherford, David Forret, Robert Traill, Andrew Bennett, Walther Greg, John Macgill, younger, John Moncreiff, Fredrick Carmichaell, John Chalmers, John Duncan, Andrew Donaldson, William Oliphant, George Simmer, Andrew Affleck, Arthur Granger, David Strachen, Andrew Cant, John Row, John Paterson, Alexander Cant, John Young, John Seaton, David Lindsay at Belhelvie, Nathaniel Martine, John Annand, William Falconer, Joseph Brodie, Alexander Summer, William Chalmer, Gilbert Anderson, David Rosse, George Gray, Robert Knox, William Penman, James Guthrie, Thomas Donaldson, William Jameson, Thomas Wilkie, James Ker, John Knox, Andrew Duncanson, *Ministers*; Archibald Marques of Argile, Alexander Earle of Eglintoun, John Earle of Cassils, William Earle of Lothian, Archibald Lord Angus, William Lord Borthwick, John Lord Torphichen, John Lord Balmerino, Robert Lord Burly, James Lord Couper, Lord Kildubright, Alexander Lord Elcho, Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston, Sir John Hope of Craighall, Arthur Erskin of Scotsraig, Sir John Moncreiff of that Ilk, Beaton of Creigh, Sir John Wauchhope of Nidrie, Sir Thomas Ruthven of Frieland, Sir George Maxwell of Netherpollock, Sir James Fraser of Brae, Sir James Hackact of Pitfirren, Sir William Carmichaell, younger of that Ilk, Walter Dundas, younger of that Ilk, Thomas Craigs of Ricarton, Mr George Wiurain of Liberton,

Sir Alexander Inglis of Ingliston, Alexander Brodie of that Ilk, Forbes of Eight, William Moore of Glanderston, John Ker of Lochtour, Alexander Pringill of Whitbank, Walther Scot of Whitslaid, John Craford of Crafordland, Sir John Chisly of Carswell, Robert Monroe of Obsteall, Cornwall of Bonhard, George Dundas of Dudington, Sir James Stewart of Kirkfield, Mr Alexander Colvill of Blair, Mr Alexander Peirson, Mr Robert Burnet, younger, Mr Thomas Murray, George Potterfield, Mr James Campbell, James Hamilton, Lawrence Henderson, Mr Robert Barclay, Mr William More, Dr William Glendoning, Dowglas, James Sword, Gideon Jack, Mr Dougall Campbell, John Boswall, John Brown, William Brown, Robert Brown, and William Russell, *Elders*; giving unto them full power and commission to do all and every thing for preservation of the established doctrine, discipline, worship, and government, of this Kirk, against all who shall endeavour to introduce any thing contrary thereunto; and for prosecuting, advancing, perfecting, and bringing the said work of uniformity in religion in all his Majestie's dominions to a happy conclusion, conform to the former commissions granted by preceding Assemblies thereanent; and to that effect, appoints them, or any seventeen of them, whereof thirteen shall be ministers, to meet here in this city to-morrow, the 12th of this moneth, and thereafter upon the last Wednesday of November, February, and May next, and upon any other day, and in any other place, they shall think fit. Renewing also, to the persons before named, the power contained in the act of the Assembly, 1643, intituled, "A Reference to the Commission anent the Persons designed to repair to the Kingdom of England." And, further, in case delinquents have no constant residence in any one Presbytery, or if Presbyteries be negligent or overawed, in these cases the Assembly gives to the persons before named such power of censuring compliers and persons disaffected to the Covenant, according to the Acts of the Assembly: declaring alwayes and providing, that ministers shall not be deposed but in one of the quarterly meetings of this commission; and, further, authorises them, as formerly, with full power to make supplications, remonstrances, declarations, and warnings—to indict fasts and thanksgivings as there shall be cause—to protest against all encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk—and to censure all such as interrupt this commission, or any other Church judicatory—or the execution of their censures—or of any other sentences or acts issuing from them; and with full power to them to treat and determine in the matters referred unto them by this Assembly, as fully and freely as if the same were here fully expressed, and with as ample power as any commission of any former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before: Declaring also, that all opposers of the authority of this commission in matters intrusted to them, shall be holden as opposers of the authority of the Generall Assembly; and this commission, in their whole proceedings, are comptable to and censurable by the next Generall Assembly.

Sess. 40, August 11, 1648, post meridiem.—Exemption of Murray, Rosse, and Caithnesse, from the Contribution granted to the Boyes of Argyle, with a Recommendation to Presbyteries to make up what is taken of them by that exemption.

Concerning the overture and desire of the Commissioners of the Presbyteries of Murray, Rosse, and Caithnesse, for an exemption from that contribution of fourty shillings, recommended for entertainment of the Irish boyes in Argyle; the Assembly, having considered thereof, and of their offer, in the name of the said Presbyteries, if that exemption be granted, do approve their offer; and, therefore, hereby exoner the said Presbyteries of the said contribution of fourty shillings toward the entertainment of the boyes in Argyle; and ordains, for that exemption, according to the offer of the said Commissioners, that each Presbyterie of the said provinces entertaine one of the Irish language at schooles; and if any be found already fit for colledges, they shall maintain them at philosophie, and so forward, untill they be fit for the ministry. And because, by this exemption, the contribution for the boyes in Argyle will be so much lessened, therefore, the Assembly recommends to all other Presbyteries to think upon some way, how, by the charitable supply, that may be made up unto them.

Act concerning Collection for the Poor.

The Assembly, understanding that the collections for the poor in some kirks in the country are taken in the time of divine service, which being a very great and unseemly disturbance of divine worship, do, therefore, hereby inhibit and discharge the same; and ordains that the minister and session appoint some other way and time for receiving the said collections.

Recommendation for securing Provisions to Ministers in Burghs.

In regard that the stipends of many ministers in burghs are not secured unto them and their successors; therefore, the Assembly do seriously recommend to the honourable Commission of Parliament for Planting of Kirks to provide reall and valide security of competent and honest meanes to the present ministers of burghs and their successors, where they are not sufficiently provided or secured already; ordaining Presbyteries to use all necessary diligence for prosecuting thereof before the said Commission for Planting Kirks.

The humble Supplication of the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, met at Edinburgh, August 12, unto the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

Albeit your Majesty, through the suggestions of evil men, may haply entertain hard thoughts of us and our proceedings, yet the Searcher of hearts knows, and our consciences bear record unto us, that we bear in our spirits these humble and dutifull respects to your Majesty that loyall subjects owe to their native Sovereigne, and that it would be one of our greatest contentments upon earth to see your Majesty reigning for the Lord, in righteousness and peace, over these nations: And, therefore, as we do bow our knees daily before the throne of grace on your behalf, and the behalf of your posterity, so we finde our selves, as heretofore, obliged faithfully and freely to warn your Majesty of your danger and dutie; wishing and hoping that the Lord will incline your royall heart, from the sence of the evil which hath befallen you through the slighting of former warning, to be more attentive unto this. We are very sensible of your Majesty's sufferings and low condition, and do not in the least measure approve, but from our hearts abhorre, any thing that hath been done to your Majesty's person, contrary to the common resolutions of both kingdoms: Yet it shall be your Majesty's wisdom in this, as in all that hath befallen you these years past, to read the righteous hand of the Lord, writing bitter things against you, as for all your provocations, so especially for resisting his work, and authorising by your commissions the shedding of the blood of his people, for which it is high time to repent, that there be no more wrath against you and your realms.

The commission of the preceding Assembly, whose proceedings are unanimously approved by this Assembly, having read your Majesty's letter of the date at Carisbrook Castle, December 27th, and perused your concessions, did finde some of these concessions destructive to the Covenant, and all of them unsatisfactorie; and did therefore emit a declaration concerning the same, least your Majesty's subjects in this kingdom should have unawares imbarcked themselves in an Engagement upon grounds not consisting with the good of religion, and the Solemn League and Covenant. For preventing whereof, they did also present most just and necessary desires unto the High and Honourable Court of Parliament of this kingdom; which, if they had been granted, might have, through the blessing of God, either procured (upon treaty) your Majesty's re-establishment and a solide peace, or laid open the expedience and necessity of a lawfull war, and have united this kingdom therein for the good of religion, of your Majesty, and of your kingdoms. When the Parliament was pleased, without satisfaction to any of these desires, to go on towards the determining of a war upon the grounds contained in their declaration, as many of their own members, who have been faithfull in the cause of God from the beginning, did dissent from their proceedings, so most of all the Presbyteries and Synods of this kingdom, and the committees of war in severall shires, did, by humble sup-

plication, represent to the Parliament how unsatisfied they were in their consciences concerning the present Engagement; notwithstanding of all which, the Engagement hath been carried on without clearing either of the lawfulness or necessity thereof. Therefore, we, having now examined the same by the rule of God's Word, and having found it unlawfull, as we have warned the whole kingdom of the danger thereof, so we hold it our duty also to warne your Majesty, as the servants of the Most High God, and in name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who must judge the quick and dead, earnestly beseeching your Majesty that as ye would not draw new guilt upon your Majesty's throne, and make these kingdoms again a field of blood, you would be far from owning or having any hand in this so unlawfull an Engagement, which, as it hath already been the cause of so much sorrow and many sufferings to the people of God in this land, who choose affliction rather than sin, so it tendeth to the undoing of the Covenant and work of reformation. As we do not oppose the restitution of your Majesty to the exercise of your royall power, so we must needs desire that that which is God's be given unto him in the first place, and that religion may be secured before the settling of any humane interest; being confident that this way is not only most for the honour of God, but also for your Majesty's honor and safety. And, therefore, as it was one of our desires to the High and Honourable Court of Parliament, that they would sollicite your Majesty for securing of religion, and establishing the Solemn League and Covenant in all your dominions, that your Majesty might know that what they intend on your behalf was with a subordination to religion; so we do now from our selves make this humble address unto your Majesty, intreating your Majesty, as you tender truth and peace, you would be pleased to suffer your self to be possessed with right thoughts of the League and Covenant, and of the proceedings of your Majesty's loyall subjects in relation thereunto, and give your royall assent for injoyning of it in all your dominions. If your Majesty had been pleased to hearken to our counsell hereanent some years ago, the blood of many thousands, which now lyes upon your Majesty's throne, might have been spared; Popery, Prelacy, idolatry, superstition, prophanesse, heresie, error, sects, and schismes, which are now grown to so great a height in England, might have been extirpate; and your Majesty sitting in peace in your own house, reigning over your subjects with much mutuall contentment and confidence. And if your Majesty shall yet search out and repent of all your secret and open sins, and after so many dear-bought experiences of the danger of evil counsell, be now so wise as to avoid it, and to hearken to us speaking unto you in the name of the Lord, we are confident by this means your Majesty may yet be restored, and a sure and firme peace procured. We take it as a great mercy, and as a door of hope, that God still inclines the hearts of all his servants to pray for your Majesty, and we would not have your Majesty to look upon it as a light thing, that you have been preserved alive, when many thousands have, by your means and procurement, fallen on your right hand and on your left hand. God forbid that your Majesty should any longer despise the word of exhortation, the riches of his goodnesse, forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leads you unto repentance; for if your Majesty do so, as we are afraid, all counsels and endeavours for your Majesty's re-establishment shall be in vain and without successe, because of the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, who brings down the mighty from his throne, and scatters the proud in the imaginations of their hearts; so we shall mourn in secret for it, and for all the miseries that are like to come upon your throne and your dominions, and comfort our selves in this, that we have delivered our own souls. But we desire to hope better things, and that your Majesty will humble your self under the mighty hand of God, and be inclined to hearken to the faithfull advise of his servants, be willing to secure religion, and imploy your royall power for advancing the Kingdom of the Son of God, which will turn as well to the honour and happinesse of your Majesty, as to the peace and safety of your subjects.

Sess. Ult. August 12, 1648.—Act Discharging Duels.

The Generall Assembly, taking in consideration the many duels and combats that have been fought, and challenges that have been made, and carried and received, in this land of late; and, being sensible of the exceeding great offence that comes by so horrible and hainous a sin, which is a grosse preferring of the supposed credit of the creature unto the honour of the Most High God, and an usurpation upon the office of the magistrate, by private men's taking of the sword, and a high degree of murther both of body and soul, by shedding the blood of the one, and cutting off the other from time of repenting, and which doth ordinarily produce many wofull consequents; therefore, doth enact and ordain, that all persons, of whatsoever quality, who shall either fight duels, or make, or write, or receive, or with their knowledge carry challenges, or go to the fields, either as principals or as seconds, to fight duels and combats, that they shall, without respect of persons, be processed with the censures of the Kirk, and brought before the congregation two severall Lord's dayes; in the first whereof, they are sharply to be rebuked and convinced of the hainousnesse of their sin and offence; and on the next, to make a solemn publick confession thereof, and profession of their unfained humiliation and repentance for the same. And if the person guilty of any of the former offences be an elder or deacon, he is to be removed from his office; and whatsoever person, guilty of any of these offences, shall refuse to give obedience according to the tenour of this act, shall be processed to excommunication: Declaring always, that if any be killed at such duels, the killer shall be proceeded against by the Kirk as other murtherers.

Act concerning Deposed Ministers.

The Assembly, considering that divers ministers deposed for Malignancy, and complying with the enemies of this Kirk and cause of God, may be suited by, and hope to get entry in some congregation where a minister deposed for Malignancy hath been, and may be supposed to have put on the people a stamp and impression of Malignancy, and being by the act of the Generall Assembly, in *anno* 1645, past all hope of being restored to the place out of whilk he was cast; now also ordains and enacts, that no minister deposed for Malignancy and compliance foresaid, (when it shall fall out that he be put in a capacity of admission to the ministry,) shall enter into the congregation of any other minister who also hath been deposed for Malignancy and compliance, as said is.

The General Assembly not having now time to consider the references of preceding Assemblies, and the most part of Presbyteries not having sent their opinions in writ; therefore, do yet again recommend to Presbyteries and Provinciaill Assemblies to consider all matters referred by this or by any former Assemblies, and to send their opinions therein in writ to the next Generall Assembly.

The meeting of the next Generall Assembly is hereby appointed to be at Edinburgh, the first Wednesday of July 1649.

A. KER.

THE PRINCIPALL ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AT
EDINBURGH, JULY 7, 1649.

Sess. 4, July 7, 1649, ante meridiem.—Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of the General Assembly.

The Generall Assembly, having heard the report of the committee appointed for revising the proceedings of the commissioners of the preceding Assembly; and find-

ing thereby that in all their proceedings they have been zealous, diligent, and faithfull, in the discharge of the trust committed to them; do, therefore, unanimously approve and ratifie the whole proceedings, acts, and conclusions, of the said commission; appointing Mr John Bell, Moderator, *pro tempore*, to return them heartie thanks, in the name of the Assembly, for their great pains, travail, and fidelity.

Sess. 6, July 10, 1649, ante meridiem.—Approbation of the Commissioners sent to his Majesty.

The Generall Assembly, having taken in serious consideration the report of the travells and proceedings of the commissioners sent to his Majesty, presented by them this day, together with the commission and instructions which were given unto them; do finde, by the report, that they have been very diligent and faithfull in the discharge of the trust committed to them; and, therefore, do unanimously approve of their carriage, and return them hearty thanks for their great pains and travails in that employment.

Sess. 18, July 19, 1649, post meridiem.—Act discharging Promiscuous Dancing.

The Assembly, finding the scandall and abuse that arises thorow promiscuous dancing; do, therefore, inhibit and discharge the same, and do referre the censure thereof to severall Presbyteries, earnestly recommending it to their care and diligence.

Sess. 19, July 20, 1649, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the receiving of Engagers in the late unlawfull War against England to publick satisfaction, together with the Declaration and Acknowledgment to be subscribed by them.

The Generall Assembly, considering what great offence against God, and scandal to his people at home and abroad, hath arisen from the late unlawfull Engagement in war against England, whereby, contrary to the law of God and of nations—contrary to the Solemn League and Covenant—contrary to the petitions of almost the whole kingdom—contrary to the Declarations of the Judicatories of this Kirk—contrary to the protestations of a considerable part of the Parliament—contrary to the frequent and clear warnings of the servants of God in his name, not only an association in counsels and arms was made with malignant persons, who had formerly shewn their disaffection to the Covenant and cause, but an invasion of the neighbour nation was prosecuted; from whence flowed the oppression of the persons, estates, and consciences of many of the people of God in this land, the shedding of the blood of some, the losse and dishonour of this nation, and severall other inconveniences: And considering that the Commissioners of the last Generall Assembly have acquitted themselves faithfully, in ordaining to be suspended from the renewing of the Covenant, and from the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, such as are designed in their acts of date the 6th of October, and 4th of December last, referring the further consideration and censure of the persons foresaid to this present Generall Assembly: Therefore, the Generall Assembly, for removing of such offences, and for prevention of the like in time coming, and for restoring of such as are truly humbled, do declare and appoint,—

I. That all those who have been guilty and censured as aforesaid, and withal do not, by their addresses to kirk judicatories, testifie their dislike thereof, and give evidences of their repentance therefor, that these be processed, and continuing obstinate, be excommunicated; but if withall they go on in promoting malignant designes, that they be forthwith excommunicated; as also, that all such persons guilty as aforesaid, who, after profession of their repentance, shall yet again hereafter relapse to the promoting any malignant designe, that these be likewise forthwith excommunicated.

II. That all these who have been guilty and censured as aforesaid, and desire to testifie their repentance, and to be admitted to the Covenant and Communion, shall, besides any confession in publick before the congregation, subscribe the declaration hereto subjoyned, of their unfained detestation and renunciation of that Engagement,

and all other malignant courses contrary to the Covenant and cause, promising to keep themselves from such ways in time coming, and acknowledging, that if they shall again fall into such defection thereafter, they may justly be accounted perfidious backsliders, and breakers of the Covenant and Oath of God, and proceeded against with the highest censures of the Kirk.

III. That of these who have been guilty and censured as aforesaid, and desire now to testify their repentance, whosoever were formerly joyned in arms or counsell with James Graham in his rebellion, or who were generall persons or colonels in the late unlawfull Engagement, or who went to Ireland to bring over forces for that effect, or who have been eminently active in contriving of, or seducing unto the said Engagement, or whosoever above the degree of a lieutenant commanded these parties, that in promoting of the ends of the said Engagement shed blood within the kingdom, either before that army of Engagers went to England, or after their return, or who above the degree foresaid commanded in the late rebellion in the North; that none of these be admitted or received to give satisfaction, but by the Generall Assembly or their commissioners.

IV. That all the rest of these who have been guilty, or censured as aforesaid, may be received by the Presbyteries where they reside.

V. That all who have been guilty as aforesaid, before their receiving to the Covenant, shall make a solemn publick acknowledgement in such matter, and before such congregations as the Commission of the Generall Assembly or Presbyteries *respectively*, shall prescribe, according to the degree of their offence and scandal given.

VI. That none of the foresaid persons be admitted or received as elders in any judicatories of the Kirk, but according to the Act of the Generall Assembly of the last of August 1647, against compliers of the first classe.

And because many have heretofore made shew and profession of their repentance, who were not convinced of their guiltinesse, nor humbled for the same, but did thereafter return with the dog to the vomit, and with the sow to the puddle, unto the mocking of God, and the exceeding great reproach and detriment of his cause: Therefore, for the better determining the truth and sincerity of the repentance of those who desire to be admitted to the Covenant and Communion, it is appointed and ordained, that none of those persons who are debarred from the Covenant and Communion shall be admitted and received thereto, but such as, after exact triall, shall be found, for some competent time before or after the offer of their repentance, according to the discretion of the respective judicatories, to have in their ordinary conversations given real testimony of their dislike of the late unlawfull Engagement, and of the courses and wayes of Malignants, and of their sorrow for their accession to the same, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly; and if any shall be found, who, after the defeating of the Engagers have uttered any malignant speeches, tending to the approbation of the late unlawfull Engagement, or the blood shed within the kingdome, for promoting of the ends of the said Engagement—or any other projects or practises within or without the kingdome, prejudiciall to religion and the Covenant, or tending to the reproach of the ministry or the civill government of the kingdom—or who have unnecessarily or ordinarily conversed with malignant and disaffected persons—or who have had hand in, or accession to, or compliance with, or have any wayes countenanced or promoted any malignant design, prejudiciall to religion and the Covenant: That these, notwithstanding their profession of repentance, be not suddenly received, but a competent time, according to the discretion of the judicatory, be assigned to them for tryall of the evidence of their repentance, according to the qualifications above mentioned. And the Generall Assembly ordains Presbyteries to make intimation of this act in the severall kirks of their bounds, so soon as they can after the rising of the Generall Assembly, that none pretend ignorance; and that Presbyteries make accompt of their diligence in prosecuting of this act to the quarterly meetings of the commission of this Assembly.

The Declaration and Acknowledgement before mentioned.

I, _____ after due consideration of the late warre against the kingdom of England, and having also considered the course pursued and promoted by the

Earle of Lanerk, George Monro, and their adherents in and about Stirling, and by others in the late rebellion in the North, against all which, not only eminent testimonies of God's wrath have been given in defeating of them, but they were in themselves sinfull breaches of Covenant, and preferring the interest of man unto God; I doe, herefore, in God's sight professe that I am convinced of the unlawfulness of all these ways, as contrary to the Word of God and to the Solemn League and Covenant, not only in regard of the miscarriages of these that were employed therein, but also in respect of the nature of these courses themselves; and, therefore, professing my unfained sorrow for my guiltinesse by my accession to the same, doe renounce and disclaim the foresaid Engagement, and all the courses that were used for carrying on the same, either before or after the defeat of the Engagers, as contrary to the Word of God and Solemn League and Covenant, and destructive to religion and the work of reformation; and I doe promise, in the power of the Lord's strength, never again to own any of these or the like courses. And if hereafter at any time I shall be found to promote any malignant design or course, that I shall justly be accompted a perfidious Covenant-breaker and despiser of the oath of God, and be proceeded against with the highest censures of the Kirk. Likeas I doe hereby promise to adhere to the National Covenant of this kingdome, and to the Solemn League and Covenant betwixt the kingdomes, and to be honest and zealous for promoving all the ends thereof, as I shall be called thereunto of God, and to flee all occasions and temptations that may lead me into any the like snares against the same. Subscribed at
the day of .

Sess. 23, July 24, 1649, post meridiem.—To the High and Honourable Court of Parliament.

The Generall Assembly, Humbly Sheweth,

That, whereas we have seen and considered the act of Parliament abolishing patronages, and doe highly commend the piety and zeal of the Estates of Parliament in promoving so necessary a point of reformation; the Generall Assembly do humbly supplicate, that, beside the settling of the ministers' stipends, that the tythes mentioned in the said act may be affected with the burthen of pious uses within the respective paroches, conform to a draught of an act seen by the Commissioners of the late General Assembly before it passed in Parliament; and that the foresaid act may be made effectuell for the settling of ministers' stipends in kirks erected, and necessary to be erected according to the tenour of the act of Parliament; and, for this effect, that your Lordships will hasten the sitting of the commission for Plantation of Kirks, with all convenient diligence, and your Lordships' answer.

Sess. 27, July 27, 1649, ante meridiem.—A seasonable and necessary Warning and Declaration, concerning present and imminent Dangers, and concerning Duties relating thereto, from the General Assembly of this Kirk unto all the Members thereof.

The Lord, who chooses Jerusalem in a furnace of affliction, hath been pleased, since the beginning of the work of reformation in this land, to exercise his people with many trialls. All that desired to keep a good conscience were not long ago under many heavy and sad pressures from the insolency and oppression of a prevailing party of disaffected and malignant men, who, under a pretext of bringing the King to a condition of honour, freedom, and safety, did carry on an unlawful Engagement against the kingdom of England; and if the Lord had not been mercifull unto his people, they were like either to have been banished out of the land, or to have been kept in a perpetuall bondage in their consciences, persons, and estates. But he whose messengers those men had mocked, and whose word they had despised, did bring them down suddenly in a day, and restored liberty and peace unto his people,—a mercy and deliverance, which, as it ought to be remembered with thankfulness and praise, so may it engage our hearts not to faint in troubles and straites that do yet abide us, but to trust in the name of the Lord, who both can and will deliver us still out of all our afflictions.

Albeit we do now enjoy many rich and precious blessings, wherein we have reason to be comforted, and to rejoyce; yet it were to shut our own eyes if we should not see our selves involved in and threatned with many and great dangers at home and from abroad. It is matter of exceeding great sorrow to think upon the ignorance and profanity, the impenitencie and security, that abounds still in the land, notwithstanding all the gracious dispensation of the Gospel, and means of grace in such purity and plenty, that none of the nations round about us can boast of the like, and of all the long-suffering patience of the Lord, and of all his sharp rods wherewith he hath afflicted us from year to year, and of all the mercies and deliverances wherewith he hath visited us, and of our late solemn confession of sinnes, and engagement unto duties, sealed with the renewing of the Covenant and the oath of God, which some men have so far already forgotten, as to return with the dog to the vomit, and with the sow to the puddle: And many signes of inconstancy and levity do appear among all sorts and ranks of persons, who seem to want nothing but a suitable temptation to draw them away from their steadfastnesse; our army is not yet sufficiently purged, but there be still in it malignant and scandalous men, whose fidelity and constancy as it is much to be doubted, so is the wrath of the Lord to be feared upon their proceedings and undertakings, without a speedy and effectually remedy.

That prevailing party of sectaries in England, who have broken the Covenant and despised the oath of God, corrupted the truth, subverted the fundamentall government by King and Parliament, and taken away the King's life, look upon us with an evill eye, as upon these who stand in the way of their monstrous and new-fangled devices in religion and government; and though there were no cause to fear any thing from that party but the gangrene and infection of those many damnable and abominable errors which have taken hold on them, yet our vicinity unto and daily commerce with that nation, may justly make us afraid that the Lord may give up many in this land unto a spirit of delusion to believe lies, because they have not received the love of the truth.

Neither is the Malignant party so far broken and brought low, as that they have abandoned all hopes of carrying on their former designs against the Covenant and work of reformation. Beside many of them in this kingdom, who are as foxes tied in chains, keeping their evill nature, and waiting an opportunity to break their cords, and again to prey upon the Lord's people, there be standing armies in Ireland, under the command of the Marquesse of Ormond, the Lord Inchqueen, the Lord of Airds, and George Munro, who, forgetting all the horrible cruelty that was exercised by the Irish rebels upon many thousands of the English and Scottish nations in that land, have entred into a peace and association with them, that they may the more easily carry on the old designs of the Popish, Prelaticall, and Malignant party; and the Lord of Airds and George Munro have, by treachery and oppression, brought the Province of Ulster and garrisons therein under their power and command, and have redacted our countrymen, and such as adhere unto the Covenant and cause of God in that province, unto many miseries and straits, and are like to banish the ministers of the Gospell, and to overturn these faire beginnings of the work of God, which were unto many a branch of hope, that the Lord meant to make Ireland a pleasant land.

But which is more grievous unto us then all these, our King, notwithstanding of the Lord's hand against his father's opposition to the work of God, and of the many sad and dolefull consequences that followed thereupon, in reference to religion and his subjects, and to his person and government, doth hearken unto the counsels of these who were authors of these miseries to his royall father and his kingdoms, by which it hath come to passe that his Majesty hath hitherto refused to grant the just and necessary desires of this Kirk and kingdom, which were tendred unto him from the Commissioners of both for securing of religion, the liberties of the subject, his Majesty's government, and the peace of the kingdome; and it is much to be feared that those wicked counsellours may so farre prevaile upon him in his tender yeers, as to engage him in a warre for overturning (if it be possible) of the work of God, and bearing down all those in the three kingdoms that adhere thereto, which if he shall doe, cannot but bring great wrath from the Lord upon himself and his throne, and must be the cause of many new and great miseries and calamities to these lands.

It concerns a nation thus sinfull and loaden with iniquity, and involved in so many difficulties and dangers, by timous repentance and unfained humiliation to draw near to God, and to wrestle with him in prayer and supplication, that our sin may be pardoned, and our iniquity done away; and that he would establish the land in the love of the truth, and inable every one in their station to do their duty boldly and without fear, and in a humble dependance upon the Lord, in whom alone is the salvation of his people. Every man ought, with all faithfulness and diligence, to make use of all these means that are approven and allowed of God, for preserving and carrying on of his work, and for securing and guarding the land against all enemies whatsoever, both upon the right hand and upon the left.

The spirit of error and delusion in our neighbour land, in the policie of Satan, hath veiled it self in many under the mask of holinesse, and is, in the righteous and wise dispensation of God, armed with power, and attended with successe; therefore, all the inhabitants of this land would labour for more knowledge and more love of the truth, without which they may easily be deceived, and led into tentation, and would learn to distinguish betwixt the shew and power of godlinesse. We know that there be many in England who be truly godly, and mourn with us for all the errors and abominations that are in that land; but it is without controverisie, that that spirit which hath acted in the courses and counsels of these who have retarded and obstructed the work of God, despised the Covenant, forced the Parliament, murdered the King, changed the civill government, and established so vast a toleration in religion, cannot be the spirit of righteousness and holinesse, because it teaches not men to live godly and righteously, but draws them aside into error, and makes them to bring forth the bitter fruits of impiety and iniquity, and therefore ought to be avoided. And not only are such of our nation as travel in our neighbour land to take heed unto themselves, that they receive not infection from such as are leavened with error, but these also who live at home, especially in those places where sectaries, upon pretext of merchandise, and other civill imployments, ordinarily traffique and converse. Neither needs any man to be afraid of the power and successe of that party. They who have gadded about so much to change their way shall ere long be ashamed; the Lord hath rejected their confidences, and they shall not prosper in them. How farre they may proceed in their resolutions and actings against this kingdome, is in the hand of the Most High. If the Lord shall suffer that party to invade this land, it may be the comfort and encouragement of all the inhabitants thereof, that not only hath that unlawfull Engagement against the kingdom of England been declared against and condemned both by Kirk and State, but also that these men can pretend no quarrell against us, unlesse it be that we have adhered unto the Solemn League and Covenant, from which they have so foully revolted and backslidden; and that we have borne testimony against toleration, and their proceedings in reference to religion and government, and the taking away of the King's life. And, therefore, we trust, that in such a case none will be so farre deficient in their duty, as not to defend themselves against such unjust violence, and, in the strength of the Lord, to adhere unto their former principles with much boldnes of spirit and willingness of heart. In this certainly we shall have a good conscience, and the Lord shall be with us.

We are not so to have the one of our eyes upon the Sectaries, as not to hold the other upon the Malignants, they being an enemy more numerous, and no lesse subtle and powerfull nor the other, and at this time more dangerous unto us, not only because experience hath proven that there is a greater aptitude and inclination in these of our land to comply with Malignants then sectaries, in that they carry on their wicked designs under a pretext of being for the King; but also, because there be many of them in our own bowels, and for that they doe pretend to be for maintenance of the King's person and authority, and (which is the matter of our grief) because the King owens their principles and wayes; which, if it be not taken heed unto, may prove a great snare, and dangerous tentation to many to side with them against the Lord's people and his cause. The constant tenour of the carriage of these in this land who stand for the cause of God, are undeniable arguments of their affection to monarchy, and to that royal family and line which hath swayed the scepter of

this kingdom for many hundreds of yeers past. Albeit his Majesty who lately reigned refused to harken to their just desires, yet did they, with much patience and moderation of mind, supplicate and sollicite his Majesty for satisfaction in these things that concern religion and the Covenant, and were still willing, that upon satisfaction given, he should be admitted to the exercise of his power; and, whatsoever envie and malice objects to the contrary, were carefull to get assurance concerning the safety of his Majesty's person, when they brought their army out of England; and when, notwithstanding of that assurance, the prevailing party of sectaries were acting for his life, did, to the utmost of their power, endeavour by their commissioners that there might have been no such proceeding; and when their desires and endeavours were not successfull, did protest and bear testimony against the same. And, as both Kirk and State had testified their tender respect to his Majesty who now reigns, by their letters written to him whilst his father was yet living, so, no sooner did the Parliament heare of his father's death, but they did, with all solemnity, proclaim him King of these kingdoms; and after they had acquainted his Majesty by messages with their proceedings herein, commissioners were sent both from State and Kirk, instructed with power and commission to expresse the affection of this kingdome to monarchy, and his Majesty's person and government, together with their desires concerning the security of religion, and the peace of those kingdoms. And albeit the desires of both, which are now published to the world, with his Majesty's answers thereto, are such as are most just and necessary, yet the counsels of the Malignant party had so great influence upon his Majesty, that his answers are not only not satisfactory, but short of that which was many times granted by his royall father, and cannot be acquiesced unto, unlesse we would abandon the League and Covenant, and betray religion and the cause of God.

We hold it the duty of all who live in this land to wrestle with God in the behalfe of the King, that he may be recovered out of the snare of evill counsell, and brought to give satisfaction to the publick desires of Kirk and State; and in their places and stations, to use all endeavours with himselfe and others for that effect, and to be willing, upon satisfaction given, to admit him to the exercise of his power, and cheerfully to obey him in all things, according to the will of God and the lawes of the kingdom, and to do every thing that tends to the preservation of his Majesty's person, and just greatnesse and authority, in the defence and preservation of the true religion and liberties of the kingdomes.

But if his Majesty, or any having or pretending power and commission from him, shall invade this kingdom, upon pretext of establishing him in the exercise of his royall power, as it will be an high provocation against God to be accessory or assisting thereto, so will it be a necessary duty to resist and oppose the same. We know that many are so forgetfull of the oath of God, and ignorant and careless of the interest of Jesus Christ and the Gospel, and doe so little tender that which concerns his kingdom and the privileges thereof, and do so much dote upon absolute and arbitrary government for gaining their own ends, and so much maligne the instruments of the work of reformation, that they would admit his Majesty to the exercise of his royall power upon any termes whatsoever, though with never so much prejudice to religion, and the liberties of these kingdomes, and would think it quarrell enough to make war upon all those who for conscience sake cannot condescend thereto. But we desire all these who fear the Lord, and mind to keep their Covenant, impartially to consider these things which follows:—

1. That as magistrates and their power is ordained of God, so are they, in the exercise thereof, not to walk according to their owne will, but according to the law of equity and righteousness, as being the ministers of God for the safety of his people; therefore, a boundles and illimited power is to be acknowledged in no king nor magistrate; neither is our King to be admitted to the exercise of his power as long as he refuses to walk in the administration of the same, according to this rule, and the established laws of the kingdom, that his subjects may live under him a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlinesse and honestie.

2. There is ane mutuall obligation and stipulation betwixt the King and his people; as both of them are tied to God, so each of them are tied one to another, for the perform-

ance of mutuall and reciprocal duties. According to this, it is statute and ordained in the 8th Act of the 1st Parliament of King James the Sixth, "That all kings, princes, or magistrates whatsoever, halding their place, which hereafter shall happen in any time to reign and beare rule over this realm, at the time of their coronation, and receipt of their princely authority, make their faithfull promise by oath in the presence of the eternall God, that, during the whole course of their lives, they shall serve the same eternall God to the utmost of his power, according as he hath required in his most holy Word, contained in the Old and New Testament; and according to the same Word, shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus—the preaching of his most holy Word—and due and right ministration of his sacraments, now received and preached within this realm—and shall abolish and gainstand all false religion, contrary to the same—and shall rule the people committed to their charge according to the will and command of God, revealed in his Word, and according to the lovable lawes and constitutions received within this realm—and shall procure, to the utmost of their power, to the Kirk of God and the whole Christian people, true and perfect peace in all time coming, and that justice and equity be kepted to all creatures without exception." Which oath was sworn, first by King James the Sixth, and afterwards by King Charles at his coronation, and is inserted in our Nationall Covenant, which was approved by the king who lately reigned. As long, therefore, as his Majesty who now reignes refuses to hearken to the just and necessary desires of State and Kirk, propounded to his Majesty for the security of religion and safety of his people, and to engage and oblige himself for the performance of his duty to his people, it is consonant to Scripture and reason, and the laws of the kingdom, that they should refuse to admit him to the exercise of his government, untill he give satisfaction in these things.

3. In the League and Covenant which hath been so solemnly sworn and renewed by this kingdom, the dutie of defending and preserving the King's Majesty's person and authority is joyned with, and subordinat unto, the dutie of preserving and defending the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms; and, therefore, his Majesty standing in opposition to the just and necessary publick desires, concerning religion and liberties, it were a manifest breach of Covenant, and a preferring of the King's interest to the interest of Jesus Christ, to bring him to the exercise of his royal power, which he, walking in a contrary way, and being compassed about with malignant counsels, cannot but employ unto the prejudice and ruin of both.

4. Was not an arbitrary government and unlimited power the fountains of most of all the corruptions both in Kirk and State? And was it not a restraint of this, and for their own just defence against tyranny and unjust violence, which ordinarily is the fruit and effect of such a power, that the Lord's people did joyn in Covenant, and have been at the expense of so much blood, pains, and treasure these yeers past? And if his Majesty should be admitted to the exercise of his government before satisfaction given, were it not to put in his hand that arbitrary power, which we have upon just and necessary grounds been so long withstanding, and so to abandon our former principles, and betray our cause?

5. The King being averse from the work of reformation and the instruments thereof, and compassed about with malignant and disaffected men, whom he hearkens unto as his most faithfull counsellors, and looks upon as his best and most loyall subjects, we leave it to all indifferent men to judge, whether his Majesty, being admitted to the exercise of his power before satisfaction given, would not by such counsells endeavour an overturning of the things which God hath wrought amongst us, and labour to draw publick administrations concerning religion and the liberties of the subject, unto that course and channell in which they did run under Prelacie, and before the work of reformation; which we have the more cause to fear, because his royall father did so often declare that he conceived himself bound to employ all the power that God should put in his hands, to the utmost, for these ends; and that he adheres as yet to his father's principles, and walkes in his way, and hath made a peace with the Irish rebels, by which is granted unto them the full liberty of Popery.

6. It is no strange nor new thing for kingdoms to preserve religion and themselves from ruine, by putting restraint upon the exercise of the power and government of

those who have refused to grant those things that were necessary for the good of religion and the people's safety. There have been many precedents of it in this and other nations, of old and of late. Upon these and other important considerations, it shall be the wisdom of every one who dwell in the land to take heed of such a temptation and snare, that they be not accessory to any such designs or endeavours, as they would not bring upon themselves and upon their families the guilt of all the detriment that will undoubtedly follow thereupon to religion and the Covenant, and of all the miseries and calamities that it will bring upon his Majesty's person and throne, and upon these kingdoms. Such a thing would in all appearance be the undermining and shaking, if not the overthrowing and destroying, of the work of reformation; and, therefore, whosoever attempt the same, oppose themselves to the cause of God, and will at last dash against the rock of the Lord's power, which hath broken in pieces many high and lofty ones, since the beginning of this work in these kingdoms—and it is unto us a sure word of promise, that whosoever shall associate themselves, or take counsell together, or gird themselves against God and his work, shall be broken in pieces.

It is not only joyning in armes with the Malignant partie, that all these who would keep their integritie has need to beware of, but also subtile devices and designs, that are promoted by fair pretexts and perswasions to draw men to dispense at least with some part of these necessarie desires that are propounded to his Majesty for securing of religion. After many turnings and devices, the foundation of the unlawfull Engagement was at last laid by his Majesty's concessions in the year 1648. Wherein, though many things seemed to be granted, yet that was denied without which religion and the union betwixt the kingdoms could not have been secured; and it is probable that such a way may be assayed again, and prosecuted with very much cunning and skill, to deceive and ensnare the simple. It doth therefore concern all ranks and conditions of persons to be the more warie and circumspect, especially in that which concerns the Nationall Covenant, and the Solemn League and Covenant, that before his Majesty be admitted to the exercise of his royall power, that, by and attour the oath of coronation, he shall assure and declare by his solemn oath, under his hand and seal, his allowance of the Nationall Covenant, and of the Solemn League and Covenant, and obligation to prosecute the ends thereof in his station and calling; and that he shall, for himself and his successours, consent and agree to Acts of Parliament injoyning the Solemn League and Covenant, and fully establishing Presbyteriall government, the Directory of Worship, the Confession of Faith and Catechisme, as they are approved by the Generall Assembly of this Kirk, and Parliament of this kingdom, in all his Majesty's dominions; and that he shall observe these in his own practise and familie, and that he shall never make opposition to any of these, nor endeavour any change thereof. Albeit the League and Covenant be despised by that prevailing party in England, and the work of uniformity, thorow the retardments and obstructions that have come in the way, be almost forgotten by these kingdoms, yet the obligation of that Covenant is perpetuall, and all the duties contained therein are constantly to be minded, and prosecuted by every one of us and our posterity, according to their place and stations. And, therefore, we are no lesse zealously to endeavour that his Majesty may establish and swear, and subscribe the same, than if it were unanimously regarded and stuck unto by all the kingdom of England; for his Majesty swearing and subscribing the League and Covenant will much contribute for the security of religion, his Majesty's happinesse, and the peace of his kingdoms.

As it is incumbent to all who live in this Kirk and kingdom to be watchful and circumspect, so it concerns these of the High and Honourable Court of Parliament and their Committees, in a special way, to see to their duty, and to be straight and resolute in the performance of the same. Their former proceedings is unto us a sufficient evidence and ground of hope, that they will not be wanting in any necessary testimony of dutie and loyalty that they owe to the King, by using all just and seasonable endeavours for obtaining satisfaction of his Majesty, that so he may be established upon his thrones. And we trust, that, upon the other hand, the sense of their obligation to God, and his oath that is upon them, will make them constantly

to adhere to their former principles, resolutions, and desires, concerning religion and the Covenant, that reall satisfaction may be had thereanent, before the King be put in the exercise of his power; and that they will carefully provide for the safety of the kingdom, both in regard of intestine dangers, and in regard of invasion from without. It is not long since they, together with the rest of the land, made solemn publick confession of compliance with Malignants, carnall confidence, following of self interests, and hearkening to the counsell of flesh and blood, and did in a speciall way engage themselves to comply and seek themselves and their own things no more, to abandon the counsels of their own hearts, and not to rely upon the arm of flesh, and to purge judicatories and armies from profane and scandalous persons; and God forbid that they should so soon forget or neglect so necessary duties, and fall again into so great and grievous transgressions. We trust that they will seek the things of Christ, and not their own things—that they will hearken to his word, and not walk in the imaginations of their own hearts—that they will rely upon the arm of the Lord, and not upon the arm of flesh—that they will be wary and circumspect in discerning the dispositions and affections of those whom they put in trust; and that, seeing this kingdom hath so much smarted, and been so often deceived by compliance with Malignants, they will carefully avoid this snare, in regard of those who were upon the former unlawfull Engagement, and be tender in bringing in of such; and we cannot but exhort them, in the name of the Lord, to take notice of the oppression of the people and commons in the land, by the lawlesse exactions of landlords, collectours, and souldiers. We do not justifie the murmurings and grudgings of those, who, preferring the things of the world to the Gospel and things of Jesus Christ, repine at necessary burthens, without which it is not possible that the land can be secured from invasion without, and insurrection within, or the cause and people of God be defended from enemies. It is the duty of every one who hath taken the Covenant willingly, and with a cheerfull minde, to bestow their means and their pains as they shall be called thereunto, in an orderly way. Yet should these to whom God hath committed the government take care that they be not needlessly burthened, and that none grind their faces by oppression, not only by making of lawes against the same, but by searching out of the cause of the poor, and by executing these lawes timously upon these that oppresse them, that they may find real redresse of their just grievances and complaints, and be encouraged to bear those burthens which cannot be avoided.

As the Parliament have begun, so we hope they will continue, to purge out all these from trust that are not of known integrity and affection to the cause of God, and of a blamelesse and Christian conversation, and that they and the officers of the army, in their respective places, will seriously mind, and speedily and resolutely goe about the removing from the army all malignant and scandalous persons, and also the removing of sectaries when any shall be found therein, that they may give real evidence that they did not deal deceitfully with God, in the day that they engaged themselves thereto.

Albeit we hope and pray that those who beare charge in our army will, from the remembrance of the Lord's goodnesse to them, and the honour that he hath put upon them, endeavour to carry themselves faithfully and straightly; yet it cannot be unseasonable to warn them to take heed of tentations, and to beware of snares that they be not drawn to indifferencie or neutrality in the cause of God, much lesse unto connivance at or compliance with the courses and designes of Malignants or Sectaries, but to stick closely by the same, and to be zealous against all the enemies and adversaries thereof: And it concerns souldiers to be content with their wages, and to doe violence to no man, but as they are called unto the defence of the cause and people of God, so to behave themselves in such a blamelesse and Christian way, that their carriage may be a testimony to his cause, and a comfort to his people. So shall our armies prosper, and the Lord shall goe out with them.

But most of all, it concerns the ministers of the Gospel, whom God hath called to give warning to his people, to look to their duty. It is undeniably true, that many of the evils wherewith this Kirk and kingdome hath been afflicted in our age, have come to passe because of the negligence of some, and corruptions of others, of the ministry.

Whilst some fell asleep, and were carelesse, and others were covetous and ambitious, the evil man brought in Prelacy and the ceremonies, and had farre promoted the Service-Book, and the Book of Cannon, and the course of backsliding and revolting was carried on, untill it pleased God to stirre up the spirits of these few who stood in the gap to oppose and resist the same, and to begin the work of reformation in the land. Since which time, the silence of some ministers, and compliance of others, hath had great influence upon the backsliding of many amongst the people, who, upon the discovery of the evil of their way, complain that they got not warning, or that if they were warned by some, others held their peace, or did justifie them in the course of their backsliding. We can look upon such ministers no otherwise than upon those that are guilty of the blood of the Lord's people, and with whom the Lord will reckon for all the breach of Covenant and defection that hath been in the land. The priest's lips should preserve knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But such are departed out of the way, and hath caused many to stumble at the law; therefore hath the Lord made them contemptible and base before all the people, according as they have not kept his wayes, but have been partiall in his law. Because they have lost their savour, he hath cast out many of them as unsavoury salt; but such as have been faithfull, as he hath preserved them from the violence and fury of men, so hath he verified his word in their mouths, both against his enemies, and concerning his people and his work; and makes them see, though not all their desires concerning the Gospel, and the work of God in the land, yet very much of the fruit of their labour, by preserving the doctrine and all the ordinances of Jesus Christ in their purity, and adding in some measure thereto the power and life thereof. We doe, therefore, charge all the ministers of the land, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing in his kingdom, as in every thing to be ensamples of a good conversation, and to walk without offence, that the ministry be not blamed, so to take heed unto the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers—to declare unto them all the counsell of God, and to give them timous warning concerning every danger and duty—and to hold forth unto them the solid grounds of reall consolation, by which they may be encouraged and comforted in all their trials and afflictions, that they may be free of the blood of all men, and have this as a ground of rejoicing, even the testimony of their consciences, that in simplicity and godly purenesse, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, they have had their conversation in the world, and have exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one committed unto them, as a father doth his children. Especially, ministers are to be careful to be much in discovering the temptations, and pressing the duties of the times, that these who are under their charge may know what to avoid, and what to embrace and pursue. If all the watchmen in the land shall give warning, and blow the trumpet at once, it shall not be easie for enemies to prey upon the people of God. We know no cause why any whom God hath called to preach the Gospel should be afraid to speak boldly in the name of the Lord, since God hath given so manifest a testimony of his care and protection, in preserving them, these yeers past, who have striven to be faithfull to him who hath called them, from all the fury and malice of haters of the work of God, and of the kingdom of his Sonne Jesus Christ, who hath promised to be with his servants unto the end of the world.

Albeit the land be involved in many difficulties, and compassed about with great and imminent dangers, yet there is hope and ground of consolation concerning this thing. The Lord is in the midst of us, and we are called by his name;—our eares hear the joyfull sound of the Gospel, and our eyes see our teachers;—we behold the arm of the Lord stretched out daily in working salvation for his people, and answering their desires upon their enemies by terrible things in righteousness. Although we be but few in number, yet the Lord of Hosts is with us, and in the power of his strength we shall be able to prevaile;—although our land be filled with sin, yet we have not been forsaken of the Lord our God, but he hath alwayes had compassion upon us, and delivered us in all our distresses;—although some of understanding fall, it is but to try, and to purge, and to make white, even to the end, because it is yet for a time appointed:—although many cleave to us by flatteries, yet there be a

remnant who keep their integrity, and the Lord shall doe good to these that be good ; but such as turn aside to crooked wayes shall be led forth with the workers of iniquity.

The Lord's people in England and Ireland, who adhere to the cause and Covenant, may be perplexed, but shall not despair ; they may be persecuted, but shall not be forsaken ; they may be cast down, but shall not be destroyed ; and although uniformity, and the work of reformation in these lands, seem not only to be retarded, but almost pluckt up by the roots, and the foundations thereof razed ; yet the seed which the Lord hath sown there shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. "The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall performe this."

Sess. 30, July 30, 1649, ante meridiem.—Act concerning Catechising.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their serious consideration the great darknesse and ignorance wherein a great part of this kingdom lyeth, together with the late solemn engagement to use all means for remedy thereof, doe ordaine every minister, with assistance of the elders of their severall kirk-sessions, to take course, that in every house where there is any who can read, there be at least one copie of the Shorter and Larger Catechisme, Confession of Faith, and Directorie for Family Worship. And doe renew the Act of the Assemblie, August 30, 1639, for a day of weeklie catechising, to be constantly observed in every kirk ; and that every minister so order their catechetick questions, as thereby the people (who doe not convene all at one time, but by turns, unto that exercise) may at every dyet have the chief heads of Saving Knowledge, in a short view, presented unto them. And the Assembly considering that, notwithstanding of their former act, these dyets of weekly catechising are much slighted and neglected by many ministers throughout this kingdome, doe, therefore, appoint and ordaine every Presbytery to take triall of all the ministers within their bounds, once at least in the halfe year, whither they be carefull to keep weekly dyets of catechising ; and if they shall finde any of their number negligent herein, they shall admonish for the first fault, and if after such admonition they shall not amend, the Presbytery for the second fault shall rebuke them sharply, and if after such rebuke they doe not yet amend, they shall be suspended.

Sess. 40, August 4, 1649, ante meridiem.—Commission for Publick Affaires.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary it is for preservation of religion in this kingdom, and prosecution of the work of uniformity in all his Majesty's dominions, that the Commissions formerly granted to that effect be renewed ; therefore, they doe renew the power and Commission granted for the Publick Affaires of the Kirk, by the Generall Assemblies, held in St Andrews, 1642, and at Edinburgh, 1643, 1644, 1645, 1646, 1647, and 1648, unto the persons following, viz., Masters Alexander Rollock, John Murray, Thomas Lundie, John Freebairne, George Murray, Harie Livingston, William Macjore, Hew Henderson, Samuel Austine, Gavin Young, David Laing, William Maxwell, John Macceleland, James Erving, Robert Ferguson, John Scot, Thomas Wylie, Hew Eccles, John Bell, John Nevoy, William Guthrie, John Hammiltoun, Hew Peebles, Alexander Dunlope, Harie Semple, David Dickson, Patrick Gillespie, James Durham, Robert Baillie, William Hammiltoun, Francis Aird, James Nasmith, Richard Inglis, William Summervail, Evan Cameron, Robert Blair, Samuel Rutherford, James Wood, John Macgill, elder, Alexander Balfoure, William Row, John Moncreife, Fredrick Carmichaell, Harie Wilke, William Oliphant, George Pitillo, John Robeson, James Thomsone, William Rate, David Campbell, Andro Cant, John Menzies, Andro Abercromby, Robert Sheyn, William Forbes, John Paterson, Duncan Forbes, William Chalmers, John Annand, William Falconer, Murdoch Mackenzie, Robert Jameson, Gilbert Marshall, John Dallase, William Smyth, Robert Hume, Thomas Swintoun, James Stratoun, John Douglas, James Guthrie, Thomas Donaldson, William Jameson, John Livingstoun, John Scot, Andro Dunkeson, John Dalzell, Arthur Forbes, James Fleming, James Robison, Hew Campbel, Robert Douglass, Mungo Law, George Leslie, John Adamson, James Hammiltoun, John Smyth, Hew Mackell, George Hutchison, Patrick Fleming, John Hay, Ephraim Melvill, John Row, Gilbert Hall, George Bennet, Kenneth Logie,

John Craford, *Ministers*; Archibald Marquesse of Argyle, Earle of Sutherland, Alexander Earle of Eglintoun, John Earle of Cassills, William Earle of Lothian, the Viscount of Arbuthnet, Daniel Lord Elcho, Lord Brichen, Robert Lord Burly, James Lord Couper, Sir Archibald Johnstoun of Waristoun, Clerk-Register, Sir Daniel Carmichael, Thesaurer-Depute, Sir John Hope of Craighall, Mr George Winraham of Libbertoun, Mr Alexander Person of Southhal, A. Brodie of that ilk, four of the Ordinary Lords of the Session, Arthur Erskene of Scotsrage, Laird of Wauchtoun, Sir David Hume of Wedderburne, Laird of Edzell, Laird of Nidrie, Sir William Scot of Harden, Laird of Greenheid, Laird of Freeland, Laird of Cesnock, Sir James Stewart of Kirkfield, the Laird of Swintoun, younger, Laird of Eight, Sir James Fraser, Sir Thomas Ker, Laird of Fernie, Sir Robert Adair, Sheriff of Tiviotdail, younger, Tutor of Pitsligo, Sir John Chiesly, Laird of Englistoun, Laird of Leslie, younger, Laird of Dunbeth, Laird of Watertoun, Sir John Smyth, Mr Alexander Colvill of Blair, Whitbank, younger, Laird of Grenock, Galloshields, younger, Buchchantie, Crachlaw, Cloberhil, Dalsersfe, Mr Robert Burnet, younger, Mr Thomas Murray, James Eleis, David Kennedie, Alexander Jaffray, James Sword, George Porterfeild, Mr Robert Barclay, Hew Kennedey, William Glendoning, Thomas Macbirnie, Robert Lockart, Mr James Campbel, John Carsane, John Boswel, Dr Alexander Douglass, Mr Alexander Skeen, William Brown, *Elders*; giving unto them full power and commission to do all and every thing for preservation of the established doctrine, discipline, worship, and government in this Kirk, against all who shall endeavour to introduce any thing contrarie thereunto; and for prosecuting, advancing, perfecting, and bringing the works of uniformitie in religion in all his Majesty's dominions to a happy conclusion, conform to the former commissions granted by preceding Assemblies thereanent.

And, to that effect, appoints them, or any nineteen of them, whereof thirteen shall be ministers, to meet in the citie to-morrow, the 7th of this instant, and thereafter, upon the second Wednesday of November, February, and May next, and upon any other day, and in any other place, they shall think fit; giving also unto them full power to send commissioners to the kingdom of England, for prosecuting the treatie of uniformitie, as they shall find conveniencie, and to give instructions and commissions to that effect, conform to former commissions granted thereanent: And likewise, in case delinquents have no constant residence in any one Presbytery, or if Presbyteries be negligent or overawed, in these cases the Assembly gives to the persons before named power of censuring compliers and persons disaffected to the Covenant, according to the acts of the Assembly; declaring alwayes and providing, that ministers shall not be deposed but in one of the quarterlie meetings of the Commission: And further, authorizes them, as formerlie, with full power to make supplication, remonstrances, declarations, and warnings, to indict fasts and thanksgivings as there shall be cause, to protest against all encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk, and to censure all such as interrupt this Commission or any other Church judicatorie, or the execution of their censures, or of any other sentences or acts issuing from them; and with full power to them to treat and determine in the matters referred unto them by this Assemblie, as fullie and freelie as if the same were here fully expressed, and with as ample power as any Commission of any former Generall Assemblies hath had or been in use of before: Declaring also, that all opposers of the authoritie of this Commission in matters intrusted to them, shall be holden as opposers of the authoritie of the Generall Assemblie, and this Commission in their whole proceedings are comptable to and censurable by the next Generall Assemblie.

Directory for Election of Ministers.

When any place of the ministrie in a congregation is vacant, it is incumbent to the Presbytery with all diligence to send one of their number to preach to that congregation, who, in his doctrine, is to represent to them the necessitie of providing the place with a qualified pastor, and to exhort them to fervent prayer and supplication to the Lord, that he would send them a pastor according to his own heart; as also, he is to signifie that the Presbytery, out of their care of that flock, will send unto

them preachers whom they may hear ; and if they desire to hear any other, they will endeavour to procure them an hearing of that person or persons upon the sute of the elders to the Presbytery.

2. Within some competent time thereafter, the Presbytery is again to send one or more of their number to the said vacant congregation, on a certain day appoynted before for that effect, who are to convene and hear sermon the foresaid day, which being ended, and intimation being made by the minister that they are to goe about the election of a pastor for that congregation, the session of the congregation shall meet and proceed to the election, the action being moderated by him that preached ; and if the people shall, upon the intimation of the person agreed upon by the session, acquiesce and consent to the said person, then the matter being reported to the Presbytery by commissioners sent from the session, they are to proceed to the triall of the person thus elected, and, finding him qualified, to admit him to the ministry in the said congregation.

3. But if it happen that the major part of the congregation dissent from the person agreed upon by the session, in that case the matter shall be brought unto the Presbytery, who shall judge of the same ; and if they doe not find their dissent to be grounded on causelesse prejudices, they are to appoynt a new election in manner above specified.

4. But if a lesser party of the session or congregation shew their dissent from the election without exceptions relevant and verified to the Presbytery, notwithstanding thereof, the Presbytery shall go on to the trials and ordination of the person elected ; yet all possible diligence and tendernesse must be used to bring all parties to an harmonious agreement.

5. It is to be understood that no person under the censure of the Kirk, because of any scandalous offence, is to be admitted to have hand in the election of a minister.

6. Where the congregation is disaffected and malignant, in that case the Presbytery is to provide them with a minister.

*Sess. ult. Aug. 6, 1649, ante meridiem.—A Brotherly Exhortation from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to their Brethren in England.**

The many and great obligations which lie upon us in reference to our brethren in England, who hold fast their integrity, and adhere to the Solemn League and Covenant, together with the desire which we have to testifie our sympathie with them in their afflictions, and to preserve, so far as in us lieth, that fellowship and correspondence that hath been entertained betwixt the Church of Scotland and England these years past, do call upon us and constrain us not to be silent in this day of their trouble and distress.

Albeit the Lord (who hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem) hath now for a long time past afflicted these kingdoms with many and sharp rods, and that his wrath seems not yet to be turned away, but his hand stretched out still ; yet in all this it becomes us, who live in these lands, to stop our mouthes, neither can any impute iniquity to the Most High.

It is rather a wonder that any mercy should be continued, and that England and Scotland are not cut off from being nations, seeing the backslidings and provocations of both has been so many and so grosse. Although the Solemn League and Covenant was sworne and subscribed by both, yet have many in both despised the oath of God, as appears by the late unlawfull Engagement against the kingdom of England, contrived and carried on by a prevailing party of Malignants in this land, and by the proceedings of the sectaries in England, in reference to religion and government.

We shall not insist upon what hath been the condition and carriage of the Lord's people in this land, in reference to the late unlawfull Engagement. As we desire to magnifie the power and loveing kindnesse of the Lord, who enabled all the judicatures of this Church, and a considerable part of the Parliament, and the body of the land, to dissent from, and bear testimony against the same, which made the House of Commons, in their Letter directed to the last General Assembly, or their commissioners, to declare that that Engagement could not be looked on as a nationall breach ;

* Baillie says, that the draught of this exhortation " was Mr James Durham's ; it did not so fully please as to pass, but was referred to the Commission to perfect."—*Ed.* 1843.

so we look upon it as a wonder of his wisdom and mercy, that he hath disposed and directed the same for the furtherance of his work in our hand, and purging his house amongst us. All this cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderfull in counsel and excellent in working. Neither was it the least part of the Lord's goodness to us in that day of our strait, that we were led in a plain path, and kept from compliance with Sectaries on the one hand, no less than with Malignants on the other. We have obtained this mercy to be steadfast to our old principles, in bearing free and faithfull testimony against their proceedings, both in reference to toleration and government, and the taking away of the King's life.

And as the danger and judgment which threatens the authors and abettors of these things doth affect our spirits with horror, and maketh us desire that it may be given to them of God to repent; so we should conceive ourselves void of Christian affection and compassion toward those in England, who suffer for the truth and cause of God, if we were not very sensible of all their present troubles and calamities. It is no small grief to us that the Gospel and government of Jesus Christ are so despised in that land, that faithfull preachers are persecuted and cryed down, that toleration is established by pretext of law, and maintained by military power, and that the Covenant is abolished, and buried in oblivion. All which proceedings cannot but be looked upon as directly contrary to the oath of God lying upon us, and therefore cannot eschew his wrath when he shall come in judgement, "to be a swift witness against those that swear falsly by his name."

These things are the more grievous to us, because (beside many other wofull evils brought forth by them) they have interrupted the building of the Lord's house in England; the foundation whereof was laid by oath and Covenant with the Most High God, and followed for some years with many declarations and protestations of faithfull adhering thereto, and with great expense of blood and treasure; which things were to all the godly in these nations a branch of hope that the Lord would bring to perfection the work of uniformity (so far advanced in all the parts thereof) in these three kingdoms.

But the great obstructions and sad interruptions that have been made therein, by the strange and unexpected practises of many now in place and power in England, are to all the well-affected in both kingdoms, and in all the churches abroad, the matter of their sorrow and humiliation. And if there be any place left for admonition, we warn such as have forgotten the Covenant, and despised the oath of God, and turned aside to lies and error, to consider whence they are fallen, and to repent. Prosperity and success for a time are no warrantable evidences of a good cause, nor sufficient guards against the wrath of God. It is no good use of the Lord's mercy for such men, under pretext of liberty, to make both themselves and others slaves to corruption, and to make all men, both in Church and State, like the fishes of the sea, or the creeping things, that have no ruler over them. Are these things according to the Word of God, and the pattern of the best reformed churches? Or is that the endeavour to bring the three kingdoms to the nearest uniformity that may be in doctrine, worship, government, and discipline? Or is that the maintaining of the union betwixt the three kingdoms, when the straitest bond thereof is utterly dissolved and quite taken away, and the fundamentall government, by King and Parliament, wholly overturned? The just God, who is of pure eyes, beholds these things; and shall with no lesse fury and indignation break the horn of these men, than he hath broken the power, and brought down the pride of Malignants before them, if repentance prevent not.

Amidst those fears and griefes, it is unto us matter of rejoycing, that there be many in England who mourn for all these abominations, and labour to keep their garments pure, by refusing to comply with that course of backsliding, and by bearing testimony against the same. And we hope the expectation of such shall not be disappointed, but that the Lord will open to them a doore of hope for carrying on of his work, and making the lying spirit to passe out of that land.

And albeit many think no otherwise of the Covenant and work of reformation than as a mean to further their own ends; yet we are confident that none who hold fast their integrity have so learned Christ, but are carefull to make con-

science of the oath of God lying on them; and we are sure (whatever be the base thoughts and expressions of backsliders from the Covenant) it wants not many to own it in these kingdomes, who (being called thereto) would seale the same with their blood.

Although there were none in the one kingdome who did adhere to the Covenant, yet thereby were not the other kingdome, nor any person in either of them, absolved from the bond thereof, since in it we have not only sworne by the Lord, but also covenanted with him. It is not the failing of one or more that can absolve others from their duty or tye to him; besides, the duties therein contained, being in themselves lawfull, and the grounds of our tye thereunto moral, though others do forget their duty, yet doth not their defection free us from that obligation which lyes upon us by the Covenant, in our places and stations. And the Covenant being intended and entered into by these kingdoms, as one of the best means of stedfastnesse for guarding against declining times, it were strange to say that the backsliding of any should absolve others from the tye thereof, especially seeing our engagement therein is not only nationall, but also personall, every one with uplifted hands swearing by himselfe, as it is evident by the tennor of the Covenant.

From these, and other important reasons, it may appear that all these kingdomes joyning together to abolish that oath by law, yet could they not dispense therewith; much lesse can any one of them, or any part in either of them, doe the same. The dispensing with oathes hath hitherto beene abhorred as Antichristian, and never practised and avowed by any but by that man of sin; therefore, those who take the same upon them, as they joyn with him in his sin, so must they expect to partake of his plagues.

As we shall ever (God willing) be mindfull of our duty to the faithfull that adhere to the Covenant in England, having them alwayes in our hearts before the Lord, so we desire to be refreshed with their singlenesse and boldnesse in the cause of God, according to their places. This is the time of their triall, and the houre of tentation among them. Blessed shall they be who shall be found following the Lamb, and shall not be ashamed of his testimony. We know in such dark houres many are drawne away with the multitude, whom the Lord will againe purge and make white; and we doubt not but many such are in England, whom the bold and clear preaching of Christ may reclaim. Much, therefore, lieth upon the watchmen at this time, that their trumpet may give a certain and distinct sound, warning and exhorting every one, as those that must give account. And blessed shall those servants be, who shall be found faithfull in their Lord's house, distributing to his houshold what is meet for this season, and can say they are free of the blood of all men, having shewn them the whole counsell of God, being in nothing terrified of the threats of their adversaries. And blessed and happy shall that people be that walk in the light holden forth by them, and staye upon the Lord in this dark time, harkning to the voyce of his servants, and walking in the light of his Word, and not in the sparks of their owne kindlings, which will end in sorrow. How inexcusable will England be, having so foulie revolted against so many faire testimonies which the Lord Christ hath entred as protestations, to preserve his right in these ends of the earth, long since given unto him for his possession, and of late confirmed by solemne Covenant. Christ's right to these kingdomes is surer than that he should be pleaded out of it by pretended liberty of conscience, and his begun possession is more precious to him than to be satisfied with a dishonourable toleration. All that yet we have seen doth not weaken our confidence of the Lord's glorifying the house of his glory in these lands, and of his Son's taking unto him his great power, and reigning in the beauty and power of his ordinances in this island. His name is Wonderfull, and so also are his workes; we ought not therefore to square them according to our line, but leave them to him who hath the government laid upon his shoulder, all whose wayes are judgement, and whose ruling these kingdoms had never yet reason to decline. It is good for us to be stedfast in our duty, and therein quietly to wait and hope for the salvation of God. The word of promise is sure, (and hath an appointed time,) that "he that will come, shall come, and will not tarry." There is none hath cause to distrust the Lord's word to his people; it hath often, to our experience, been tryed in the

fire, and hath ever come forth with a more glorious lustre. Let not, therefore, these that suffer in England cast away their confidence: they are not the first who have needed patience after that they had done the Lord's will; but let them strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and say to the fearfull in heart, "Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence: he will come and save you." Now the just shall live by faith, whereas these that draw back, or become lukewarm in the Lord's work, his soul shall abhorre them, and he shall spue them out of his mouth. But we perswade ourselves of better things of these our brethren in England, and pray that the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, may make them perfect in every good work to doe his will, working in them, that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Act for a Collection for entertaining Highland Boyes at Schooles.

The Generall Assembly, considering that the contribution of fourty shillings, for entertaining of Highland boyes at schools, in respect of the penury and great indigence of those parts, hath not taken the intended effect; therefore, in respect of the necessity and profitableness of so pious a work, the Assembly, in lieu of the said fourty shillings, do appoint and ordain that there be an extraordinary collection at the kirk doors for that use one Sabbath in the year; and to that effect, that a certain Sabbath yearly be appointed and designed, whereupon that collection shall be gathered, intimation being made by the minister the Sabbath before to prepare for such a collection, and the necessity and usefulness thereof being laid out to the people for that end. And if the collection in any little private congregation shall be lesse then fourty shillings, the session shall make up what wants of fourty shillings; and where the collection is more, it is hereby specially inhibited and discharged that any part thereof be retained or interverted to any other use whatsoever: And these collections shall be sent to the persons formerly appointed to receive the fourty shillings, that they may see the right distribution and employment thereof; recommending to Presbyteries to see this punctually performed, and accompt thereof shall be craved at Synods and Generall Assemblies. It is alwayes to be remembred that the congregations exeemed from the fourty shillings are also exeemed from this collection.

Commission for a Conference of Ministers, Lawyers, and Physitians, concerning the Tryal and Punishment of Witchcraft, Charming, and Consulting.

The Generall Assembly, taking to their serious consideration the growth of the sins of witchcraft, charming, and consulting, notwithstanding the frequent recommendations for restraining thereof, and remembring that the Generall Assembly, 1647, did propose a good way for the tryall and punishment of these sinnes, by appointing conferences with some ministers, lawyers, and physitians in that matter, which hath never yet taken effect; therefore, the Assembly doth appoint Masters Robert Dowglas, Robert Blair, Mungo Law, James Hammilton, John Smith, Robert Traill, George Leslie, John Hamilton, John Duncan, Samuel Rutherford, James Wood, John Leviston, James Guthrie, Andro Cant, David Calderwood, John Moncreiff, Frederick Carmichael, James Durhame, Patrick Gillespie, Robert Ker, Ephraim Melvill, ministers, to consider seriously of that matter, and to consult and advise therein amongst themselves, as also with Sir Archbald Johnston of Wariston, Clerk-Register, Mr Thomas Nicolson, his Majesty's Advocate, Mr Alexander Pierson, one of the Ordinary Lords of Session, Sir Lewes Stewart, Mr Alexander Colvill, and Mr James Robertson, Justice-Deputes, Masters Rodger Mowet, John Gilmoir, and John Nisbet, lawyers; and with Doctors Sibbald, Cunninghame, and Purves, physitians, severally or together, as occasion shall offer. And the Assembly earnestly requests, and confidently expects, from these learned and judicious lawyers and physitians beforenamed, their best endeavours and concurrence with their brethren of the ministrie, for advise

and counsell herein, and for conference in the said matter; and ordaine the said brethren to make report of the result of their consultations and conferences from time to time, as they make any considerable progresse, to the Commission for Publick Affaires; and the said Commission shall make report to the next Generall Assembly.

Recommendation for Maintenance of Schoolmasters and Precenters.

The Generall Assembly doe humbly recommend to the Parliament or Committee for Plantation of Churches, that whatever, either in paroches of burghs or landwart, was formerly given to the maintenance of these who were readers-precentors in congregations, and teachers of schooles, before the establishing of the Directory for Publick Worship, may not be, in whole or in part, alienat or taken away, but be reserved for the maintenance of sufficient schoolmasters and precentors, who are to be approved by the Presbytery; and Presbyteries are hereby required to see that none of that maintenance given to the foresaid uses, or in use to be payed thereunto, before the establishing of the Directory of Worship, be drawn away from the Church.

Act concerning Persons to be admitted Bursars.

The Assembly doe hereby ordaine, that none be sent to universities from Presbyteries, nor be admitted as bursars of divinitie, but pious youths, and such as are known to be of good expectation and approved abilities.

Reference to the Commission for Publick Affaires, for re-examining the Paraphrase of the Psalmes, and emitting the same for publicke use.

The Generall Assembly, having taken some view of the new Paraphrase of the Psalmes in meeter, with the corrections and animadversions thereupon, sent from severall persons and Presbyteries, and finding that they cannot overtake the review and examination of the whole in this Assembly; therefore, now, after so much time and so great paines about the correcting and examining thereof, from time to time some yeares bygone, that the worke may come now to some conclusion, they do ordain the brethren appointed for perusing the same during the meeting of this Assembly, viz., Masters James Hammiltoun, John Smith, Hew Mackail, Robert Traill, George Hutcheson, and Robert Lowrie, after the dissolving of this Assembly to goe on in that worke carefully, and to report their travels to the Commission of the Generall Assembly for Publick Affaires, at their meeting at Edinburgh in November; and the said Commission, after perusall and re-examination thereof, is hereby authorized with full power to conclude and establish the Paraphrase, and to publish and emit the same for publick use.

Letter to the King's Majesty.

Most gracious Sovereigne,

We, your Majesty's most humble and loyall subjects, the commissioners from all the Presbyteries in this your Majesty's ancient kingdome, and members of this present Nationall Assembly, having expected to finde at our meeting a gracious and satisfactory returne to those humble representations made to your Majesty at the Hague, by the commissioners of this Kirk, cannot but expresse our great sorrow and grieffe, that your Majesty's goodnes has been so far abused, as that not only the just and necessary desires presented by them to your Majesty, which so much concerne the glory of God, your owne honours and happinesse, the peace and safety of your kingdomes, are utterly frustrated, as we perceive by the paper delivered in answer to them; but also this Assembly hath not received so much as any signification by letter of your Majesty's minde; which princely condescension had not wont to be wanting in your royall father to former Generall Assemblies, even in times of greatest

distance. Our witnesse is in heaven, and record on high, that we are not conscious to ourselves of any undutifull thought or disloyall affection, that might have procured this at your Majesty's hands; and that, as we doe from our hearts abominate and detest that horrid fact of the sectaries against the life of your royall father, our late soveraigne, so it is the unfained and earnest desire of our soules, that the ancient monarchicall government of these kingdoms may be established and flourish in your Majesty's person all the dayes of your life, and be continued in your royall family, which, by divine Providence, hath, without interruption, reigned over us and our predecessors for so many generations, since the time that we were a kingdom; and that there is nothing under the glory of God, and cause of our Lord Jesus Christ, for which we doe more heartily sollicite the throne of grace, or would more readily expose unto hazard all that is deare to us in the world, than for this. And now, though this very great discouragement might incline us to hold our peace at this time, yet the tendernesse and uprightness of our affection and love to your Majesty's happiness, (which many waters cannot quench,) together with the conscience of our duty which our Lord and Master has laid upon us, in this our place and station, constraineth us, yea, and your Majesty's owne goodnesse and gracious disposition, whereof the late commissioners have given us so large a testimony, doth much encourage us, to renew our addresses to your Majesty in this humble, faithfull representation, both of the great and growing dangers to your royall person and throne, and of these duties which the Lord of Lords and King of Kings call for from you, as you would look to finde favour in his eyes, and to be delivered out of your deepe distresses.

Our hearts are filled with fears and troubles in your Majesty's behalf, when we look upon the sad calamities which have been already produced by such wayes and courses, as we perceive your Majesty is entred, and in danger to be further led away into, by the prevalency of evill counsell upon your tender age; particularly, your refusing to give satisfaction to the just and necessary desires of the people of God, for advancing the work of reformation of religion, and establishing and securing the same in your Majesty's dominions, which is nothing else but to oppose the kingdome of the Sonne of God, by whom kings doe reign, and to refuse that he should reign over you and your kingdomes in his pure ordinances of Church government and worship—your cleaving unto these men as your trustiest counsellors, who, as they have never had the glory of God, nor good of his people, before their eyes, so now, in all their wayes and counsels, are seeking nothing but their owne interests, to the hazard of the utter subversion of your throne, the ruine of your royall family, and the desolation of your kingdomes—your owning the practises, and entertaining the person of that flagitious man, and most justly excommunicate rebell, James Graham, who has exercised such horrid cruelty upon your best subjects in this kingdom, which cannot but bring upon your throne the guiltinesse of all the innocent blood shed by him and his complices—and, above all, that, which we cannot think upon without trembling of heart and horreur of spirit, your settling of late such a peace with the Irish Papists, the murderers of so many thousands of your Protestant subjects, whereby not only they are owned as your good and loyall subjects, but also there is granted unto them (contrary to the standing lawes of your royall progenitors, contrary to the commandment of the Most High God, and to the high contempt and dishonor of his Majesty, and evident danger of the Protestant religion) a full liberty of their abominable idolatry; which cannot be otherwise judged, but a giving of your royall power and strength unto the Beast, and an accession to all that blood of your good subjects wherewith those sonnes of Babell have made that land to swim.

We do, in all humility, beseech your Majesty to consider and lay to heart what the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken of all the attempts of people, nations, kings, and rulers, against the kingdom of his Son, that they imagine a vaine thing, and that he that sitteth in heaven will have them in derision, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Consider how he hath blasted and turned upside downe these yeares bypast, all the devices and plots of those men that now beare the sway in your Majesty's counsels—consider how the anger of God has been kindled, even against his dearest saints when they have joyned themselves

to such men as he hateth and has cursed ;—consider how severely he hath threatned and punished such kings as have associate with idolaters, and leaned unto their helps. Surely great is the wrath of God, whereof you are in danger ; and yet the Lord, in the riches of his goodnesse, forbearance, and long-suffering, is waiting to be gracious to your Majesty. To-day, if ye will heare his voice, harden not your heart ; but humble your self under the mighty hand of God, lamenting after him as for the iniquities of your father's house, especially the opposition against the reformation of religion and cause of God, the permitting and practising antichristian idolatry in the royall family itself, and the shedding of so much blood of the people of God, so also, for your owne entering to walke in the like courses in the beginning of your reign. It is high time to fall downe before the throne of grace, seeking to get your peace made with God through Jesus Christ, whose blood is able to wash away all your sins—to walk no longer in the counsell of the ungodly, nor cleave to such as seeke their own things and not the things of Jesus Christ, nor the welfare of your subjects and government—but to set your eyes upon the faithfull in your dominions, that such may dwell with you, and be the men of your counsell—to serve the Lord in feare, and kisse the Sonne of God, by a sincere and cordiall contributing your royall allowance and authority for establishing in all your dominions the reformation of religion, in doctrine, worship, and government, as it is now agreed upon, according to the cleare and evident warrant of the Word of God, by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and the Generall Assemblies of this Church ; and also, laying aside that Service-Book, which is so stuffed with Romish corruptions, and conforming your owne practise, and the worship of God in your royall family, to that Gospel simplicity and purity which is holden forth from the Word of God in the Directory of Worship ; and not only to grant your royall approbation to the Covenant of these three kingdomes, (without which your people can never have from you sufficient security, either for religion or their just liberties,) but also your selfe to joyne with your people therein as the greatest security, under heaven, for your person and just greatness, and to cause all of them stand to it by your royall command, according to the practise of that gracious King Josiah, to whom we wish your Majesty in these your younger yeares, and this beginning of your reign, to look as to an ensample and kingly portraict approven of God. These things if your Majesty do, as we are well assured that the hearts of all your good subjects in these kingdomes will be enlarged with all cheerfulness to embrace your person, and submit unto your royall government, so we darre promise, in the name of our Lord, that you shall finde favour with God, peace, and joy unspeakable and full of glory to your soule, and deliverance out of your sad afflictions and deep distresses in due time ; but if your Majesty shall go on in refusing to hearken to wholesome counsells, we must, for the discharge of our conscience, tell your Majesty, in the humility and griefe of our hearts, that the Lord's anger is not turned away, but his hand stretched out still against you and your family. But we hope, and shall with all earnestnesse and constancy pray for better things from and to your Majesty. And whatsoever misconstruction (by the malice of those that desire not a right understanding and cordiall conjunction between your Majesty and this Kirk and kingdome) may be put upon our declaration, yet we have the Lord to be our witnesse, that our purpose and intention therein is no other but to warne and keepe the people of God committed to our care, that they runne not to any course which would bring upon themselves the guilt of highest perjury and breach of covenant with God, and could not but prove most dangerous to your Majesty and your government, and involve you in shedding the blood of those who are most desirous to preserve your Majesty's person and just right in all your dominions. And now, we doe, with all earnestnesse, beseech your Majesty that you will follow the courses of truth and peace ; and that when there is a doore opened for your Majesty to enter to your royall government over us in peace, with the favour of God, and cordiall love and embracings of all your good subjects, you will not suffer your selfe to be so farre abused and misled by the counsells of men, who delight in war, as to take a way of violence and blood, which cannot but provoke the Most High against your Majesty, and alienat from you the hearts of your best subjects, who desire nothing more than

that your Majesty may have a long and happy reign over them, and that they may live under you a peaceable and quiet life, in all godlinesse and honestie.

Your Majesty's most loyall subjects and humble servants, the Ministers and Elders convened in this National Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland.

Edinburgh, August 6, 1649.

Presbyteries and Provincial Assemblies recommended to consider Matters referred to them.

The Generall Assembly, not having now time to consider the references of preceding Assemblies, and the most part of Presbyteries not having sent their opinions in writ; therefore, do yet againe recommend to Presbyteries and Provinciaill Assemblies to consider all matters referred by this or by any former Assemblies, and to send their opinions therein in writ to the next Generall Assembly.

The meeting of the next Generall Assembly is hereby appointed to be at Edinburgh, the second Wednesday of July, 1650.

A. KER.

[The General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the second Wednesday of July 1650, according to the appointment of the Assembly preceding, but none of the Acts thereof have been printed.

The Assembly again met at St Andrews, July 1651, and, after sitting for a few days, adjourned to Dundee, in consequence of the arrival of Cromwell's army in Fife. At Dundee, however, the Assembly continued its sittings for three days only. Intelligence having been received that the enemy was marching towards Perth, the business was brought to an abrupt conclusion, and the members obliged immediately to disperse.

Another Assembly met at Edinburgh in July 1652, but against the lawfulness of this, as also of the Assembly of 1651, protestation was taken by several ministers, elders, and professors. Several documents connected with these two Assemblies are to be found in the Wodrow MSS. A small tract, entitled "Three Acts of the General Assembly, for promoting the Knowledge of the Grounds of Salvation, and observing the Rules of Discipline," was published in 1652, and will be reprinted in an Appendix to the present work.

An Assembly met at Edinburgh, July 20, 1653, concerning which, Mr Baillie thus writes to his friend Mr Calamy, minister at London:—"On the 20th of July last, when our Generall Assemblie wes sett in the ordinarie tyme and place, Lieutenant-Colonell Cotterall besett the Church with some rattes of musquetiers and a troupe of horse; himself (after our fast, wherein Mr Dickson and Mr Dowglass had two gracious sermons) entered the Assemblie-house, and, immediately after Mr Dickson the Moderator his prayer, required audience; wherein he inquired, If we did sitt there by the authority of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England? or of the Commanders-in-Chiefe of the English forces? or of the English Judges in Scotland? The Moderator replied, That we were ane ecclesiasticall Synod, ane spirituall court of Jesus Christ, which medled not with any thing civile; that our authoritie wes from God, and established by the lawes of the land yet standing unrepealed; that, by the Solemn League and Covenant, the most of the English army stood obliedged to defend our Generall Assemblie. When some speeches of this kind had passed, the Lieutenant-Colonell told us, his order wes to dissolve us; whereupon he commanded all of us to follow him, else he would drag us out of the rowme. When he had entered a protestation of this unheard-of and unexampled violence, we did ryse and follow him; he led us all through the whole streets a myle out of the towne, encompassing us with foot-companies of musqueteirs, and horsemen without; all the people gazing and mourning as at the saddest spectacle they had ever seen. When he had ledd us a myle without the towne, he then declared what further he had in commission, that we should not dare to meet any more above three in number; and that against eight o'clock to-morrow, we should depart the towne, under paine of being guiltie of breaking the publick peace: And the day following, by sound of trumpet, we were commanded off towne under the paine of present imprisonment. Thus our Generall Assemblie, the glory and strength of our Church upon earth, is, by your souldiarie, crushed and trod under foot, without the least provocatione from us, at this time, either in word or deed. For this our hearts are sadd, our eyes runn downe with water, we sigh to God against whom we have sinned, and wait for the help of his hand; bot from those who oppressed us we deserved no evil."

It was again attempted to have an Assembly at Edinburgh in July 1654, but before it was constituted, the commander-in-chief o. Cromwell's army gave orders to his soldiers to break it up.—*Ed. 1843.*]

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, OCTOBER 16, 1690, AND ENDING THE 13th DAY
OF NOVEMBER NEXT THEREAFTER.

I

Sess. 1, October 16, 1690, post meridiem.—The Meeting of the General Assembly, and the recording of their Majesties' Commission to John Lord Carmichael, for representing their Majesties therein.

This day, being a day of solemn fasting and humiliation, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this Church did, after sermons, (in the forenoon by Mr Gabriel Cuninghame, Moderator of the last General Meeting, and in the afternoon by Mr Patrick Sympson, Moderator of the preceding General Meeting,) convene in the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, according to the indiction of an act of the current Parliament, dated the 7th day of June last, and directions given by the late General Meeting of the ministers and elders of this Church; and after prayer, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, their Majesties' commission for his being their Majesties' High Commissioner and Representative to this General Assembly, dated at Kensington, the 10th day of October 1690, which was with all due respect publicly read; and Mr Gabriel Cuninghame, Moderator for the time, did, in the Assembly's name, represent to his Grace how great a mercy it was to this Church and kingdom that their Majesties had countenanced this Assembly with their authority, and honoured it with a representative of their royal persons, and the Assembly's great satisfaction with their Majesties' choice of a person so well qualified and so acceptable to this Assembly, to represent their Majesties therein. To whom his Grace was pleased to give this return, that it was his firm resolution, in the capacity wherein their Majesties had now put him, to lay out himself for their Majesties' service and the good of the Church. The Assembly appointed the said commission to be recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*; the tenor whereof follows:—

GULIELMUS et MARIA, Dei Gratia, Magnæ Britanniae, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ, Rex et Regina, Fideique Defensores, Omnibus probis hominibus, ad quos præsentēs literæ nostræ pervenerint, salutem. Quandoquidem per actum, in secunda sessione currentis hujus nostri Parlamenti, expeditum, de stabiliendo Ecclesiæ regimine, in antiquiore hoc nostro Scotiæ regno; primum Ecclesiæ illius Generalem Conventum, Edinburgi, tertio die Jovis, mensis Octobris instantis, teneri ordinavimus: Nos autem (rebus magni momenti alio vocantibus) in dicto Conventu interesse nequimus: Abunde vero cupidi, ut idem Generalis Conventus, ad religionem veram reformatam melius firmandam, pietatem et sanctitatem propagandam, pacem itaque et unitatem, in dicta ecclesia, et hoc nostro antiquiore regno acquirendam; methodo debita et regulari, observetur: Cumque testimoniis perplurimis et probatis, nobis abunde satisfactum sit, de præclaris animi dotibus et fide eximia, fidelissimi et dilectissimi nostri consilarii, Joannis Domini Carmichael, quibus ad summæ fiduciæ munus infra expressum, debite et exacte obeundum et excercendum, usque quaque est adaptatus: Noveritis igitur nos nominasse et constituisse, sicuti per hæc nostras patentes literas, nominamus et constituimus eundem Joannem Dominum Carmichael, Supremum nostrum Commissionarium, quoad effectum infra expressum: Damus pariter et concedimus illi, sacram nostram personam et auctoritatem regiam repræsentandi, ac pro nobis præsentiam faciendi, locumque nostrum in subsequente Generali Conventu, tanquam Commissionario nostro, in hunc effectum specialiter constituto, tenendi: Omniaque alia ad imperium et munus commissionarii, pro Generale Ecclesiæ Conventu peragendi, tam plene, adeoque libere, in quovis respectu, quam quilibet alius ejusdem muneris et characteris fecerat, seu quovis tempore retroacto facere potuerat, atque adeo sicuti nosmet ipsi personaliter præsentēs possemus, plenissimam et amplissimam nostram potestatem et commissionem. Quæquidem omnia et singula, a dicto Joanne Domino Carmichael, in hac nostra commissione proseguenda, legitime facienda, nos firmiter approbamus, rata habemus, et habituri sumus. Omnibus et singulis insuper antedicti Conventus, et

Ecclesiæ pastoribus et presbyteris, ac cæteris quibuscumque hujus nostri regni subditis, cujuscunque ordinis seu conditionis, ut eundem Joannem Dominum Carmichael, tanquam Supremum nostrum Commissionarium, quoad effectum et modum supra mentionatum, agnoscant, colant, et dicto ipsius audientes se præbeant, stricte mandamus et imperamus. Et denique hanc nostram commissionem, a die quo magnum hujus regni nostri sigillum, presentibus est appensum, ac durante primâ dicti Generalis Conventus Sessione, aut usque donec hæc nostra commissio per nos revocetur continuare declaravimus, ac per præsentem declaramus. In cujus rei testimonium, præsentibus magnum sigillum nostrum appendi mandavimus, apud aulam nostram de Kensington, decimo die mensis Octobris, anno Domini 1690, regnique nostri anno secundo.

Per signaturam manu S. D. N. Regis supra signatam.
(Locus sigilli appensi.)

INDORSO.

Sealed at Edinburgh the 16th of October 1690. ALEX. INGLIS.

Written to the Great Seal, and registrat the 16th day of October 1690. DUN. RONALD, Dpt.

II.

Sess. 2, October 17, 1690, ante meridiem.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the Assembly.

This session his Majesty's gracious letter direct to this General Assembly was publicly read and heard with great respect, and appointed to be recorded in the books of the Assembly; the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Reverend, trusty, and well-beloved,

Our concern for the good of our ancient kingdom hath been such, that we have left nothing undone that might contribute to the making of it happy: And, therefore, having been informed, that differences as to the government of the Church have caused greatest confusions in that nation, we did willingly concur with our Parliament in enacting such a frame of it as was judged to be most agreeable to the inclinations of our good subjects; to which, as we have had a particular regard, in countenancing this Assembly with our authority, and a representative of our royal person, so we expect that your management shall be such as we shall have no reason to repent of what we have done. A calm and peaceable procedure will be no less pleasing to us than it becometh you. We never could be of the mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion; nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party. Moderation is what religion enjoins, neighbouring churches expect from you, and we recommend to you. And we assure you of our constant favour and protection in your following of these methods, which shall be for the real advantage of true piety and the peace of our kingdoms. Given under our royal hand, at our Court at Kensington, the 10th day of October 1690.

By his Majesty's command,

MELVILL.

Direct.—To the Reverend, Trusty, and Well-Beloved, Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at Edinburgh.

III.

Sess. 4, October 18, 1690, post meridiem.—The Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your gracious letter, direct to the ministers and elders met here in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was read and heard among us with all joy and

thankfulness, that the rising and shining again of the royal favour upon this long afflicted and distressed Church could possibly inspire : For, as your Majesty's concern for the good of this your ancient kingdom hath indeed been such, as nothing can impair the happy state whereunto you have restored it, save the want of the due sense and understanding of so great a mercy ; so we do most heartily acknowledge, that through your Majesty's care and kindness, the Church of Christ therein doth equally partake of the same blessing. It was the sad confusions, that differences as to the government of the Church had caused in this nation, that, according to your Majesty's first declaration for our relief, moved our gracious God to raise up and prosper you to be our glorious deliverer for effectuating the Re-establishment that we now enjoy ; so that we are persuaded, that it is not more agreeable to the inclinations and conscientious persuasions of all within this kingdom, who are best affected to your Majesty's person and government, than it is acceptable to God, and will be your Majesty's perpetual peace and satisfaction. Nor are we less sensible of the particular regard your Majesty professeth towards us on this occasion, in countenancing this Assembly with your authority, and a representative of your royal person, for which we most humbly acknowledge your gracious favour ; especially that it hath pleased your Majesty to fix your choice upon a person so well qualified and so acceptable to us. And now, great Sir, after so many and so great mercies and favours received from God and your Majesty, we hope we may with confidence assure you, that our management shall be such as your Majesty hath so just reason to expect, and shall never give you cause to repent of what you have done for us. The God of love, the Prince of peace, with all the providences that have gone over us, and circumstances that we are under, as well as your Majesty's most obliging pleasure, require of us a calm and peaceable procedure. And if, after the violence for conscience sake that we have suffered, and so much detested, and these grievous abuses of authority in the late reigns, whereby through some men's irregular passions we have so sadly smarted, we ourselves should lapse unto the same errors, we should certainly prove the most unjust towards God, foolish towards ourselves, and ungrateful towards your Majesty, of all men on earth. Great revolutions of this nature must be attended with occasions of complaint, and even the worst of men are ready to cry out of wrong for their justest deservings ; but as your Majesty knows these things too well to give us the least apprehension of any impressions evil report can make ; so we assure your Majesty, as in the presence of God, and in expectation of his dreadful appearance, that we shall study that moderation which your Majesty recommends, as being convinced that it is the duty that religion enjoins, and neighbouring churches do most justly expect from us ; desiring in all things to approve ourselves unto God as the true disciples of Jesus Christ, who, though most zealous against all corruptions in his Church, was most gentle towards the persons of men ; and to maintain as much as in us lies peace and concord with all the Reformed Churches : As likewise, to comply in all obsequious duty, with all that your Majesty enjoins for the real advantage of true piety and the peace of all your kingdoms. Heartily wishing that God, who has graciously brought back your Majesty's person in safety from your late, no less generous than dangerous expedition, for his cause and truth, with joyful success may still preserve your Majesty and our most gracious Queen, granting you long life, health, and prosperity, and may establish your throne, and bless your government, to the glory of his great name, the good of all his churches, and the welfare of all your people. Which shall ever be the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient,
and most humble subjects.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

HU. KENNEDIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—Appointment of a Diet to be kept by the Assembly for Prayer.

The General Assembly appoints Monday next, betwixt eight and twelve o'clock

in the forenoon, to be set apart for prayer, by the members of this Assembly; and recommends to all the members to meet in the Assembly-House for that end, at eight o'clock in the morning.

V.

Sess. 9, October 25, 1690, ante meridiem.—The Proceedings of the Assembly anent Mr Thomas Lining and others.

The General Assembly having received a report from the Committee of Overtures, anent two papers given in to the said Committee, and subscribed by Mr Thomas Lining, Mr Alexander Shields, and Mr William Boyd, who had followed some courses contrary to the order of this Church; whereby "The said Committee, out of their ardent desire of union in the Church, recommend to the Assembly the reading of the shorter of these two papers, in which the forenamed persons oblige themselves, after the exhibiting of the larger paper, (which they offer, as they profess, for the exoneration of their consciences,) and laying it down at the Assembly's feet, to be disposed upon as the Assembly should think fit, that they shall, in all required submission, subject themselves, their lives and doctrine, to the cognizance of the respective judicatories of this Church, and equally to oppose schism and defection in any capacity that they should be capable of. But the said Committee judgeth the reading of the larger of the said two papers in full Assembly to be inconvenient, in regard that though there be several good things in it, yet the same doth also contain several peremptory and gross mistakes, unseasonable and impracticable proposals, and uncharitable and injurious reflections, tending rather to kindle contentions than to compose divisions. Nevertheless, the said committee gives it as their opinion that the foresaid offer of the above named persons, their subjection and obedience to the authority of this Church in their respective judicatories, contained in the said shorter paper, should be entertained and accepted of by the Assembly, and they received into communion with this Church, according to their several capacities."

Likeas, the above named persons having compeared in presence of the Assembly, and judicially owned and adhered unto their shorter paper; and the Assembly having heard the above written report of the Committee of Overtures, concerning both the said papers, as also the said shorter paper read in their presence, the General Assembly, after mature deliberation, did unanimously, and without a contrary vote, approve the above written report and opinion of the Committee of Overtures, in the hail heads thereof; which being intimated to the forenamed persons, they acquiesced thereto. Upon all which, the following act was made :—

Act anent Mr Thomas Lining and others.

Whereas Mr Thomas Lining, Mr Alexander Shields, and Mr William Boyd, have presented to this Assembly two papers, one containing the expressions of their purpose and promise of being subject to the authority of this Church as formerly constituted, and now restored, in its several judicatories, the other offered for the exoneration of their consciences; which paper, containing their submission and subjection, did, after the exhibition of the other to the Assembly, become binding upon them, according to the promise therein made. Likeas, after that other and longer paper had been read before the Committee of Overtures, it was exhibited to and received by the Assembly, together with the reasons from the said Committee why it should not be publicly read in full Assembly. Which reasons being duly considered, and the said other paper of submission and subjection publicly read, and judicially owned by the forenamed persons, in presence of the Assembly; the Assembly did conclude, by one single vote, that the foresaid longer paper should not be read; and that the abovenamed persons should be received into the fellowship of this Church, on the terms of submission and subjection contained in the shorter paper: And after passing of the said vote, and that they were gravely admonished by the Moderator to walk orderly in time coming, in opposition to all schism and division, it was declared to them by the Moderator, in the name of the Assembly, that the Assembly did receive

them into the fellowship of this Church, to enjoy the privileges thereof, and perform the duties therein, whereof they are or shall be found capable. Whereupon, and at their desire, it was ordained that this act should be made, and an extract thereof given to them in good form. Follows the tenor of the said shorter paper:—

“ *To the Moderator and remanent Members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.*

“ Right Reverend and Honourable,

“ With the greatest earnestness of longing we have desired, and yet with a patience perhaps to excess, we have waited for an opportunity to bring our unhappy differences (of which all parties concerned are weary) to a happy and holy close; and for this end, to have access to apply ourselves to a full and free General Assembly of this Church, invested with authority and power, *in foro divino et humano*, to determine and cognosce upon them. The want of which, an Assembly constituted in that vigour to which, through the mercy of God, this venerable national Synod hath arrived, hath been the greatest let and impediment of our composing these differences, in a way, wherein not only we, but all of the same sentiments, would acquiesce. Now, having obtained this much longed and long prayed for privilege, we cannot forbear any longer humbly to accost and address this venerable Assembly, with a free and ingenuous representation of our minds and desires. The scope of which is, to represent these things which have been most stumbling to us, for the exoneration of our consciences; and to declare our design, after we have exhibited our testimony against these courses, which we understand to have been corruptions and defections in this Church, and laid it down at the Assembly's feet to be disposed of as their Wisdoms shall think fit, that we shall, in all required submission, subject ourselves, our lives and doctrine, to the cognizance of the judicatories of this Church, and shall equally oppose schism and defection, in any capacity that we shall be found capable of. And here, by these presents, we bind and oblige ourselves faithfully to live in union, communion, and entire subjection, and due obedience in the Lord, to the authority of this Church, in her respective judicatories; as witness our hands at Edinburgh, the 22d day of October 1690.

“ THOMAS LINING.

“ ALEXANDER SHEILDS.

“ WILLIAM BOYD.”

VI.

Sess. 11, October 28, 1690, ante meridiem.—Act anent Ministers that observe not the Public Orders of the Church.

The Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to take notice of all ministers within their bounds, whether the late conforming incumbents or others, who shall not observe fasts and thanksgivings indicted by the Church; or who shall be found guilty of any other irregular carriage, in administrating the Sacraments in private, or celebrating clandestine marriages, without due proclamation of bans, and to censure them accordingly.

VII.

Sess. 12, October 29, 1690, ante meridiem.—Act approving several Overtures.

This day, the Overtures following were read in presence of the Assembly.

1. Anent subscribing the Confession of Faith.

“ For retaining soundness and unity of doctrine, it is judged necessary that all probationers licensed to preach, all intrants into the ministry, and all other ministers and elders received into communion with us, in church government, be obliged to subscribe their approbation of the Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified in the second session of the current Parliament; and that this be recommended to the diligence of the several Presbyteries, and they appointed to record their diligence thereanent in their respective registers.”

2. Anent Papists.

“That it be recommended to Presbyteries to take special notice what Papists are in their bounds, and that they take pains to reclaim them, and to advert how their children are educated; and if need be, to make application to the civil authority concerning them.”

3. Anent Celebration of Marriage.

“That the celebration of marriage without due proclamation of bans, according to order, three several Sabbaths in the respective parishes, be discharged; and that it be recommended to Presbyteries to censure the contraveners.”

4. Against Profanation of the Sabbath.

“That it be recommended to Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries carefully to put in execution the Acts of former General Assemblies against profanation of the Lord’s day, and particularly by unnecessary sailing and travelling.”

5. Anent Markets on Saturdays and Mondays.

“That application be made to the Parliament, for altering all markets in royal burghs, and other places, on Saturdays and Mondays.”

The General Assembly, after mature deliberation, approves of these Overtures, and recommends and appoints accordingly; and ordains the same to be observed, and to have the force and strength of an Act and Ordinance of Assembly.

VIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act approving the Associations of Presbyteries.

The General Assembly allows and approves of the ministers of different Presbyteries their associating in Presbyteries, ay and until the vacancies of the said Presbyteries be filled; and declares them to have the authority and power of Presbyteries respectively; and that, notwithstanding that according to the old platform, the said ministers do reside in the bounds of different Presbyteries.

IX.

Sess. 15, October 31, 1690, ante meridiem.—Act against Ministers removing out of this Church.

The General Assembly does hereby appoint that no ministers, who have actual standing and absolute relations to any charge in the Church of Scotland, shall remove out of the kingdom, without the consent of the respective judicatories of this Church.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Administration of the Sacraments.

The General Assembly, considering that the two Sacraments that Christ hath appointed under the New Testament, viz., Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, are his solemn ordinances, and seals of the covenant of grace, (which is held forth in the preaching of the Gospel,) and that in the use of them the parties receiving them are solemnly devoted and engaged to God, before angels and men, and are solemnly received as members of the Church, and do entertain communion with her; and that by the authority of this Church, in her former Assemblies, the private use of them hath been condemned: As also, that by allowing the private use of the same, in pretended cases of necessity, the superstitious opinion is nourished that they are necessary to salvation, not only as commanded duties, but as means without which salvation cannot be attained. Therefore, the Assembly hereby discharges the administration of the Lord’s Supper to sick persons in their houses, and all other use of the same, except in the public assemblies of the Church; and also, do discharge the administration of Baptism in private, that is, in any place, or at any time, when the congre-

gation is not orderly called together to wait on the dispensing of the Word. And appoints that this be carefully observed, when and wherever the Lord giveth his people peace, liberty, and opportunity for their public assemblies. And ordains this present act to be publicly intimated in all the churches.

XI.

Sess. 24, November 11, 1690, post meridiem.—Act approving Overtures anent the Irish Bibles, &c.

This day the overtures following, anent the Irish Bibles, New Testaments, and Catechisms, were read in presence of the Assembly:—

“1. That a letter of thanks be written to these concerned, whether in this or our neighbour nation, for their care of and liberal charity towards the Highlanders of this kingdom, in their so liberally contributing for the said Irish Bibles, &c.; and that Mr David Blair be appointed to write the said letter in the name of this Assembly.

“2. The whole money so charitably contributed being expended, Therefore, and for making up of the same, and for defraying of the necessary charges of transporting the said Bibles, &c., to Scotland, it is thought most needful that there be an advance of one thousand pounds Scots, and that their Majesties' Privy Council be supplicated for as much of some vacant stipends of parishes where the King is patron as will make up the said sum for the ends foresaid.

“3. That it be recommended to the kirk-sessions, heritors, and others concerned in the Highlands, to see the Act of Parliament anent erecting of schools in every parish duly executed, and the funds established by law for the same made effectual.

“4. That it be recommended to the agent for the Kirk to receive the foresaid sum, and to disburse the same, at the sight of Mr John Law and Mr David Blair, for the said use; and also to receive the books above mentioned, being three thousand Bibles, one thousand New Testaments, and three thousand Catechisms, from London.

“5. That the several Synods who have Highland parishes in their bounds appoint one of their number to receive their proportion of the said Bibles, New Testaments, and Catechisms; and that, in order thereto, the ministers and elders having interest in the Highlands, present in this Assembly, shall meet and appoint some to receive these Bibles, &c., and proportion the number that each parish shall have thereof.

“6. That it be recommended to the ministers concerned in the Highlands to dispatch the whole Paraphrase of the Irish Psalms to the press. And if the principal copy can be recovered, to expedite the same; but that any other copy they have be revised by the Synod of Argyle, and, being approved by them, that the same be printed.”

The Assembly, having considered these Overtures, they approve thereof, and recommend and appoint accordingly.

XII.

Sess. 25, November 12, 1690, post meridiem.—Act anent a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation, with the Causes thereof.

The General Assembly, having taken into their most serious consideration the late great and general defection of this Church and kingdom, have thought fit to appoint a day of solemn humiliation and fasting, for confession of sins, and making supplication to our gracious God to forgive and remove the guilt thereof; in order whereunto, they have ordained the confession of sins, and causes of fasting following, to be duly intimated and published; recommending it most earnestly to all persons, both ministers and others, that every one of us may not only search and try our own hearts and ways, and stir up ourselves to seek the Lord, but also in our stations, and as we have access, deal with one another in all love and tenderness, to prepare for so great and necessary a duty, that we may find mercy in God's sight, and he may be

graciously reconciled to our land in the Lord Jesus, and take delight to dwell among us.

Although our gracious God hath of late, for his own name sake, wrought great and wonderful things for Britain and Ireland, and for this Church and nation in particular, yet the inhabitants thereof have cause to remember their own evil ways, and to loathe themselves in their own sight for their iniquities.

Alas! we and our fathers, our princes, our pastors, and people of all ranks, have sinned, and have been under great transgression to this day; for though our gracious God shewed early kindness to this land, in sending the Gospel among us, and afterward in our reformation from Popish superstition and idolatry; and it had the honour, beyond many nations, of being, after our first reformation, solemnly devoted unto God, both prince and people; yet we have dealt treacherously with the Lord, and been unstedfast in his Covenant, and have not walked suitably to our mercies received from him, nor obligations to him. Through the mercy of God this Church had attained to a great purity of doctrine, worship, and government; but this was not accompanied with suitable personal reformation, neither was our fruit answerable to the pains taken on us by word and work. We had much Gospel preaching, but too little Gospel practice; too many went on in open wickedness, and some had but a form of godliness, denying the power thereof; many also, who had the grace of God in truth, fell from their first love, and fell under sad languishings and decays; and when, for our sins, the anger of the Lord had divided us, and we were brought under the feet of strangers, and many of our brethren killed, and others taken captive and sold as slaves, yet we sinned still; and after we were freed from the yoke of strangers, instead of returning to the Lord, and being led to repentance by his goodness, the land made open defection from the good ways of the Lord; many behaved as if they had been delivered to work abomination; the flood-gates of impiety were opened, and a deluge of wickedness did overspread the land. Who can, without grief and shame, remember the shameful debauchery and drunkenness that then was? And this accompanied with horrid and hellish cursing and swearing, and followed with frequent filthiness, adulteries, and other abominations; and the reprover was hated, and he that departed from iniquity made himself a reproach or prey. And when by these, and such like corrupt practices, men's consciences were debauched, they proceeded to sacrifice the interest of the Lord Jesus Christ and privileges of his Church to the lusts and will of men—the supremacy was advanced in such a way, and to such an height, as never any Christian church acknowledged—the government of the Church was altered, and Prelacy (which hath been always grievous to this nation) introduced, without the Church's consent, and contrary to the standing acts of our National Assemblies, both which the present Parliament hath (blessed be God) lately found; and yet, nevertheless, of the then standing Ministry of Scotland many did suddenly and readily comply with that alteration of the government, some out of pride and covetousness, or man-pleasing, some through infirmity or weakness, or fear of man, and want of courage and zeal for God. Many faithful ministers were thereupon cast out, and many insufficient and scandalous men thrust in on their charges, and many families ruined, because they would not own them as their pastors.

And, alas! it is undeniable there hath been under the late Prelacy a great decay of piety, so that it was enough to make a man be nicknamed a fanatic if he did not run to the same excess of riot with others.

And should it not be lamented, for it cannot be denied, that there hath been in some a dreadful atheistical boldness against God, some have disputed the being of God and his Providence, the Divine authority of the Scriptures, the life to come, and immortality of the soul, yea, and scoffed at these things.

There hath been also an horrid profanation of the holy and dreadful name of God, by cursing and swearing. Ah! there hath been so much swearing and forswearing amongst us, that no nation under heaven hath been more guilty in this than we; some by swearing rashly or ignorantly; some falsely, by breaking their oaths, and imposing and taking ungodly unlawful oaths and bonds, whereby the consciences of many have been polluted and seared; and many ruined and oppressed for refusing and not taking them.

There hath also been a great neglect of the worship of God, too much in public, but especially in families and in secret.

The wonted care of religious sanctifying the Lord's Day is gone; and, in many places, the Sabbath hath been and is shamefully profaned.

The land also hath been full of bloody crimes, and cities full of violence, and much innocent blood shed, so that blood touched blood; yea, Sodom's sins have abounded amongst us; pride, fulness of bread, idleness, vanities of apparel, and shameful sensuality filled the land.

And, alas! how great hath been the cry of oppression and unrighteousness. Iniquity hath been established by a law; there hath been a great perverting of justice, by making and executing unrighteous statutes and acts; and sad persecutions of many for their conscience towards God.

It is also matter of lamentation, that, under this great defection there hath been too general a fainting, not only amongst professors of the Gospel, but also amongst ministers; yea, even amongst such, who, in the main things, did endeavour to maintain their integrity, in not giving seasonable and necessary testimony against the defections and evils of the time, and keeping a due distance from them; and some, on the other hand, managed their zeal with too little discretion and meekness.

It is also matter of humiliation, that when differences fell out amongst these who did own truth, and bear witness against the course of defection, they were not managed with due charity and love, but with too much heat and bitterness, injurious reflections used against pious and worthy men on all hands, and scandalous divisions occasioned, and the success of the Gospel greatly obstructed thereby, and some dangerous principles drunk in. And after all this, there were shameful advances towards Popery; the abomination of the mass was set up in many places, and Popish schools erected, and several fell to idolatry.

And though the Lord hath put a stop to the course of defection, and of his great mercy given us some reviving from our bondage, yet we have sad cause to regret and bemoan that few have a due sense of our mercy, or walk answerable thereto; few are turned to the Lord in truth, but the wicked go on to do wickedly. And there is found amongst us to this day shameful ingratitude for our mercies, horrid impenitency under our sins; yea, even among those who stand most up for the defence of the truth; and amongst many in our armies there is woful profaneness and debauchery. And though we profess to acknowledge there can be no pardon of sins, no peace and reconciliation with God, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, yet few know him, or see the necessity and excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; few see their need of him, or esteem, desire, or receive him as he is offered in the Gospel; few are acquainted with faith in Jesus Christ, and living by faith on him, as made of the Father unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and few walk as becometh the Gospel, and imitate our holy Lord in humility, meekness, self-denial, heavenly-mindedness, zeal for God, and charity towards men; but as there is even until now a great contempt of the Gospel, a great barrenness under it, so a deep security under our sin and danger, a great want of piety toward God, and love toward men, with a woful selfishness, every one seeking their own things, few the things of Christ, or the public good, or one another's welfare; and, finally, the most part more ready to censure the sins of others than to repent of their own.

Our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our trespasses are grown up unto the heavens; they are many in number, and heinous in their nature, and grievously aggravated, as having been contrary to great light and love, under signal mercies and judgments, after confession and supplication, and notwithstanding of our profession, promises, and solemn vowing, and covenanting with God to the contrary.

Have we not, then, sad cause of deep sorrow and humiliation? and may we not fear, if we do not repent, and turn from the evil of our ways, and return to the Lord with all our hearts, that he return to do us evil, after he hath done us good, and be angry with us, until he hath consumed us?

Let us, therefore, humble ourselves by fasting and praying;—let us search out our sins, and consider our ways, and confess these and our other sins with sorrow

and detestation ;—let us turn unto the Lord with fasting and weeping, and with mourning ;—let us firmly resolve, and sincerely engage, to amend our ways and doings, and return unto the Lord our God with all our heart, and earnestly pray that, for the blood of the Lamb of God, our sins may be forgiven, and our backslidings healed, and we may yet become a righteous nation, keeping the truth, that religion and righteousness may flourish, and love and charity abound, and all the Lord's people may be of one mind in the Lord ; and in order to all these, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, and that the preaching of the Word and dispensing of the sacraments may be accompanied with the wonted presence, power, and blessing of the Spirit of the Lord ;—that the Lord would preserve and bless our gracious King and Queen, William and Mary, and establish their throne by righteousness and religion, and grant to these nations peace and truth together ; and for that end, bless and prosper his Majesty's councils, and forces, by sea and land, and these of the princes and states his allies, for God and his truth ;—that inferior rulers may rule in the fear of God, and judges be clothed with righteousness ; and that many faithful labourers may be sent out into the Lord's vineyard ; and they who are sent may find mercy to be faithful and be blest with success ;—that families may be as little churches of Christ ; and that the Lord would pour out his Spirit on all ranks of people, that they may be holy in all manner of conversation, and God may delight to dwell amongst us, and to do us good.

And while we pray for ourselves, let us not forget our brethren in foreign churches, with whom, alas ! we had too little sympathy ; nay, let us pray that all the ends of the earth may see the salvation of God ;—and that he would bring his ancient people of the Jews to the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ ;—and that he would hasten the ruin of Romish Babylon, and advance the reformation in Christendom, and preserve and bless the Reformed Churches ;—that he would pity his oppressed people, the French Protestants, and gather them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day ;—and that he would be the defence, strength, and salvation of any of his people who are in war or danger, by infidel or Popish adversaries, in Europe or America ;—and, in particular, that the Lord would be gracious to Ireland, and sanctify to his people there both their distress and deliverance, and perfect what concerneth them ;—that he would convert the natives there to the truth, reduce that land to peace, and appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks to Britain.

For all these causes and reasons, the General Assembly hath appointed the second Thursday of January next to be observed in all the congregations of this Church and nation as a day of solemn fasting, and humiliation and prayer ; beseeching and obtesting all, both pastors and people of all ranks, to be sincere and serious in humiliation and supplication, and universal reformation, as they would wish to find mercy of the Lord, and have deserved wrath averted, and would obtain the blessing of the Lord upon themselves and posterity after them ; and that the Lord may delight in us, and our land may be as married to him. And ordains all ministers, either in kirks or meeting-houses, to read this present act publicly from the pulpit, a Sabbath or two before the said day of humiliation ; and that the several Presbyteries take care that it be carefully observed in their respective bounds. And where, in regard of vacancies, the day hereby appointed cannot be observed, the Assembly appoints the said humiliation to be kept some other day with the first convenient opportunity ; and appoints the Commission of Visitation to apply to the Council for their civil sanction to the observation thereof.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—*Act anent Sentences past against Ministers from the year 1650, &c.*

The General Assembly does hereby declare all sentences past against any ministers, *hinc inde*, by any Church judicatory upon the account of the late differences among Presbyterians, from the year 1650 till the re-introduction of Prelacy, to be

of themselves void and null, to all effects and intents: And, sicklike, the General Assembly hereby recommends to the respective Presbyteries to take care that such of these ministers, as are not otherways disposed of by the Church, return to the exercise of their ministry in their respective congregations; and also hereby recommends to the civil magistrate that the said ministers may have the legal maintenances and stipends where they served.

XIV.

Sess. 26, November 13, 1690, post meridiem.—The Assembly's Letter to his Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,

The happiness we have had by your Majesty's influence, as an instrument in the hand of God towards us for good, and the countenance you have given us in holding this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, doth encourage us to make application again to your Majesty; that as, in our answer to your gracious letter direct to us in the entrance of this Assembly, we engaged to your Majesty that in all things that should come before us we would carry with that calmness and moderation which becometh the ministers of the Gospel of peace, and which your Majesty did so effectually recommend to us; so now, in the close of this our Assembly, we presume to acquaint your Majesty, that, through the good hand of God upon us, we have in a great measure performed accordingly; having applied ourselves, mostly and especially, to what concerned this whole Church, and endeavoured, by all means ecclesiastical and proper for us, to promote the good thereof, together with the quiet of the kingdom, and your Majesty's satisfaction and contentment. And God hath been pleased to bless our endeavours, in our receiving to the unity and order of this Church some who had withdrawn, and now have joined with us and promised subjection; and in providing for the propagation of religion, and the knowledge of God, in the most barbarous places of the Highlands, which may be the surest way of reducing these people also unto your Majesty's obedience; and especially in regulating the ministers of this Church, after so great revolutions and alterations; for we have, according to the use and practice of this Church, ever since the first reformation from Popery, appointed visitations both for the southern and northern parts of this kingdom, consisting of the gravest and most experienced ministers and elders, to whom we have given instructions about the late Conformists, that none of them shall be removed from their places but such as are either insufficient, or scandalous, or erroneous, or supinely negligent; and that these of them be admitted to ministerial communion with us, who, upon due trial, and in a competent time for that trial, shall be found to be orthodox in doctrine, of competent abilities, of a godly, peaceable, and loyal conversation, and who shall be judged faithful to God and to the government, and who shall likewise promise to own, submit unto, and concur with it. We have also taken care, that all persons who shall be found to have received wrong, in any inferior judicatory of this Church, shall be duly redressed. Other things, which are not of so universal a concern, we have delayed till the next General Assembly. This account, great Sir, we look upon ourselves as obliged to give unto your Majesty, for that great goodness you have been pleased to express, in giving such countenance to this Assembly, and in appointing such a Commissioner to represent your royal person, who hath been in all his conduct in this affair most acceptable unto us. That God may bless your Majesty and our most gracious Queen with all blessings, which concern both this life and the life to come, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most humble,
and most obedient subjects and servants.

Subscribed in name, and at the appointment of the General Assembly, by

HU. KENNEDIE, *Moderator.*

XV.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions to the Commission for Visitations on the South and North sides of Tay.

The following instructions to the Commission for Visitations on this side of Tay were read in presence of the Assembly :—

“ 1. That there be appointed by the Assembly a delegated number of the most experienced ministers and elders. This number to be forty ministers and twenty ruling elders, fifteen of them to a quorum, ten of these being always ministers; and that they, at their first session, choose their moderator and clerk; and for the sub-committee betwixt the quarterly meetings, nine to be the quorum, six of these being always ministers.

“ 2. That the work of this commission for visitations be to take to their cognizance all references and appeals, and other things, which being stated before this Assembly, shall by them be specially referred to the said commission to determine the same.

“ 3. That the commission give their opinion to all Presbyteries and Synods who shall apply to them for the same in difficult cases; and though Presbyteries shall not apply, yet, if the commission shall be informed of any precipitant or unwarrantable procedure of Presbyteries in processes, which may prove of ill consequence to the Church, the commission shall interpose their advice to such Presbyteries, to sist such procedure till either the Synod or next General Assembly take cognizance of it; if the said commission shall not find a present fit expedient to direct them for bringing the matter sooner to a right conclusion.

“ 4. That in discussing references, appeals, and bills, they take care to purge out all who, upon due trial, shall be found to be insufficient, supinely negligent, scandalous, or erroneous.

“ 5. That this commission shall have power of visiting any ministers within the bounds of any Presbyteries on this side of the water of Tay, as they shall find need; and that this power reach Presbyterians as well as others.

“ 6. That they shall be careful that none shall be admitted by them to ministerial communion, or to a share of the government, but such as, upon due trial, (for which the commission is to take a competent time,) shall be found to be orthodox in their doctrine, of competent abilities, having a pious, godly, loyal, and peaceable conversation, as becometh a minister of the Gospel, of an edifying gift, and whom the commission shall have ground to believe will be true and faithful to God and the government, and diligent in their ministerial duties; and that all who shall be admitted to the ministry, or shall be received to a share in the government, shall be obliged to own and subscribe the Confession of Faith, and profess their submission to and willingness to join and concur with the Presbyterian Church government.

“ 7. That they be very cautious of receiving informations against the late Conformists, and that they proceed in the matter of censure very deliberately, so as none may have just cause to complain of their rigidity; yet, so as to omit no means of information; and that they shall not proceed to censure, but upon relevant libels and sufficient probation.

“ 8. That this commission do not take on them to meddle with any thing not expressed in their commission; and that it be declared, that this commission is only given *ad hunc effectum et pro præsenti Ecclesiæ statu*.

“ 9. That this commission be in all their actings accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly.

“ 10. That this commission continue till the first of November next; and in case the General Assembly intervene, then this commission is to terminate at the meeting of this said Assembly.”

The General Assembly approves these instructions for the said Commission for Visitations on the south side of Tay; and ordains the same also to serve for the Visitors that are to be appointed for the north.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission for Visitations on the South Side of Tay.

The General Assembly, considering that there are many important and weighty affairs, processes, appeals, and references, tabled before this Assembly, which the Assembly could not overtake for want of time to consider them maturely; does, therefore, nominate and authorize a commission of ministers and elders, for visitation of the whole Presbyteries on the south side of Tay, viz., Mr Hugh Kennedy, Mr John Veatch, Mr John Law, Mr Gabriel Semple, Mr Gilbert Rule, Mr James Kirtoun, Mr William Areskyne, Mr William Weir, Mr William Crichtoun, Mr John Anderson, of Perth, Mr Alexander Pitcairn, Mr Richard Howison, Mr George Campbel, Mr John Lawrie, Mr Archibald Hamiltoun, Mr Patrick Peacock, Mr John Spalding, Mr Michael Bruce, Mr Gabriel Cunningham, Mr Patrick Warner, Mr Alexander Forbes, Mr John Hutcheson, Mr William Eccles, Mr James Veatch, Mr Patrick Symson, Mr Matthew Crawford, Mr William Legat, Mr Niel Gillies, Mr Thomas Forrester, Mr Andrew Mortoun, Mr Robert Duncanson, Mr John Bannatyne, Mr William Ker, Mr William Vilant, Mr Robert Rule, Mr James Frazer, Mr George Meldrum, at Kilwinning, Mr David Blair, Mr Samuel Nairn, Mr Edward Jamieson, Mr James Rymer, *Ministers*; and the Earl of Crawford, the Earl of Sutherland, the Viscount of Arbutnot, the Lord Halcraig, the Lord Aberuchil, the Laird of Ormistoun, Sir John Hall, Provost of Edinburgh, Sir John Riddel, the Laird of Greenknows, Archibald Muir, late Bailie of Edinburgh, James M'Lurg, Dean of Guild, George Stirling, Deacon Convener, the Laird of Naughtoun, the Laird of Meggans, the Laird of Leuquhat, Sir Thomas Stewart, the Laird of Glanderstoun, the Laird of Lamingtoun, Provost Muir of Air, and the Laird of Grange Hamiltoun, *Ruling Elders*;—to meet for their first diet at Edinburgh the fourteenth day of November instant, fifteen of them being a quorum, whereof ten are to be always ministers; and of their sub-committee in the interval of their quarterly meetings, nine to be a quorum, six of these being always ministers, who only are to ripen and prepare matters for the quarterly meetings; and their next quarterly meeting to be at Edinburgh the third Wednesday of January thereafter; and their next quarterly meeting to be on the third Wednesday of April: And if afterwards the said commission shall think fit to appoint other quarterly meetings, they may do as they see expedient; with full power to them, and their sub-commission foresaid, to give warrant for citing parties upon fifteen free days. And the said commission being only appointed *ad hunc effectum et pro presenti Ecclesiæ statu*, Therefore, the Assembly recommends particularly to the said commission to take cognizance of, and finally determine in the particulars following, specially committed and referred to them by this Assembly, viz., the purging and planting of the city and Presbytery of Edinburgh; the transportation of Mr Robert Wyllie to Hamilton; the processes of the heritors and people of Peebles; the processes of Mr Thomas Wood at Dunbar, of Mr Robert Spotswood at Abbotsrule, Mr John Bowes at Abbotshall, Mr Patrick Lyon at Kinghorn, Mr Symon Cowpar at Dunfermline, Mr William Crawford at Ladykirk, Mr James Orr at Huttoun, Mr Adam Peacock at Morbattle, Mr Daniel Urquhart at Clackmannan, Mr George Monro at Dollar, Mr George Shaw at Logie, Mr Alexander Ireland at Fossoway and Tillibole, Mr Robert Sharp at Muckart, Mr James Grahame at Dunfermline, Mr George Gray at Beith, Mr John Monro at Stirling, and Mr John Skinner at Bothkenner; the petition of the Magistrates of Perth and reference anent Mr John Anderson there; the processes of Mr William Alison at Kilbucho, and Mr James Coupar at Humbie; some references of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale to the Assembly, viz., one anent Dr Canaries, and another anent Mr Kirktoun and Mr Jamieson's returning to their charges, or else to demit; and a third anent Mr William Crawford deposed, to procure him some livelihood, because of his age and infirmity, and some others given in to the clerk therewith from the said Synod; the affair anent Mr Duncan Campbel and the parishes of Dunoon and Kilmunn; the process of Mr Robert Glasford at Auchterderren; the reference from the Presbytery of Stirling for advice anent Mr Patrick

Coupar; the petitions of Mr William Hamiltoun and Mr Hugh Nisbet; the petition of Mr Alexander Strang, anent his clerk's fees. This commission is also to correspond with the State, anent fasts and thanksgivings, and their causes, if the occasions thereof fall out during the time of their sitting; also to take the monitory paper to consideration, and see what use is to be made of it; to consider what acts of Assembly are fit to be printed together, and order the same; to consider the Form of Process, being first revised by the Lord Aberuchil and the Lord Halcraig; and to apply to the Privy Council for their civil sanction to the observation of the fast. And this commission is to walk in all things according to the particular instructions given unto them by this Assembly, and in all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly. And this commission to continue till the first of November next, or the diet that shall be appointed for the next General Assembly.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission for Visitations on the North Side of Tay.

The General Assembly, taking to their consideration the necessity of purging and planting of the churches on the north side of Tay, do, by their ecclesiastical authority, nominate, appoint, and authorise, their reverend brethren, Mr Hugh Kennedy, Mr John Law, Mr William Crichtoun, Mr Edward Jamieson, Mr Robert Rule, Mr James Rymer, Mr James Frazer, Mr Alexander Forbes, Mr John Anderson at Perth, Mr George Meldrum at Kilwinning, Mr Thomas Ramsay, Mr Andrew Bowie, Mr Robert Young, Mr William Legat, and Mr William Mackie, *Ministers*; and the Lord Viscount of Arbutnot, the Laird of Meggins, the Laird of Naughtoun, the Laird of Lenquhat, and the Laird of Greenknows, *Ruling Elders*, to join with the ministers and elders in the north, after-mentioned, viz. Mr John Stewart, Mr James Urquhart, Mr Alexander Dunbar, Mr Alexander Frazer, Mr Thomas Hogg, Mr Hugh Henryson, Mr William Mackay, Mr Walter Dinnoon, Mr George Meldrum of Glass, Mr Arthur Mitchell, Mr William Ramsay, Mr Francis Melvil, and Mr John McCulloch, *Ministers*; together with the Earl of Sutherland, the Laird of Brodie, the Laird of Grant, the Laird of Grange Dunbar, the Laird of Eight, the Laird of Culloden, the Laird of Dalfolly, the Laird of Park-Hay, Sir John Monro, Sir George Monro, Sir Robert Gordon of Embo, David Frazer of Mains, Mr John Campbel of Moy, Hector Monro of Drummond, Alexander Duff of and Robert Martyne of Burnbrae, *Ruling Elders*; to be a Commission for visiting the whole Presbyteries on the north side of the water of Tay, in planting vacant churches, constituting elderships in congregations, trying and purging out of insufficient, negligent, scandalous, and erroneous ministers, by due course of ecclesiastical process and censures, according to the particular instructions given them thereanent; and, for that effect, to have their first diet of meeting at Aberdeen the second Wednesday of March next, and thereafter to appoint their own diets and places of meeting, as they see expedient; with full power to them, or their quorum, being seven ministers and three ruling elders, to issue out warrants for citing of parties, upon fifteen free days, to cognosce, determine, and finally decide, in planting of vacant churches, constituting elderships, and trying and purging out all insufficient, negligent, scandalous, and erroneous ministers, conform to the particular instructions given them thereanent; they being always accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly of this Church; and this Commission to continue till the first of November next, or the diet that shall be appointed for the next General Assembly.

XVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission for Mr Gilbert Rule and Mr David Blair, to wait upon his Majesty anent the Affairs of this Church.

The General Assembly, judging it expedient to send two of their number to Lon-

don, to attend his Majesty anent the affairs of this Church, does, therefore, nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Mr Gilbert Rule, one of the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, and Principal of the College thereof, and Mr David Blair, another of the ministers of the said city, with all convenient speed to repair to London, to attend his Majesty for the end foresaid; and refers the instructions to be given them, and what other things concern their journey, to the Commission for Visitations on the south side of Tay appointed by this Assembly.

This Assembly being dissolved, and the next General Assembly appointed to be held at Edinburgh the first day of November next to come, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected, visied, and extracted from the Records of the said Assembly, by
me, JOHN SPALDING, *Cl. Syn. National.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MARCH 29, 1694.*

I.

Sess. 1, March 29, 1694, post meridiem.—The recording of their Majesties' Commission to John Lord Carmichael, for representing their Majesties in this General Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of this National Church being met and constituted, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, their Majesties' commission, under the Great Seal of the Kingdom of Scotland, nominating and appointing him to be their Majesties' High Commissioner and representative in this General Assembly: Which Commission was publicly read, with all due honour and respect; and the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, the said commission to be recorded in the books of the General Assembly, therein to remain, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, whereof the tenor follows:—"GULIELMUS et MARIA," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Appointment of a Diet to be kept by the Assembly for Prayer.

The General Assembly appoints to-morrow, being Friday, betwixt nine and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, to be set apart for public prayer by the members of this Assembly; and recommends to all the said members to meet timeously in the Assembly-House for that effect.

III.

The General Assembly's Letter to his Majesty.

* The Assembly did not meet on the 1st of November 1691, the day appointed by the Assembly of 1690. In consequence of the proposed Commissioner being called to London to meet his Majesty on his return to Britain, a royal proclamation was issued, adjourning the Assembly to the 15th of January 1692, when it accordingly met, and sat till the 13th of February, on which day it was dissolved by the Earl of Lothian, Royal Commissioner. No day was named by the Commissioner for another Assembly, but the Moderator, before dissolving in the name of Jesus Christ, did, with concurrence of the members of Assembly, appoint the next meeting to be held at Edinburgh on the third Wednesday of August 1693. The Assembly, however, did not meet at that time, but the Privy Council, by order of the King, who was then abroad, issued a proclamation indicting a meeting to take place on the 6th of December following, which meeting was, in consequence of his Majesty being detained from Britain beyond expectation, farther adjourned by royal proclamation to the 29th of March 1694. The Acts of the Assembly 1692 were not printed.—*Ed. 1843.*

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the giving in of Commissions.

The General Assembly, taking to consideration how inconvenient it is that the rolls of the Assembly should be made up when the Assembly is met and actually sitting, and how much time is unnecessarily spent thereby, and being desirous that for the future it may be remedied; therefore, the General Assembly doth hereby appoint, that, in time coming, the commissioners from Presbyteries and others shall give in their respective commissions to the clerk of the General Assembly the night at least before the first diet or meeting thereof, to the effect the rolls may be timeously made up, and that the commissions may be considered by the Assembly, without any interruption through the making of the rolls. And the General Assembly appoints that any such commissions as may happen to be undelivered before the said first diet, shall only be delivered in the intervals betwixt the after diets, and no ways in presence of the Assembly while actually sitting.

V.

Sess. 3, April 2, 1694, post meridiem.—Act anent the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assemblies.

The General Assembly doth hereby enact and appoint, that, in all time coming, the representation of the several Presbyteries of this National Church, in its General Assemblies, shall hold proportion to the number of parishes in which there are or ought to be settled ministers within each Presbytery in manner following:—That is to say, that all Presbyteries consisting of twelve parishes, or under that number, shall send two ministers and one ruling elder; and that all Presbyteries consisting of eighteen parishes, or under that number, but above twelve, shall send three ministers and one ruling elder; and that all Presbyteries consisting of twenty-four parishes, or under that number, but above eighteen, shall send four ministers and two ruling elders; and, lastly, that all Presbyteries consisting of above twenty-four parishes shall send five ministers and two ruling elders to the General Assemblies. And it is hereby declared that collegiate kirks, where there used to be two or more ministers, are, so far as concerns the design of this act, understood to be as many distinct parishes.

And farther, the General Assembly hereby enacts, appoints, and declares, that no person shall be admitted members of Assemblies but such as are either ministers or ruling elders.

VI.

Sess. 5, April 4, 1694, post meridiem.—Act for the better regulating Transportations of Ministers, and Appeals thereanent.

The General Assembly, taking to consideration that designs of transportations are become too common to many parishes, and very troublesome to neighbouring congregations, and to church judicatories; therefore, the General Assembly hereby recommends to all parishes which are or may be vacant, that, before they design the calling of any minister already fixed in another congregation, they do first seriously essay and follow other means of providing themselves, if they can be found. As also, the General Assembly hereby recommends to all Presbyteries that they do not concur in any such call or design of transporting a minister from one congregation to another, unless, by due comparing of places and all parties concerned, the disproportion betwixt them and the greater good of the Church be manifestly evident.

And suchlike, when any such design of transportation is pursued, the General Assembly hereby ordains that all parties concerned therein shall debate, with such meekness and brotherly kindness as becometh parts and members of the same body of

Christ, designing the good of the whole ; and that they represent their reasons and answers with due perspicuity and all possible brevity, and that they do not needlessly expatiate on things which concern not the true merit of the cause ; and the General Assembly hereby prohibits all lengthening of debates, by replies and duplies, unless the judicatory before whom the debate lies find it necessary for clearing some matter of fact, or because of some new matter that hath occurred, which could not be considered before.

And farther, to prevent unnecessary and contentious appeals in such matters, it is hereby declared and ordained, that, if both the competing parishes be within the bounds of the same Presbytery, in that case the decision and sentence of the Presbytery shall take effect and be obeyed. Or if the parishes be in different Presbyteries, but both Presbyteries within the same Synod, in that case, the decision and sentence of the Synod shall also take effect and be obeyed, seeing these respective judicatories are equally concerned in both parishes, and may be thought fittest to judge both of the disproportion of the parishes, and the suitableness and fitness of the person called for either of the places. Yet always allowing liberty to any person or parish, who think themselves aggrieved, to appeal to superior judicatories, to have redress by taking off the sentence, and censuring the respective judicatory complained of, if they be found to have malversed ; but with this certification, that if any be found unnecessarily to pursue appeals and complaints they shall be severely censured therefor.

VII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the giving in of Process, &c.

The General Assembly, considering how inconvenient it is that processes or other papers should be brought in in presence of the Assembly while it is actually sitting, without any previous acquainting the moderator or clerk therewith ; doth, therefore, hereby enact and appoint, that all processes or other papers be delivered to the clerk in the intervals betwixt the diets of the Assembly's meetings ; declaring, that such as shall be otherwise delivered shall be laid aside for that diet.

VIII.

Sess. 7, April 6, 1694, post meridiem.—Act anent Appeals.

The General Assembly of this National Church, for preventing some mistakes that have happened about appeals, doth hereby appoint, that any appeals made in writing under the appellant's hand, with the reasons thereof, in presence of the judicatory appealed from, shall be extracted by the appellant in due form from the records of the said judicatory, and produced to the judicatory appealed to at the discussing thereof, with a citation of the parties-defenders therein, either *apud acta*, if they be present when the appeal is made, or a separate citation if they be absent.

And because, by the former practice, parties not instantly giving in their subscribed appeals at the time of the sentence were allowed verbally to appeal, and protest for liberty to give in their subscribed appeals, with the reasons thereof, within the space of ten days thereafter ; and because that before the said space the said judicatory may happen to be up, therefore, it is hereby appointed and ordained, that all parties who have, immediately after sentence, verbally appealed and protested as aforesaid, shall, within the said space of ten days, give in their said subscribed appeals, with the reasons thereof, to the clerk of the judicatory appealed from, notwithstanding it may be up before that time. And, likewise, that they shall, within the same ten days, intimate their said appeal, with the reasons of the same, to the moderator of the said judicatory, and leave an authentic copy thereof with him. Which appeals and reasons are hereby allowed to be registered by the clerk, and summons to be directed by him for citing the parties-defenders thereupon ; and extracts thereof, with the cita-

tion foresaid, are appointed to be produced by the appellants, at discussing, to the judicatory appealed to; and the General Assembly hereby appoints the clerk to intimate to the said judicatory, at their first meeting thereafter, that such appeals were given in to him in the intervals of their meetings.

And suchlike, the General Assembly hereby appoints that all defenders in appeals, who insist in discussing thereof, shall produce extracts of the said appeals and reasons to the judicatory appealed to. And, lastly, the General Assembly hereby declares that any appeals or insistings thereanent otherwise made shall be rejected.

IX.

Sess. 9, April 10, 1694, post meridiem.—Act anent Lecturing.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering how necessary and edifying it is that the people be well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, doth, therefore, recommend to the several Presbyteries that they endeavour that the ministers within their respective bounds shall, in their exercise of lecturing, read and open up to the people some large and considerable portion of the Word of God; and this to the effect the old custom introduced and established by the Directory may by degrees be recovered.

X.

Sess. 10, April 11, 1694, post meridiem.—Act anent Probationers.

The General Assembly of this National Church hereby appoints that no Presbytery shall admit any person to trial, in order to preaching, but such as are of sound principles, and of a sober, grave, prudent, and pious behaviour, and of whom they have ground to conceive good hopes that they shall be useful and edifying in the Church. And for this end it is hereby appointed, that such persons shall produce, before the Presbyteries who admit them to trial, sufficient testimonials from the ministers of the parishes where they lived, and from the Presbyteries in whose bounds they reside, and also from the Professors of Divinity where they may have attended the profession for some time. And if the said persons come from a place where there is no Presbytery yet constituted, according to the legal establishment, they shall produce testificates from the next adjacent Presbytery, who are to inform themselves concerning their principles and behaviour, and to testify of them accordingly.

And suchlike, the General Assembly hereby appoints, that when such persons are first licensed to be probationers, they shall oblige themselves to preach only within the bounds or by the direction of that Presbytery which did license them; and they shall also, by promise and subscription, engage themselves that they shall be subject to the Presbytery that did license them, or to any other church judicatory, where in providence they shall have their abode, for shorter or longer time, and that they shall follow no divisive course; and this their engagement shall be inserted in the body of their licence. And farther, the General Assembly appoints that when they are removing from that Presbytery which did license them, they shall carry with them an extract of their licence, and a testimonial from the Presbytery of their carriage, which they are to present to the Presbytery to which they come, or at least to some minister therein, before they preach within that bounds; and which minister is not to employ them, except in his own pulpit, until he give notice thereof to the Presbytery at their next meeting, and have their allowance. As also, it is hereby appointed that the said Presbytery to which the said probationers so come, shall require the same subjection and orderly carriage from the said probationers, during their abode in that bounds, to which they were engaged to the Presbytery by which they were licensed; and if they go to any place where a Presbytery is not yet constituted according to the legal establishment, they shall be obliged, before they preach in that bounds, to make their address to the next adjacent and legally erected Presbytery, to whom they shall be subject, and by whom they shall be directed as aforesaid.

And in case the said probationers malverse in doctrine or conversation, they shall be accountable to and censurable by the foresaid respective judicatories, as they shall see cause; and if the said probationers refuse subjection, or prove contumacious to such censure, whether of reproof, suspending the exercise of their licence, or of recalling the said licence, intimation shall be made thereof by the said judicatory to the neighbouring judicatories, or where they shall understand the said probationers are, that so none may employ them to preach, nor their after irregularities be imputed to the Presbyteries that did license them, or where they afterwards had their abode.

It is always hereby expressly provided and declared, that the foresaid probationers are not to be esteemed, by themselves or others, to preach by virtue of any pastoral office, but only to make way for their being called to a pastoral charge.

XI.

Sess. 13, April 13, 1694, post meridiem.—Act approving Overtures anent a Commission of the General Assembly, and Instructions thereto.

This day the following overtures and instructions were read in presence of the General Assembly. The tenor whereof follows:—

“1. It is overtured to the General Assembly, that there be a commission appointed by this General Assembly, to meet and take such affairs under their consideration as the General Assembly shall think fit to commit to them.

“2. That out of this commission there be a certain number specially appointed by the General Assembly, as a committee to go to the North, with power to the commission to add any more of their number as they think fit.

“3. That this commission consist of fifty ministers and twenty-five ruling elders, fifteen to be the quorum, of whom ten to be ministers.

“4. That out of this commission, fifteen ministers and five ruling elders, besides these ministers and ruling elders of the North who shall be named in the foresaid commission, be appointed as a committee, as said is, to go to the North; thirteen of which committee to be the quorum, of whom seven to be of these commissioners who are on the south side of Tay, and of these seven five at least to be ministers; and that the said committee have the same power on the North side of Tay as the commission itself.

“5. That the General Assembly appoint the first meeting of this commission, and that the meeting be before the members go out of town after the Assembly ends; and that the commission do appoint their own after-meetings, and likewise the time when the said committee should meet in the North.

“6. That this commission may receive into ministerial communion such of the late conforming ministers as, having qualified themselves according to law, shall apply personally to them one by one, duly and orderly, and shall acknowledge, engage, and subscribe upon the end of the Confession of Faith as follows, viz.:—

“‘I, _____, do sincerely own and declare the above Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, to be the confession of my faith; and that I own the doctrine therein contained to be the true doctrine, which I will constantly adhere to; as likewise, that I own and acknowledge Presbyterian Church government of this Church, now settled by law, by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, to be the only government of this Church, and that I will submit thereto, concur therewith, and never endeavour, directly nor indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof; and that I shall observe uniformity of worship, and of the administration of all public ordinances within this Church, as the same are at present performed and allowed.’

“And the commission is to have special regard to their ministerial qualifications. And if any of the said ministers so applying, or any other ministers within this Church, of what persuasion soever, shall be accused or informed against of any scandal, error, supine negligence, or insufficiency, then the said commission shall make inquiry thereinto, cite parties, lead witnesses, take depositions, and do every other thing that may clear the matter of fact informed against them, and report the

same, and their diligence therein, to the next General Assembly. Providing always, that if any be accused of gross uncontroverted scandals, and these clearly proven, in that case the commission shall proceed to determine as they find cause: As it is likewise expected of all Presbyteries in this kingdom, that they will use that discretion in their behaviour and government, as that (during the continuance of this commission) in all processes against any ministers, they advise with their respective Synods, or in case of urgent necessity, consult with the said commission. As also, that the General Assembly require all Presbyteries and Synods, in their admitting or receiving any to ministerial communion, that they oblige them to take and subscribe the above acknowledgment: And that during the said time, neither this commission, or any other judicatory of this Church, do take advantage to censure any minister whatsoever, for not having qualified himself in the terms of the Act of Parliament 1693, intituled, 'Act for settling the Quiet and Peace of the Church;' as likewise, that the said commission and all other judicatories are to take care, that if any shall be found to have maliciously or calumniously accused any minister, they shall be condignly censured, according to the order and practice of this Church. As also, that the Assembly ordain, that none of these ministers who are not presently in charge be received into ministerial communion but by the said commission, or by that Presbytery or Synod of the bounds in which they now reside.

" 7. That this commission and committee foresaid shall be careful to settle elder-ships and plant ministers in vacant congregations on the North side of Tay, either by ordaining well qualified expectants (who shall be bound at their entry to subscribe the said Confession of Faith, with the acknowledgment above expressed) or by transporting ministers, who shall be called by any vacant congregation therein, (the Presbytery to which they belong being first applied unto,) requiring all ministers who shall be so called to give obedience to these sentences of transportation; with power likewise to the said commission, to receive any appeals that shall be made in any process of transportation of a minister from one Synod to another, (which appeals may be from any such Presbytery to the Synod or commission, which of these two shall first happen to sit,) and to determine finally therein, as they find cause.

" 8. And seeing there are diverse processes led before several judicatories of this Church against Mr John Hepburn, which, by references thereanent, lie before this Assembly, that, therefore, the General Assembly do remit these processes to the consideration of the said commission. And it being informed that several aspersions are laid on the ministers and judicatories of this Church by some persons, as if the said ministers and judicatories had receded from the known principles thereof, in relation to the constitution and government of the Church, contained in the Confession of Faith, though the contrary thereof be evident, not only by the ministers of this Church their owning of and adhering to the said Confession, wherein these principles are contained, but also by the whole course of their ministry; that, therefore, the General Assembly require the said commission to take all due pains to inform, convince, and satisfy any such persons of their mistakes, that they may be reclaimed.

" 9. That such references and appeals as the General Assembly cannot overtake to determine, and shall be particularly remitted to the said commission by the Assembly, the same shall by the said commission be taken to consideration, cognosed upon, and finally determined as they see cause.

" 10. That this commission do not take on them to meddle with any thing not contained in their commission; and that in all their actings they be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly.

" And, lastly, that this commission continue till the second Tuesday of April 1695, or the meeting of the next General Assembly, which soever of these two shall first happen."

All which overtures and instructions above set down being maturely considered, the General Assembly of this National Church hereby approves thereof; and recommends and appoints according thereto in all points.

XII.

Sess. 13, April 14, 1694, post meridiem.—Act anent Processes against Ministers.

The General Assembly doth seriously recommend to all the Presbyteries of this Church, to proceed in all processes against ministers with all due circumspection and prudence, and that they consult their respective Synods, or, in case of urgent necessity, the Commission of this Assembly therein. And the General Assembly hereby requires, that no judicatory of this Church do take advantage to censure any minister whatsoever, for not having qualified himself in the terms of the act of Parliament, 1693, intituled, "Act for settling the Quiet and Peace of the Church;" and this act to endure only till the second Tuesday of April 1695, or the meeting of the next General Assembly, which of the two shall first happen.

XIII.

Sess. 14, April 16, 1694, post meridiem.—Act against Profaneness.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into serious consideration how much God is dishonoured by the impiety and profaneness that aboundeth in this nation, in profane and idle swearing, cursing, Sabbath-breaking, neglect and contempt of Gospel ordinances, mocking of piety and religious exercises, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, blasphemy, and other gross and abominable sins and vices; and how much it concerns the honour and glory of God that the same be restrained and suppressed, and that virtue and godliness be encouraged; and also what may be the remedies of these detestable sins; doth, therefore, exhort and require, that ministers, and all who fear God, have on their hearts a deep, humbling, and soul-affecting sense of these evils, and be much in prayer and supplication before God on this account; and that all the ministers of this Church preach plainly and faithfully against these vices, and denounce the threatened judgments of God against such evil-doers, and deal earnestly and much with their consciences, to bring them to a conviction and sense of their sin and danger. As also, the General Assembly appoints that Church judicatories do faithfully exercise Church discipline against all such scandalous offenders, with that gravity, prudence, and meekness of wisdom, as, by the blessing of God, may prove an effectual mean of reforming and recovering the guilty, and of preventing the like sins in others.

And farther, the General Assembly requires that care be taken in the receiving of servants, that they have testimonials of their honest and Christian behaviour; and that the same be required of all others who flit and remove from one parish to another.

And also, the General Assembly appoints, that the ministers and elders in each congregation take care that the worship of God be performed in the several families thereof; and if any family be found which neglecteth this necessary duty, the head of that family is to be gravely, seriously, and earnestly admonished, until he amend his fault; and recommends to ministers and kirk-sessions, that none be ruling elders who make not conscience of this necessary and unquestionable duty; and that no grossly ignorant and scandalous person be admitted to the Lord's Table.

And likewise the General Assembly recommends to all ministers and kirk-sessions, that they carefully apply to the several magistrates of their bounds that the acts of Parliament against profaneness may be put in execution, and particularly the act of Parliament, June 15, 1693, intituled, "Act against Profaneness."

And, lastly, the General Assembly ordains that this present act be publicly read and intimated in all churches.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act appointing some Ministers for the Supply of the North.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration the many

vacancies in this Church by north the Water of Tay, and the paucity of ministers in these parts, who are in any condition to give supply without their own congregations; and also having before them the petitions of several noblemen, gentlemen, and magistrates of burghs living in these parts; therefore, the General Assembly have ordained, and hereby ordain, that the Synods besouth Tay shall send north the number of sixteen ministers, according to the proportions after mentioned, for supply of the vacancies within the Synods of Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Murray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness: That is to say, that there be two sent to supply the vacancies of Angus and Mearns, including the kirk of Rattray; four to supply the vacancies within the town and province of Aberdeen; six to supply the vacancies within the Synod of Murray; and four to supply the vacancies within the Synods of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness: And ordains that the Synods of Fife, Perth, Lothian, Merse and Teviotdale, Glasgow, Galloway and Dumfries, do send to the north for that effect the ministers after named, viz. from the Synod of Fife, Mr Thomas Russell at Kennoway, and Mr James Hadow at Coupar; from the Synod of Lothian, Mr John Frazer at Glencorss, Mr Donald Campbell at the Queensferry, Mr Robert Livingstoun at Liberton, in the Presbytery of Biggar, and Mr Robert Colvill at Baro; from the Synod of Perth any one of their number to supply the congregation of Rattray; from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, Mr George Guthry at Oxnam, and Mr John Dysart at Langton; from the Synod of Glasgow, Mr James Brisbane at Kilmalcolm, Mr Andrew Tait at Carmunnock, Mr John Glasgow at Kilbirnie, Mr Duncan Campbell at Roseneath, (or any other for him having the Irish tongue, whom the Presbytery of Dumbarton shall appoint,) and Mr Andrew Rogers at Galston; from the Synod of Galloway, Mr John Murdoch at Crossmichael; and from the Synod of Dumfries, Mr William Somervell at Traquair, in all sixteen, who are hereby ordained to repair to the Commission of this General Assembly, to meet at Edinburgh against the eighteenth day of April instant, and receive directions from the said Commission, to go to such particular Synods in the north as it shall direct, and thereafter to be advised by the ministers, residing in these respective Synods, to what particular congregations they shall apply themselves. And likewise, the General Assembly ordains that the said ministers make all diligence (with the Lord's assistance) to be at the respective places to which they are to be sent against the first Sabbath of June next, where they are to continue for the space of three months; at which time the General Assembly doth hereby ordain the above written Synods of the south to send a new supply to the north, of as many ministers more, (if need require,) to continue for the second quarter; and so forth quarterly, ay and until the sitting of the next General Assembly; and that according to the proportion underwritten, to wit, from the Synod of Fife, three; from the Synod of Perth, one; from the Synod of Lothian, four; from the Synod of Merse, two; from the Synod of Glasgow, four; from that of Galloway, one; and from that of Dumfries, one. But, with this provision, that, according as the vacancies in the north shall be filled, and the necessity of supplies grow less, the remotest of the said Synods shall be first eased. And farther, because the Synod of Glasgow, Galloway, and Dumfries, are not to meet in their respective Provincial Assemblies before the expiring of the first quarter of the above appointed time; therefore, the General Assembly doth now nominate and appoint the ministers after named to be sent north, in manner after mentioned, from these three Synods, for the second quarter, viz. from the Synod of Glasgow, Mr John Laury at Auchinleck, Mr Archibald Hamilton at Cambuslang, Mr Alexander King at Bonhil, and Mr David Meldrum, preacher: from the Synod of Galloway, Mr Andrew Ewart at Kells; and from the Synod of Dumfries, Mr George Boyd at Glencairn.

And the General Assembly recommends to the respective Presbyteries to take care to supply the kirks of these ministers; and also of such as are upon the Commission to meet at Edinburgh, and of these that are upon the committee that is to go to the north during their absence, and that in a more punctual way than other vacancies.

XV.

Eadem Sessione.—Recommendation anent Vacant Stipends.

The General Assembly, finding it necessary for support and propagation of the work of the Gospel, to send a considerable number of ministers from the remotest parts of this kingdom to the Synods in the north, which doth require a necessary expense; and it being found in law, that such as so serve vacant congregations merit and ought to be maintained out of the stipend during the time that they serve, which certainly is the most proper and preferable pious use a stipend can be applied to; therefore, the General Assembly doth humbly desire their Majesties' High Commissioner, that he would, in the Assembly's name, apply to their Majesties for a general recommendation to the Lords of Privy Council, Lords of Treasury and Exchequer, Lords of Session, and other judges whatsoever, in favour of such as shall, by order foresaid, serve vacant congregations, that they may have access for maintenance out of the vacant stipends during the time they serve.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Intrusion upon Kirks.

The General Assembly, being informed that there are divers churches intruded upon by several persons in a most illegal and unwarrantable manner, doth, therefore, recommend to the Commission of this Assembly, which is to meet at Edinburgh, and to the committee for the North *respective*, to make inquiry thereinto, and to apply to the Lords of Privy Council to declare the intrusion; to the effect the kirks intruded into may be orderly planted with their Lordships' assistance.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Exercise and Addition, Privy Censures, and Bursars of Theology.

The General Assembly doth earnestly recommend to the several Presbyteries within this Church to set up the use of exercise and addition; as also, that of privy censures, conform to the ancient practice of this Church; and appoints their diligence therein to be recorded in their respective registers. And suchlike the General Assembly hereby recommends to the several Presbyteries, that they be careful to keep and maintain bursars of theology, conform to the ancient practice and the acts of former General Assemblies made thereanent.

XVIII.

Sess. 15 et ult. April 17, 1694, post meridiem.—Commission of the General Assembly for some Commissioners to meet at Edinburgh.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration how requisite it is, in the present juncture, that there be a commission appointed for such affairs as this Assembly sees fit to commit thereto; doth, therefore, by these presents, nominate and appoint Mr William Mackay, minister at Dornoch, &c. &c., to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after expressed, with full power and commission to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any fifteen of the said commissioners, whereof ten at least are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, upon the day next and immediately following the dissolution of this General Assembly, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, for their first meeting, and to appoint their after diets of meeting

as they shall see convenient; as also to chuse their own moderator, in case of the absence of the moderator of this Assembly. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises the said commissioners, and their quorum foresaid, to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in all references, appeals, and other matters, that have been or shall be particularly remitted to them for that effect, by any act or order of this Assembly, all which are holden as herein expressed; and specially to proceed and cognosce in every thing contained in and conform to the overtures and instructions thereanent, approved by the General Assembly upon the thirteenth day of April instant, intituled "Overtures anent a Commission of the General Assembly, and Instructions thereto," as full and freely as if the same were in these presents at full length inserted and set down; likeas, the General Assembly hereby prohibits the said commissioners to meddle in any other matter not herein contained; declaring also, that in and for all their actings the said commissioners shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, the General Assembly hereby declares that this commission shall continue till the second Tuesday of April 1695 years, or the next meeting of the General Assembly, which of these two shall first happen.

XIX.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission of the General Assembly to a Committee for the North Side of Tay.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration how requisite it is, in the present juncture, that there be a committee appointed for the North side of Tay, for such affairs as the Assembly sees fit to commit thereto; doth, therefore, by these presents, nominate and appoint Mr William Crichton, minister at Falkirk, &c. &c.; together also with any others that shall be added to them by the said commission which is to meet at Edinburgh, out of their own number, to be a committee of this General Assembly for the North side of Tay, to the effect after expressed; with full power and commission to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirteen of the said committee, of whom seven shall be of the commissioners who are on the South side of Tay, and of these seven five at least to be ministers, to meet and convene at such time and place as the foresaid other commission, which is to meet at Edinburgh, shall appoint, for their first meeting; with power to the said committee and their quorum foresaid to appoint their own after diets and places of meeting as they shall see convenient; as also to chuse their own moderator: And suchlike, the General Assembly hereby fully empowers and authorises the said committee, and quorum thereof aforesaid, to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, in all references, appeals, and other matters, that have been or shall be particularly remitted to them for that effect, by any act or order of this Assembly, all which are holden as herein expressed; and specially to proceed and cognosce in every thing contained in and conform to the overtures and instructions thereanent, approved by this Assembly upon the thirteenth day of April instant, intituled, "Overtures anent a Commission of the General Assembly and Instructions thereto," as fully and freely as if the same were, in these presents, at full length inserted and set down; likeas, the General Assembly hereby prohibits the said committee to meddle in any other matter not herein contained; declaring also, that in and for all their actings the said committee shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, the General Assembly hereby declares that this commission shall continue till the second Tuesday of April 1695 years, or the meeting of the General Assembly, which of these two shall first happen.

XX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Irish Psalms.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration that there is a complete paraphrase of the whole Psalms in Irish metre, approved and emitted

by the Synod of Argyle, who understand the Irish language, conform to an act of the General Assembly, 1690, together with a translation of the Shorter Catechism of this Church in Irish, bound with the said Psalms in one volume; and the General Assembly, understanding that in some parts of this National Church, where preaching and prayer are used in Irish, the Psalms are sung at the same diet in a different language, whereby an uniformity in the worship of God is marred, and many of the people deprived of the benefit of praising God in a known tongue: Therefore, as the General Assembly doth hereby appoint that this incongruous way of worshipping God shall be hereafter forborne, so they do recommend to all congregations and families who worship God in the Irish language to make use of the said paraphrase therein; and also to make use of the foresaid translation of the Shorter Catechism, as an uniform mean of catechising the people.

XXI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against fixing in the Lowlands of Preachers who have the Irish Language.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration that the Highlands of Scotland are deprived of many preachers who have the Irish language, contrary to divers acts of former General Assemblies, which is occasioned, in a great part, by the fixing of such as have the Irish language in congregations within the Lowlands: Therefore, the General Assembly doth hereby seriously recommend to all Presbyteries, that they fix no such preachers or intrants as have the Irish language in any congregations within the Lowlands of Scotland, without the consent of, and a testimony from the Presbyteries in the Highlands where they formerly resided; and this act to continue till such time as the Highlands shall be competently provided with ministers.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh the first Thursday of April 1695 years.

The Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, and singing of the 122d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected, visied, and extracted from the records of the General Assembly
by me,

ROB. PARK.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, DECEMBER 17, 1695.*

I.

Sess. 1, December 17, 1695, post meridiem.—The Meeting of the General Assembly.

The which day, after sermon preached by Mr John Law, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, Moderator of the last Assembly, upon 1 Corinth. iv. 2, the General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this Church of Scotland did convene in the Assembly-House; where, after prayer by the said Mr John Law, a roll was taken up of the commissioners delegated by the several Presbyteries, burghs royal, and universities, for holding this Assembly.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Act continuing Mr John Law Moderator till Friday next.

The said day, the General Assembly, considering that many of their members had

* For reasons specified in several royal proclamations, the meeting of the Assembly of 1695 was adjourned, first, to the 11th of July, then to the 20th of November, and, afterwards, to the 17th of December, when it was held at Edinburgh.—*Ed.* 1843.

not yet come to this town, did therefore put it to the vote, whether to chuse a new Moderator presently, or continue Mr John Law Moderator till Friday next; and it carried, *nemine contradicente*, that the said Mr John Law should be continued Moderator till Friday next.

III.

Eadem Sessione.—*Act appointing Mr John Bannatyne to officiate as Clerk till Friday next.*

The General Assembly, considering that through the decease of Mr Robert Park, advocate, their clerk's place is now become vacant; therefore, they, by an unanimous vote, made choice of Mr John Bannatyne, minister of the Gospel at Lanark, and one of their own number, to officiate as clerk until Friday next.

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—*Appointment of a Diet to be kept by the Assembly for Prayer.*

The General Assembly appoints to-morrow, being Wednesday, betwixt nine and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, to be set apart by the members of this Assembly for public prayer to the Almighty God, for his countenancing and directing this Assembly in the matters that shall come before them, and recommends to all the said members to meet in the Assembly-House timeously for that effect.

V.

Sess. 2, December 18, 1695, ante meridiem.—*Appointment of another Diet for Prayer.*

The General Assembly being met, this diet was spent in prayer, according to the appointment made yesterday thereanent; and, further, it was agreed to that the members of this Assembly should meet again to-morrow for public prayer; and, accordingly, it was recommended to all the members to meet in the Assembly-House to-morrow, immediately after sermon, for the effect foresaid.

VI.

Sess. 3, December 19, 1695, ante meridiem.—*A Diet spent in Prayer.*

The General Assembly being met, this diet was spent in prayer, according to the appointment made yesterday thereanent, and adjourned till to-morrow, at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

VII.

Sess. 4, December 20, 1695, ante meridiem.—*The recording of his Majesty's Commission to John Lord Carmichael, for representing his Majesty in this General Assembly, with the Commissioner's and Moderator's Speeches.*

This day, the General Assembly of this National Church being met, and Mr Patrick Simson chosen Moderator, and Mr John Bannatyne clerk, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, his Majesty's Commission under the Great Seal of the kingdom of Scotland, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which Commission was publicly read with all due honour and respect; and the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, the said Commission to be registered in the records of the General Assembly, therein to remain, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—"GULIELMUS," &c.

After reading of which commission, Mr Patrick Simson, moderator, did, in the Assembly's name, represent to his Grace how great a mercy it was to this Church and kingdom, that his Majesty had called and countenanced this National Assembly with his authority, and honoured it with a representative of his royal person, who, by his former prudent conduct in two former General Assemblies, hath rendered himself most acceptable to this Assembly to represent his Majesty therein.

Whereupon his Grace, his Majesty's High Commissioner, delivered himself as follows:—Right Reverend, and you the remanent members of this Assembly, you are now met in this Assembly conform to the King's appointment; and his Majesty having honoured me to be his Commissioner, I am warranted to give you all assurance of his Majesty's resolution to maintain Presbyterian government in this Church, and to evidence his fatherly care for its welfare. His Majesty expects that at this time you will chiefly make it your work to regulate matters of order and discipline amongst yourselves. It is the King's great regret that there are so many churches vacant within this kingdom, which obviously suggests that it would be your best work, as indeed it would be most acceptable to his Majesty, that you should apply yourselves principally to the restoring the Gospel to such churches; and, in doing of this, you may be very assured of his Majesty's countenance and authority. It is also evidently convenient, and likewise expected, that if good men apply to you to be assumed, you will receive their applications with all charity and moderation.

I hope the good Spirit of God shall direct you in these matters to the best advantage; only I recommend to you to mind your business closely, without heats and unnecessary contentions, and to make all the dispatch you can to bring this Assembly to an happy issue, both for the Church's good and his Majesty's satisfaction.

VIII.

Sess. 5, December 23, 1695, post meridiem.—Act anent Commissions to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly hereby recommends it to the several Presbyteries of this National Church to keep an uniform method, as near as may be, in granting commissions to the members of the General Assembly, and not to insert particular instructions in their commissions; and, for the better attaining the end foresaid, the General Assembly gives the form after inserted for a directory:—

At the day of years. The which day the Presbytery of did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint Mr minister at Mr minister at and ruling elders, their commissioners to the next General Assembly of this Church, indicted to meet at the day of next to come, or when or where it shall happen to sit; willing them to repair thereto, and to attend all the diets of the same, and there to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that come before them, to the glory of God and the good of his Church, according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and agreeable to the constitutions of this Church, as they will be answerable; and that they report their diligence therein at their return therefrom. Extracted by me.

IX.

Sess. 6, December 24, 1695, post meridiem.—Act anent Trafficking Priests, and the Education of young Noblemen, Gentlemen, and others, Children of Popish Parents.

The General Assembly recommends to all Provincial Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk-Sessions within this National Church, to take particular notice of trafficking Papists, and appoints lists to be taken up of their names and given to the Privy Council, with an address for executing the laws against them; and the General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to advert to the education of young noblemen, gentlemen, and others, children of Popish parents, and to put the 7th act of the General Assembly, 1690, thereanent, in execution.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Quakers.

The General Assembly of this National Church, for prevention of the growth of these abominable heresies of the Quakers, do recommend to all Provincial Synods, Presbyteries, Ministers, and Kirk-Sessions, to use all proper means for reclaiming them; and in case of their obstinacy, to proceed against them with the censures of the Church, and especially against the ringleaders, that are traffickers for seducing of others.

XL

Sess. 7, December 25, 1695, post meridiem.—An Overture and Act anent Novations.

The General Assembly of this National Church, having heard an overture brought in from the Committee for Overtures, that no new acts relating to the doctrine, worship, or government of this Church, be made until they be first transmitted to the several Presbyteries of this National Church; which, being considered, the General Assembly recommends it to the members of this Assembly to discourse upon the said overture with their respective Presbyteries, that the next General Assembly may be the more ripe to determine anent the conveniency thereof; and, in the mean time, the General Assembly hereby revives the acts of the former Assemblies made thereanent, and particularly the 13th act of the Assembly 1639, and 14th act of the Assembly 1641.

XII.

Sess. 12, December 31, 1695, post meridiem.—Act approving Overtures anent a more expedite and certain way of planting the North with fixed Ministers.

The General Assembly of this National Church, having considered the overtures underwritten, which were at two several diets publicly read over in open Assembly, and examined, and any members that desired were allowed to have doubles thereof, to the effect they might be perused by them, and intimation was made to give in their objections, if they had any, to a committee appointed for that end; and, last of all, upon the day and date hereof the said overtures were again a third time publicly read in presence of the General Assembly, as also the additional overtures annexed thereto, the tenor of both which follows:—

“ 1. That, for the more expedite planting of ministers on the North side of the Water of Tay, the Assembly nominate a commission of some of the most experienced ministers and elders to meet at Edinburgh, and there to sit monthly, from time to time, until there shall be settled on the said North side of Tay twenty-two ministers of some considerable standing and experience, now belonging to the Presbyteries on the South side of the said Water.

“ 2. That when any of the parishioners of the said North shall call any of the following ministers, they may, without sending any commissioner to prosecute the same, send the said call approved and concurred with by the Presbytery of the bounds, to the moderator of the said commission, who, for greater expedition, shall cause double the call and attest the copy, and send the same with the reasons of the desired transportation, in a letter to the moderator of that Presbytery to whom the minister called doth belong.

“ 3. That the moderator of the said Presbytery, upon the receipt of the said letter, shall be obliged to transmit the said call, with the reasons thereof, to the minister called, and shall cause summon the said minister and the parish he belongs to, the next Sabbath, in the ordinary way, to appear before the said Presbytery, and answer the call and reasons; and if the ordinary time of the meeting of the said Presbytery shall fall not to be within eleven days, then the moderator shall call a Presbytery *pro re nata* against that time.”

4. That the Presbytery at their said meeting shall, without any delay, consider and determine the process of the said call thus brought before them, and if they shall not at the same time transport the minister called to the said parish he is called unto, they be obliged to transmit the said call, reasons and answers, and the Presbytery's determination, to the said commission, against the first ensuing diet thereof; providing there intervene ten days betwixt and the said diet, and shall summon the said minister called, and his parish, to appear before the said commission, to answer finally thereunto.

5. That the said commission, at Edinburgh, do thereupon without any delay, consider and determine the said process, and that whether the said minister and his parish thus summoned do appear or not.

6. That when the said commission or Presbytery pass a sentence of transportation, it shall be obeyed by the minister transported, against the time limited in the act of transportation, under the pain of suspension, which he is to lie under until he obey, and which censure the Assembly doth require the said commission to inflict upon him who doth disobey.

7. That there be forty-four ministers of some considerable experience, fit to be transported to the North, nominated by this Assembly, in manner following, of which the one-half shall, upon calls as above, be transported by virtue of this act.

8. That there may be some suitable proportioning of the said transportations, it is overtured, that where a Presbytery on the South side of Tay is two-third parts planted with fixed ministers, and hath eight fixed ministers therein, that two of these eight (and proportionally where there are sixteen or twenty-four) be nominated by the Assembly, making up in all the above number of forty-four ministers.

9. That out of these Presbyteries who furnish two, one of the said two shall be transported, and but one; and so proportionally where the Presbytery furnishes more, making up of all, twenty-two to be actually transported.

10. That the foresaid number of forty-four, out of which only twenty-two are to be transported, shall be furnished by the following Presbyteries, viz., by the Presbytery of Chirnside two, one of which is to be actually transported; by the Presbytery of Earlstoun two, one of which is to be actually transported; by the Presbytery of Jedburgh two; by Melrose or Selkirk two; by Dunbar two; by Dalkeith none, having already given one; by Linlithgow two, one of which is to be transported; by Peebles two, one of which is to be transported; by Biggar two, one of which is to be transported; by Dumfries two, one of which is to be transported; by Lochmaben two, one of which is to be transported; by Kirkcudbright two, one of which is to be transported, having given one already; by Ayr two, one of which is to be transported, having given one already; by Irvine two, one of which is to be transported, having given one already; by Hamilton two, one of which is to be transported; by Lanark two, one of which is to be transported; by Glasgow two, one of which is to be transported, having given one already; by Paisley two, one of which is to be transported; by Dumbarton two, one of which is to be transported; by Cupar two, one of which is to be transported; by Kirkcaldy two, one of which is to be transported; by Dunfermline two, one of which is to be transported; all which make up the above-named number, out of which the half is to be transported to the North, after the way and manner above expressed.

11. That of these forty-four out of the Presbyteries above named, the half of them be appointed to go North, by way of mission to the several provinces they shall be allotted unto, so as to be there against the first Sabbath of March next, and to stay there three months, exercising their ministry according to the appointment of the Presbyteries unto which they come; and the other half to go North, after the same manner, and to stay the same length of time, against the first Sabbath of June next, and that these of them who have not been in the North already go first.

12. That the brethren from the North do meet among themselves, and proportion these twenty-two among the several provinces of Angus and Mearns, (comprehending Rattray parish,) Aberdeen, Moray, and Caithness, and that they concert among themselves out of which of the above written Presbyteries they will have their

quotas, and that they do this before the nomination of the persons to be transported.

13. That besides these forty-four, there be some ministers and expectants out of Argyleshire, nominated, who being preachers of the Highland language, are to be allotted to supply Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, and the town of Inverness.

14. It is also overtured, that such as have been appointed by the judicatories of this Church since the last General Assembly for the supply of the North, and have not obeyed their appointments, be not only censured for their disobedience, but their appointments renewed, and they ordained to go with the first supplies.

15. That the General Assembly declare, that these parishes thus to be vacated by transportation, when they shall after come to be settled with another minister, that the said minister shall be declared not transportable from that parish without their consent, and unless he have unsupportable grievances therein.

16. That the Assembly name two or three out of each Synod on the South side of Tay, to meet with the brethren of the North, to concert the names of the above forty-four ministers, and to present the same to the Assembly, to be by them nominated and appointed.

Additional Overtures for a more Expedite Planting the North.

1. It is overtured that the Presbytery of Irvine be exempted from any being nominated to be transported, but not excused from quarterly supplies.

2. That besides the brother of the Presbytery of Dalkeith who is transported already, they send one to the North in mission.

3. That the Presbytery of Dumfries, because of the particular circumstances they are in, have the Presbyteries of Penpont and Middlebie to help them, and that two fit persons be named out of these Presbyteries, and not above one out of any one Presbytery of the three.

4. That in the nomination of the commission one at least out of every Presbytery be named, who send two of the forty-four above mentioned.

5. That the suspension to be inflicted, in the case above expressed, be taken off by the Synod of the bounds, or next Assembly, if they find insuperable difficulties arising in the minister transported his obeying the sentence; and providing they immediately nominate another fit person who shall effectually supply the other's room.

6. That out of St Andrews Presbytery two be named and added to the number.

7. That all these Overtures are condescended to only for the present exigent, and that this shall be no precedent for after times, but in case there be any transportations pursued afterward, that they shall proceed in the ordinary course, and not otherwise.

All these above-written Overtures, both principal and additional, being maturely considered, the General Assembly of this National Church, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, approve the same, and recommends and appoints according thereto in all points.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Testimonials.

The General Assembly appoints all probationers who apply to Presbyteries, to bring not only sufficient testimonials, but also a letter from a known person to the Presbytery, and that the Presbytery write to them from whom the testimonials come, (if need be,) to know the verity thereof.

XIV.

Sess. 16, January 3, 1696, ante meridiem.—Act anent the Supply of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their serious consider-

ation the many vacant churches, and great desolations that are in the bounds of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, do therefore appoint, that there be sent in mission to the said bounds of Sutherland, Ross, and Caithness, the ministers and probationers after mentioned, in manner and to the effect under expressed, viz., Mr Robert Duncanson, minister, from the Provincial Synod of Argyle, who is declared already transportable, and upon a call to be transported, in case the commission shall see cause, to whom that matter is hereby referred; as also, that such as have the Irish language in Lowland congregations be sent in mission, and, upon calls, transported by the commission, and that in the same way that other ministers are appointed to be transported to the North; and, farther, that Messrs Thomas and Hector Frasers, probationers, (who were formerly appointed,) go there, and Mr Hugh Duff be sent to that Presbytery to pass his trials, in order to be settled there, and such other probationers that have the Irish language as the Synod of Argyle can spare.

XV.

Sess. 17, January 3, 1696, post meridiem.—Act Nominating and Appointing Ministers to go North, by way of Mission.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their consideration that by their act, dated the last day of December last, they have laid down a way for a more expedite planting of the vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and for that end appointed the number of forty-four ministers to be sent North, by way of mission; and now having, according to the said act, concerted the names of those to be sent to the North, do therefore nominate and appoint the ministers from the several Presbyteries after named to repair to their respective posts in the North, in manner, at the times, and according to the proportions under-written, viz., to the province of Angus and Mearns, &c. &c. The General Assembly hereby appoints the brethren who are first named in each Presbytery to go so, as to be there the first Sabbath of March, and the last named in each Presbytery against the first Sabbath of June next; as also, the General Assembly appoints, that those of the said brethren first named, who are actually present at their respective posts in the North, stay some time longer, and that to stand for their mission, by virtue of this act.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act approving the Proceedings of the Commissions of the General Assemblies, 1690 and 1694.

The General Assembly of this National Church, having heard the report of a committee of their own number, appointed to revise, consider, and examine the actings and proceedings of the Commission for Visitations on the North side of Tay, appointed by the General Assembly, 1690, beginning the 14th day of November 1690, and ending the 30th of October 1691 years, inclusive of both days; as also, the actings and proceedings of the commissioners appointed by the General Assembly, 1694, to meet at Edinburgh, beginning the 18th April 1694, and ending the 5th day of April 1695, inclusive of both days; and, after serious and mature consideration thereof, finding that the whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the register thereof, do evidence much wisdom, diligence, vigilancy, and commendable zeal; and that the said commissioners have orderly and formally proceeded in every thing according to their commissions and instructions; therefore, this General Assembly did, and hereby do, unanimously ratify and approve the said whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners appointed by the said General Assemblies, 1690 and 1694 years.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act approving the Proceedings of the Committee for the North, appointed by the General Assembly, 1694.

The General Assembly of this National Church, having heard the report of a com-

mittee of their own number, appointed to revise, consider, and examine the actings and proceedings of the committee of the North, appointed by the General Assembly held at Edinburgh in the year 1694, beginning the 14th day of June, and ending the 29th day of August next thereafter; and, after serious and mature consideration thereof, finding that the whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said committee, contained in the register thereof, subscribed by Mr William Mackie, clerk thereto, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, diligence, vigilancy, and commendable zeal, and that the said committee hath orderly and formally proceeded in every thing according to their commission and instructions; therefore, this General Assembly, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said whole acts, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said committee appointed for the North, contained in the said register.

XVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act recommending to Ministers to Preach Catechetical Doctrine.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering how necessary and edifying it is that the people be well acquainted with the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, do, therefore, recommend to the care of ministers, that besides their ordinary work of catechizing, they also preach catechetical doctrine, at such times, and in such manner, as they shall find most conducive for the edification of their flocks.

XIX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Recommendations for Charity.

The General Assembly appoints that no minister, kirk-sessions, or elders, give recommendations for charity to any without the bounds of their own parishes, nor Presbyteries without the bounds of their Presbyteries, nor Provincial Synods without their bounds; and that any recommendations so to be given within their respective bounds shall be for a definite time.

XX.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission of the General Assembly for some Commissioners to meet at Edinburgh.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering the many vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and having laid down a way for a more expeditious planting of ministers therein, doth, therefore, by these presents, nominate and appoint Messrs John Dysert, minister of the Gospel at Coldingham, &c. &c., to be commissioners of the General Assembly to the effect after expressed, with full power and commission to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any fifteen of the said commissioners, whereof nine are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, upon the first Tuesday after the dissolution of this General Assembly, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Wednesday of every month, and oftener as they shall see needful, during the continuance of this commission; and the General Assembly requires all the members of this commission to attend punctually the first meeting thereof, and all the quarterly meetings thereafter, and which commissioners, at their first and quarterly meetings, are to take into their consideration the particular affairs recommended to them by the General Assembly, and the monthly and quarterly meetings to consider the transportations of the twenty-two ministers from the South to the North, with power also to the said commissioners to choose their own moderator and clerk. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises the said commissioners, and their quorum foresaid, to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in all references, appeals, and other matters, that

have been or shall be particularly remitted to them for that effect, by any act or order of this Assembly; all which are holden as herein expressed. And, finally, to proceed and cognosce in every thing contained in, and conform to the overtures and instructions thereanent, approved by this General Assembly upon the last day of December last, entitled, "Act approving Overtures anent a more expeditious and certain way for Planting the North with fixed Ministers," as fully and freely as if the same were in these presents at full length inserted and set down. This commission is also to correspond with the State for appointing fasts and thanksgivings as occasion falls out, and to specify the causes thereof. Likeas, the General Assembly hereby prohibit the said commissioners to meddle in any other matter than what is herein contained; declaring also, that in and for all their actings the said commissioners shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church; and, lastly, the General Assembly hereby declares that this commission shall continue till the meeting of the next General Assembly of this National Church.

XXI

Sess. 18, January 4, 1696, ante meridiem.—Act against the Atheistical Opinions of the Deists, and for establishing the Confession of Faith.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their serious consideration, that, in many places, not a few, of Atheistical principles, who go under the name of Deists, and for the time refuse the odious character of Atheist, maintain and disseminate pernicious principles tending to Scepticism and Atheism; and that there is no small ground to fear the spreading of that gangrene through this land, where (as it is credibly informed) there are not wanting active factors for Satan, and his kingdom of darkness, who make it their great business to overturn and ridicule true and pure religion, Do, therefore, seriously recommend to, and enjoin the ministers of the Gospel, where there is any apparent hazard of such a contagion, to warn and guard the Lord's people against that infernal course, and to detect the abominableness of the tenets of those men, such as the denying of all revealed religion, the grand mysteries of the Gospel, viz. The doctrine of the Trinity—the incarnation of the Messiah—his satisfaction to justice—salvation through Him—justification by His imputed righteousness to them who believe on His name—the resurrection of the dead—and, in a word, the certainty and authority of Scripture revelation; as also, their asserting that there must be a mathematical evidence for each purpose, before we can be obliged to assent to any proposition thereanent, and that natural light is sufficient to salvation. It is also hereby required that authors, who treat well of those subjects, be named to the people, in order to perusal; as likewise, that ministers deal seriously with the seduced, and such as are mostly in hazard to be perverted; but especially with seducers and imposters, that, after sufficient instruction and admonition, these be proceeded against as scandalous and heretical apostates used to be; and, in general, the Assembly doth discharge all ministers, and other members of this Church, to publish or vent, either by speaking, writing, printing, teaching, or preaching any doctrine, tenet, or opinion contrary unto, or inconsistent with, the Confession of Faith of this Church, or any article, part, or proposition therein; and appoints that all such as contravene this act, or any part thereof, be censured by the Church according to their demerit.

XXII

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Students.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the danger that ariseth to the Church and to the souls of people, and the contempt that may be brought on the ministry, by licensing or ordaining young men, without sufficient proof of their piety, gravity, prudence, sobriety, orthodoxy, and learning, do, therefore, appoint, that strict inquiry be made into all these qualifications of such as are offered to Presbyteries, in order to passing their trials, and that such be rejected who have not sufficient testi-

monials from universities of their good behaviour and proficiency; (and that the usual school-degrees be inquired after, though not made a necessary qualification,) or, at least, should not be found to have retrieved their lost time at schools by after diligence; as also, that such as are esteemed to be vain, or imprudent, or proud, or worldly-minded, by the generality of sober intelligent persons, who converse with them, shall be kept back from that sacred work.

In order to the education of young men for the ministry, it is recommended to Professors in Divinity, that they require of such students as they employ in any exercises, testimonials from universities where they have studied, and places where they have lived.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary it is that they who declare the oracles of God to others should themselves understand them in the original languages, do require that none be licensed to preach, or ordained to the ministry, unless they give good proof of their understanding the Greek and Hebrew; and the General Assembly recommendeth to all candidates for the ministry to study also the other oriental languages, especially the Chaldaic and Syriac, so far as they can.

It is also recommended that they be tried not only in the great controversies of religion, but also in the controversies concerning the government and discipline of the Church.

XXIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Irregularities.

The General Assembly do seriously recommend it to all Synods and Presbyteries, that they advert to the many irregularities committed by vagrant unfixed ministers, many of whom are lying under ecclesiastical censures, to the great scandal and hindrance of the Gospel, and tending to the rending of churches and congregations; and prudently to proceed to take such course anent them as the circumstances of the case and time requires; and appoints Presbyteries, where any great difficulty occurs, in cases of this nature, to consult their Synods, or the commission appointed by this Assembly thereanent, before they proceed to any further censure.

XXIV.

The General Assembly's Letter to his Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,

As we do adore the infinite goodness and mercy of God towards Britain and Ireland, in setting your Majesty King over us, and in working by you so great deliverance for us; so we do from our hearts bless God, for mercifully preserving your sacred person, in midst of so many dangers as you have been exposed to by sea and land, and in granting such success to your arms the last campaign.

We do also, with humble gratitude, acknowledge your Majesty's many royal favours to this Church, and that not only under the shadow of your protection, and with the countenance of your Majesty's authority and laws, we may peaceably meet together in a National Assembly; but that your Majesty hath honoured us, to send as your commissioner to represent your Majesty's royal person among us, the Lord Carmichael, a person of known and approved integrity and loyalty to your Majesty, and who hath been formerly, and still, is most acceptable to us all.

We do humbly beg and confidently hope, your Majesty, as appointed of God to be the nursing father of his Church, will continue your royal favour and protection to us, and command the vigorous execution of your good laws, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness, that our land may be thoroughly reformed from vice, and purged of whatsoever doth offend.

We do sincerely profess, that next to our duty to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, it is our desire to approve ourselves dutiful subjects to your Majesty, and it shall be

our endeavour, by doctrine and example, in our several capacities to promote your Majesty's honour and service in the Lord among the people.

That Almighty God may bless and long preserve your royal person, direct and prosper your councils and government, grant you always dutiful and loyal subjects, faithful and victorious armies and navies, give you the hearts of your subjects and necks of your enemies, that religion and righteousness may flourish in your days, that you may be a repairer of the breaches and builder of the house of God, and the restorer of the peace and liberty of Europe, is, and shall be, the incessant prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

PATRICK SIMSON, *Moderator.*

XXV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act continuing the Supplies of Preaching for the North, conform to the Act of the General Assembly, 1694.

The General Assembly, considering that the vacancies on the North side of the river of Tay have increased greatly since the sitting of the last General Assembly; as also, the paucity of ministers in these parts, and having before them several petitions from noblemen, gentlemen, burgesses, and others, living in these parts, craving that the Assembly would increase the supply of these bounds, and promising that they should give all due encouragement to such as the Lord, by this Assembly, shall be pleased to direct to them; therefore, the General Assembly have ordained, and hereby ordains, the ordinary supplies for the North to continue till the next General Assembly, conform to the 14th Act of the last General Assembly, entitled, "Act appointing some Ministers for the Supply of the North;" and recommends to Presbyteries and Synods, that the same be made effectual, these named, and formerly appointed to be sent from the several Presbyteries, by way of mission, being always sustained as a part of the said supply; and, lastly, the General Assembly exempts the province of Perth, in their present circumstances, from all supplies to the North.

XXVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act Declaring the Appeals made to this Assembly from the Committee of the Assembly, 1694, for the North, to be fallen from and null.

The General Assembly, considering that they had, upon the second day of January instant, caused call these persons who had appealed from, protested against, and declined the committee appointed for the North by the late General Assembly, to have compeared before the last day of this Assembly, to prosecute their said appeals and protestations, and answer for their declinatures, with certification if they compeared not, to prosecute the same before that time, their said appeals and protestations should be declared to be fallen from, void and null. And now finding that the said persons have not compeared before this Assembly for the effect foresaid: Therefore, the General Assembly do hereby declare all the said appeals to be deserted, fallen from, void, and null, to all intents and purposes, because they have not been insisted in before this Assembly.

XXVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Sentence of Suspension against Mr John Hepburn.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their serious consideration the references made to them concerning Mr John Hepburn, minister, and having often caused call the said Mr John to have compeared before this Assembly,

conform to the citation given him thereanent, to answer to these things wherewith he is charged, but he not compearing, the General Assembly, upon the 25th day of December last, appointed a committee of their own number to consider the whole process led against him, and make report; which committee did, upon the 3d day of January instant, bring in some overtures thereanent, and the said report, together with an extract of the process and depositions of witnesses led against him; as also his own confession being considered, the General Assembly found that several articles were sufficiently proven against him, and therefore were of the judgment, that though the said Mr John Hepburn deserved the highest censure of the Church, yet to manifest all tenderness and willingness to reclaim him, they did appoint that in case Mr John Hepburn would oblige himself under his hand, to walk orderly in all time coming, and embrace a call when offered to him, and oblige himself to attend the charge he should be fixed to, and submit himself to the respective judicatories of this Church, and forbear after this to preach or exercise any other part of his ministry without the consent of the said judicatories, in that case the Assembly declared they should let all processes led against him fall; but in case he either appeared not before this Assembly, or should not oblige himself as aforesaid, then the General Assembly appointed him to be suspended from the office of the ministry, with certification that he should be deposed by the Synod of Dumfries, if he should be found to contravene the said act of suspension, with which sentence the said Synod shall acquaint all other Presbyteries within this National Church. Likeas, in case the said Mr John shall be deposed, the General Assembly did appoint that the whole process led against him shall be printed, that all men may see the moderation and justice of the several judicatories that had occasion to process him; and in case that the Assembly should suspend him, and he submit thereunto, that it should be free for the said Synod or Presbytery of Dumfries to take off the said sentence upon his application and desire of the same, and embracing the terms above specified; and, upon the day and date hereof, the said Mr John Hepburn being again thrice publicly called at the most patent door of the church where the Assembly was sitting, and not compearing, the General Assembly, being well and ripely advised with the whole premises, did, and hereby do, actually suspend the said Mr John Hepburn from the exercise of his ministry, and appoints these presents to be intimated by the minister who is to preach in the New Church of Edinburgh the next Lord's Day; as also, that the sentence be afterwards intimated in all the parish churches within the Provincial Synods of Glasgow, Ayr, and Dumfries.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh upon the 2d day of January 1697 years.

The General Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing of the 85th Psalm, from the 6th verse to the end, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by me,

J. BANNATYNE, *Cls. Syn. National.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH THE 2d DAY OF JANUARY 1697.

I.

Sess. 1, January 2, 1697.—The recording of his Majesty's Commission to the Lord Carmichael, for representing his Majesty in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this National

Church being convened, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, his Majesty's commission under the Great Seal of this kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which was publicly read in their audience, with all due honour and respect; and the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, the same to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—"GULIELMUS," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The said day his Majesty's High Commissioner produced his Majesty's most gracious letter directed to this Assembly, which was publicly read in their hearing, with all due respect, and appointed to be registered in the books of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The proceedings of the last General Assembly were very satisfying to us, which hath encouraged us to allow and countenance your meeting now. We have chosen our right trusty and well-beloved councillor, John Lord Carmichael, to represent our royal person, and bear our authority as our Commissioner, in this Assembly. We have sufficient experience of his fidelity to us, and of his ability and fitness for discharging this trust. The present juncture of affairs will not allow of your sitting long; therefore, you are to lose no time in doing what is most necessary for suppressing and restraining of vice and profanity, and in planting of vacant churches with pious and moderate ministers. This will be acceptable to us, and in doing which, you shall have all necessary concurrence and assistance. As we have done formerly, so we do now upon this occasion assure you that we are resolved to maintain Presbyterian Church government in that our kingdom of Scotland; and therefore we expect, that in all matters that come before you, you will proceed and conclude with calmness and moderation, which is the duty of all, especially in church meetings. We leave what further is necessary to our Commissioner, whom we have fully instructed. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Kensington, the 24th Day of December 1696, and of our reign the 8th year.

By His Majesty's Command,

TULLIBARDINE.

For the Reverend, trusty, and well-beloved Ministers, and Elders, met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, at Edinburgh.

III.

Sess. 3, January 4, 1697, ante meridiem.—Act for bringing in and enrolling the Names of all Probationers for the Ministry, and Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly, for several weighty causes, hereby enacts and appoints that the commissioners from the several Presbyteries within this Church bring in an account to the General Assembly yearly of all the Students of Divinity who have passed their trials, in order to the ministry, from one Assembly to another; as also, of all others who have not passed trials, that have an eye to the holy ministry, and do attend the lessons of the several Professors of Divinity in the Universities, and perform the exercises enjoined them there; that a roll may be made of them, and their names read in open Assembly, and recorded in the registers thereof.

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IV.

Sess. 4, January 6, 1697, ante meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to His Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, are very sensible of our happiness in your Majesty's being satisfied with the proceedings of the last Assembly, and in being pleased to signify so much by your gracious letter directed to us; and we are no less sensible of your Majesty's goodness, in giving your royal countenance to our meeting at this time, being the very same time unto which it was indicted at the close of the last Assembly: and your Majesty's reiterated choice of the Lord Carmichael to represent your royal person among us, who hath on all occasions manifested an untainted fidelity unto your Majesty, and constant kindness to this Church, is a fresh proof of your Majesty's tender care of us. We reckon it our bounden duty so to consider the present juncture of your affairs, as that our being long together may not be any way prejudicial unto the same, and therefore shall dispatch what is presently necessary with all application, delaying other things to a more convenient season; and we hope your Majesty shall never find any Assembly of the Church of Scotland uneasy on that head. Sir, as we cannot but lament the abounding of impiety and profanity in this land, so we must acknowledge your Majesty's Christian care, in enacting good laws for suppressing the same; the vigorous execution of which we humbly beg, as that which will highly tend to the exalting of the glory of God, and to the establishing of your throne; and we, for our parts, shall use all ecclesiastic means proper for us, that may be conducive thereunto. We have, through the good hand of God upon us, made some considerable progress in planting vacant congregations, and we do look upon it as the chief part of the work which we have to do at this time, to make further advancements therein, by encouraging all pious and serious persons to join with us in the work of the Gospel, and by facilitating their settlement in places where they may be most useful, and where there is greatest need of them. We beg leave on this occasion, to acknowledge your Majesty's royal bounty bestowed on this Church since the last Assembly, for defraying the public charges of the same, which we shall be careful to apply to the uses your Majesty designed it for.

May God always preserve your sacred person from all both secret attempts and open violence of execrable men; may you have a long and prosperous reign over these nations; may your forces have success both by sea and land; may your people's love and fidelity answer the manifold obligations you have laid upon them; and, after a fulness of earthly blessings here, may you for ever wear a crown of glory that fadeth not away; which are the sincere prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

W. CRICHTON, *Moderator.*

V.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastic Judicatories, offered to the Assembly by a private hand.

The General Assembly, having heard the Report of a Committee of their own number for overtures anent the "Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of proceeding in Ecclesiastic Judicatories in the Church of Scotland," now produced in their own presence, appoints the same to be sent as overtures, from private hands,

to the several Presbyteries within this National Church; and ordains the said Presbyteries to send their animadversions and observations thereupon to the commission to be appointed by this Assembly, betwixt and the first of August next; and appoints the said commission to prepare the said overtures against the General Assembly, to be brought in thereto as overtures; and appoints the Commissioners from Presbyteries to take copies of the said overtures from George Mossman, the Assembly's printer, for the end foresaid.

VI.

Sess. 5, January 7, 1697, ante meridiem.—Act anent these Ministers who have not obeyed the appointment of the last Assembly concerning the Mission to the North.

The said day, in presence of the General Assembly, the committee for overtures reported, that, according to the appointment of this Assembly, they had been taking trial how the act of the late Assembly concerning the mission of some ministers to the North was observed, and had called the Presbyteries and persons concerned to have compeared before them; and that as to Mr James Thomson, Mr John Sandilands, Mr Robert Edgar, Mr Andrew Rodgers, Mr John Paisley at Lochwinnoch, and Mr Donald Campbell, there were defences made for them; and the said committee were of opinion, that they were not censurable in respect of their defences, which were held forth in presence of the Assembly; and the General Assembly having considered the same, they find it necessary that exact obedience be given to the Assembly's acts; and, therefore, though the persons above named have not been found censurable, yet the General Assembly appoints the respective Presbyteries to whom they belong to see them fulfil their mission, and, in case the Presbytery find sufficient ground to exonerate them, it must be done with this special provision, that the Presbytery provide another fit person in their room, as they will be answerable, and that their mission be fulfilled betwixt and the first of August; it being always understood as the mind of this Assembly, that they are liable to calls and transportations, as these on the first mission, except one be already transported out of their Presbytery.

And the General Assembly having heard the report of the Committee for Overtures anent Mr James Stirling and Mr William Steel, who, though they went to the North, did not stay their full time, and Mr Joseph Drew, who did not at all go North in mission, according to the appointment of the last Assembly; they being called and all absent, and not sending their excuses, and likewise the defences made for them, for their not giving obedience, being considered, as also the opinion of the said Committee for Overtures finding their defences irrelevant,—the General Assembly appoints the said Mr James Stirling and Mr William Steel to fulfil their mission betwixt and the first of August next; and as to Mr Joseph Drew, because he hath not as yet been in the North, appoints him to repair to the Province of Moray, and there stay and exercise his ministry for four months betwixt and the said time.

VII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Family Worship, and censuring Ruling Elders and Deacons who neglect the same.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary a duty it is that the worship of God, and calling upon his name, be daily performed in all families, do recommend it to ministers and elders in each congregation to take care thereof, and it being the duty of all ruling elders and deacons to be exemplary herein, the Assembly renews and confirms the act of Assembly, 1694, made against profaneness, recommending that none be ruling elders who make not conscience of this unquestionable duty; and do likewise appoint, that in case any elders or deacons shall neglect to worship God in their families, by themselves, or others appointed for that effect, that they be seriously admonished to amend, and, if need be, rebuked for the same; and if, notwithstanding of admonitions and rebukes of the minister and other elders, any elder or deacon continue obstinate in their neglect, that such elder or deacon be removed from his office by the Presbytery; and appoints this act to be read in all the churches yearly;

as also the said 13th act of the Assembly, 1694, against profaneness, and that upon the first Sabbath of May.

VIII.

Sess. 6, January 8, 1697, post meridiem.—Act for punctual Obedience to Appointments of Ministers to supply Vacant Churches.

The General Assembly, considering how much it is the duty of all the ministers of this Church to give punctual and exemplary obedience to all the acts and appointments of the Assemblies thereof, and particularly that, in the present exigency of the Church, wherein there continues so considerable a number of vacancies, ministers appointed by the General Assemblies, or their authority, to labour for some time in these corners of the Church, where the vacancies are most numerous, ought exactly to obey the same, at and during the time of their appointment, and that their neglect herein is very prejudicial to the interest of the Gospel, and discouraging to the ministers who are settled in these parts; do, therefore, in the fear of the Lord, obtest and beseech all ministers to be diligent and faithful in their performance of what is appointed them; and do appoint that in case any minister shall not exactly and timeously perform their respective appointments, particularly in going to the North, that they shall be suspended from the exercise of their ministry for the space of three months by their respective Presbyteries, so soon as they begin to neglect this duty: And the General Assembly do require the Moderators of the several Presbyteries to move and propose to the Presbyteries to proceed to inflict the censure above appointed without delay; and in case any Moderator shall neglect and delay the performance of his duty hereby required, that the said Moderator be suspended from the exercise of his ministry, by the next ensuing Synod of the bounds, for the space of three months; and in case that inevitable impediments fall providentially in the way of ministers, thus appointed for supplies, that cannot but free the minister of any neglect, that the Presbytery he belongs unto record the same in their registers, and produce them to their Synod at their next meeting, to be by them judged; but withal, the Presbytery in that case shall be obliged to send another under the same certifications; but so soon as he applies to the Presbytery, and offers obedience, the Presbytery shall be obliged to take off the act of suspension. And the General Assembly appoints their churches to be supplied daily, or at least two Sabbaths of three, during their absence, and the ministers appointed to make these supplies, in case of their neglect, are to be Presbyterially rebuked, and that inserted in the records of the Presbytery; and that Synods do particularly enquire anent, and see to the execution of this act, and make report to the next ensuing Assembly.

IX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Method of passing Acts of Assembly of general concern to the Church, and for preventing of Innovations.

(Commonly called the *Barrier Act*.)

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overture and act made in the last Assembly concerning innovations, and having heard the report of the several commissioners from Presbyteries to whom the consideration of the same was recommended, in order to its being more ripely advised and determined in this Assembly; and considering the frequent practice of former Assemblies of this Church, and that it will mightily conduce to the exact obedience of the Acts of Assemblies, that General Assemblies be very deliberate in making of the same, and that the whole Church have a previous knowledge thereof, and their opinion be had therein, and for preventing any sudden alteration or innovation, or other prejudice to the Church, in either doctrine or worship, or discipline, or government thereof, now happily established; do, therefore, appoint, enact, and declare, that before any General Assembly of this Church shall pass any acts, which are to be binding rules and constitutions to the Church, the same acts be first proposed as overtures to the Assembly, and, being by

them passed as such, be remitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their opinions and consent reported by their commissioners to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass the same in acts, if the more general opinion of the Church thus had agree thereunto.

X.

Sess. 7, January 9, 1697, ante meridiem.—Overture for punctual sending of Commissioners to General Assemblies, and their Attendance during the Sitting thereof.
(An Act relative to this subject was passed in 1698.)

XI.

Sess. 8, January 11, 1697, post meridiem.—Act against Profaneness.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their most serious consideration, that notwithstanding of the weighty commands and dreadful threatenings contained in the Scriptures of truth, and the many laudable Christian laws of this nation, and the acts of the General Assemblies of this Church against all impiety and profaneness, yet the open outbreaks of wickedness are not restrained, but God is daily dishonoured and provoked, the profession of Christianity discredited, and the pernicious infection of ill example disseminated and spread abroad by the abounding scandals of profane and idle swearing, cursing, Sabbath-breaking, profane withdrawing from and contempt of Gospel ordinances; yea, opposing the dispensing of them, by hindering the planting of churches, and discouraging the endeavours of others for calling and fixing a faithful Gospel ministry among them, mocking of piety and religion, and the exercises thereof, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, excessive tippling, Deism, blasphemy, and other gross abominable sins. And whereas, not only did the General Assembly, by their act April 16, 1694, recommend to all ministers and kirk-sessions carefully to apply to the several magistrates of their bounds for putting the acts of Parliament against profaneness in execution; but likewise, this current Parliament hath, by their acts, entituled, "Against Profaneness," June 15, 1693, June 28, 1695, and October 9, 1696, declared that ministers, kirk-sessions, and presbyteries, shall, by themselves, or others in their name, have good interest to apply for and pursue the execution of the said acts; and albeit execution is ordained to pass at the instance of any person whatsoever, yet, it being especially incumbent upon ministers and Church judicatories to hold hand thereto, Therefore, that this National Assembly may not be wanting to their duty, in contributing their utmost endeavours for bearing down and punishing of all immorality and wickedness, they do, in the first place, in the awe and dread of the great God, who will not hold them guiltless that break any of his commandments, beseech, warn, and obtest, all the people of this Church and nation, to break off their sins by repentance, and seriously, in the fear of the Lord, to apply themselves to a sober, conscientious, Christian, and circumspect walk, in all manner of conversation, as becomes the professors of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, and of that religion which is pure and undefiled, and as they would not incur the heavy displeasure and just indignation of the Holy One, in being excluded for ever from seeing his face in peace, and pull down his temporal judgments upon themselves and upon the land. And, next, they do require all the ministers of this Church freely and faithfully to preach against the fore-mentioned enormous sins, as the crying sins of the time, that people may be brought to a conviction and sense of their heinousness and danger, and may refrain, not only for fear, but from conscience. And, farther, they do appoint that Presbyteries and Kirk-sessions do faithfully and impartially exercise church discipline against all such scandalous offenders, and use all suitable means, in dealing with their consciences, to bring them to unfeigned repentance and reformation; and they seriously recommend to Ministers and members of Kirk-sessions, from a true zeal for God, to hold hand to the delating, informing against, and punishing of all profane transgressors, without

respect of persons, by civil punishments, conform to the acts of Parliament made in that behalf, and that they record their diligence in their session-books, that the same may be seen by their Presbyteries, who are hereby required to make inquiry therein at their visitations; and lest any may be found backward in performing their respective duties, from an unwillingness to displease or disoblige persons of note, who may happen to be guilty, the General Assembly earnestly exhorts all ministers and elders, and all Christians, to remember that in this matter they have to do with the great and terrible God, whose honour is to be preferred, and whose wrath is to be feared, before all other considerations whatsoever; and they overture, that whatever minister or member of session be found faulty in neglecting to pursue the foresaid scandals in their stations, the said minister or member of session be complained of and censured by the Presbytery for the first fault, and that the censure be recorded; and that the second negligence be delated to and censured by the Synod; and that for the third neglect they be censured by the Synod with suspension, to be recorded in the Synod register. And albeit the General Assembly hath full confidence in the integrity and zeal of all honest Christian magistrates, and that they will with firmness and resolution make conscience of the obligations of their office, and faithfully discharge the trust committed to them by God, and the supreme authority of this nation; yet because a slackness or backwardness may fall out in some particular places, and there hath been hitherto a most lamentable defectiveness in putting the laws against profaneness into execution, and some have refused to give deputations and commissions for that end, to persons who have been duly nominated and presented to them: Therefore, the General Assembly doth recommend to each minister or kirk-session who shall find cause to complain of a magistrate for negligence in executing the said laws, or for refusing deputation and commission to such persons as are duly elected and presented to them, (from parishes where there is no ordinary magistrate residing,) conform to the above mentioned act of Parliament, October 9, 1696, that they acquaint their Presbyteries therewith; and that the said Presbytery having used all previous means in dealing with the consciences of the said magistrate without any good effect, do, with the kirk-agent, thereafter pursue the said negligent or refractory magistrate before the Lords of Council or Session, according to the foresaid acts of Parliament. And, lastly, that these presents be read in all churches within this kingdom twice a-year from the pulpit, to wit, upon the first Sabbaths after Whitsunday and Martinmas yearly.

XII.

Sess. 8, January 11, 1697, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Churches in the North, and some other particular Affairs committed to them by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering the many vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and that the last Assembly had laid down a way for a more expeditious planting of ministers therein, which hath not yet had the full effect desired; doth, therefore, by these presents, nominate and appoint Messrs Alexander Colden, Minister of the Gospel at Dunse, &c., &c., to be commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with full power and commission to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any fifteen of the said commissioners, whereof nine are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten of the clock in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Tuesday of every month, and oftener, as they shall see needful, during the continuance of this commission; and the General Assembly requires all the members of this commission to attend carefully the meetings thereof, especially the quarterly meetings, which are hereby declared to be their meetings, on the first Tuesdays of March, June, September, and December, and that at the least one out of every Presbytery be present then; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, to choose their own moderator and clerk. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully

empowers and authorises the said commissioners to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, any calls and processes of transportation, of any of the forty-four ministers nominated to go North by way of mission, by the last Assembly, and that in the same way and manner, and with the same powers granted to the commission of the last General Assembly, in relation to the said forty-four ministers then nominated, whether these of them who have already obeyed their mission, or these who have it to fulfil, or these who are or shall be named in their room, in case of inevitable impediment of their fulfilment of the same, as is already provided by a former Act of this Assembly: And likewise to proceed and cognosce in every thing contained in and conform to the instructions to be given unto them by this Assembly, as fully and freely as if the same were in these presents at full length inserted and set down: And also to consider, cognosce, and determine, in all references, appeals, and other matters, that have been, or shall be particularly remitted to them for that effect, by any act or order of this Assembly, all which are holden as herein expressed. This commission is also to correspond with the State anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion falls out, and to specify the causes thereof; and likewise to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them: And the Assembly do hereby prohibit the said commissioners to meddle in any other matter than what is contained herein; declaring also, that in and for all their actings, the said Commissioners shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, the General Assembly hereby declares that this commission shall continue till the meeting of the next General Assembly of this National Church.

XIII.

Sess. 9, January 12, 1697, ante meridiem.—Act and Recommendation anent Ministers to the Army.

The said day there was presented to the General Assembly a letter from the Right Honourable the Viscount of Teviot, Commander-in-chief of his Majesty's forces within this kingdom, desiring them to fall upon some way how the said standing forces may be provided with preachers, and until that be obtained, that they seriously recommend to the respective ministers and church-sessions where they are, or shall be ordered to quarter, to provide them with convenient seats for hearing with the said congregations, and to inspect and notice them as they do other parishioners during their abode there, and assuring that care shall be taken that they attend ordinances, and walk inoffensively; and desiring that the General Assembly would be pleased to recommend to such as they appoint to manage their affairs in the intervals of Assemblies, to notice how this is performed; as the said letter, dated the 11th of January instant, and signed by the said noble Lord, in itself bears: Which letter being read and duly considered, the General Assembly unanimously did, and hereby do, recommend to the respective ministers, kirk-sessions, and others concerned, where any of the said forces are or shall be ordered to be quartered, to provide them with convenient seats for hearing with the said congregations, and to inspect and notice them as they do other parishioners during their abode there, and, if need be, to apply to the commanding officers, for taking care that inferior officers and soldiers attend ordinances, and walk inoffensively. And, farther, the General Assembly hereby recommends and refers to the commission appointed by this Assembly, during the continuance thereof, to take notice how this is performed; and likewise recommends to the said commission to fall upon all expedient ways competent for them, how the said forces may be provided with preachers, and, upon application, to settle ministers in regiments belonging to this kingdom.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act appointing some Ministers to go for the Supply of the North quarterly, until the next Assembly.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration, that albeit there hath been a good progress made in settling of vacancies be-North the Water of Tay, yet by reason of emerging deaths of some, and legal deprivation of others of the late conform ministers, who had till then possessed their churches, many vacancies are at present in that part of this Church, and the ministers who are settled there are not in a condition to supply the same in a suitable manner: Therefore, the General Assembly have ordained, and hereby ordains, that the Synods be-South Tay after named shall send to the bounds of the Synods of Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld, within the Synod of Perth, the number of eighteen ministers quarterly, according to the proportions after named: viz., that three be sent to supply the vacancies in the Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; three to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Angus and Mearns; five to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Aberdeen; five to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Moray; and two to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness: And the Assembly ordains these above supplies of eighteen ministers to be sent quarterly by the Synods after named, according to the following proportions, to wit, that from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, there be sent quarterly three; from the Synod of Lothian four; from the Synod of Dumfries one; from the Synod of Galloway one; from the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr five; from the Synod of Fife three; and from the Presbyteries of Stirling and Dunblane, within the Synod of Perth and Stirling, one: And likewise the Assembly doth ordain, that these three ministers who shall go in supply from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, shall supply the vacancies in the Synod of Angus and Mearns; that of the four who shall go from the Synod of Lothian, two shall go to the bounds of the Synod of Aberdeen, and the other two to the Synod of Moray, as the Synod of Lothian shall determine; that the one who shall go from the Synod of Dumfries shall go to the Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; that the one who shall go from the Synod of Galloway shall go to the said Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; that the five who shall go from the Synod of Glasgow shall go one of them to the said Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld, three of them to the Synod of Aberdeen, and one of them to the Synod of Moray, as the Synod of Glasgow shall determine; that the three who shall go from the Synod of Fife shall go two of them to the Synod of Moray, and one of them to the Synods of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, as the Synod of Fife shall determine; and that the one who shall go from the Presbyteries of Stirling and Dunblane shall go to the bounds of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness. And farther, because it is necessary that the said supplies who shall go there for the first quarter, be there sooner than the next ordinary meetings of the Synods; therefore, the Assembly have nominated, and hereby nominate, the ministers after named, to repair to the bounds of the Synods after mentioned, to supply the vacancies there, and that they be there against the first Sabbath of March next, viz., from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, Mr Alexander Lauderat Mordington, &c., &c. And the Assembly ordains, that the brethren above mentioned, and such who shall be hereafter nominated by their respective Synods for the succeeding quarters, do repair to the respective bounds, as above set down, against the respective times allotted to them, and to be directed by the Presbyteries and ministers residing in these respective Synods they repair to, as to what particular congregations they shall apply themselves unto. And the Assembly doth farther ordain the above written Synods in the South to send to the places, and in manner above mentioned, a new quarterly supply of as many ministers more, to continue for the second quarter, beginning the same the first of June next, and so forth, quarterly, ay and until the sitting of the next General Assembly. And the Assembly recommends to the respective Presbyteries to take care to supply the kirks of these ministers who shall be sent North for supplies with

daily preaching, at least two Sabbaths of three: And the Assembly doth likewise ordain these ministers sent in supply to the North to get and produce to their own Presbytery a testimonial from the Presbyteries within the bounds where they did supply, of their having fulfilled their appointment, and of their carriage and behaviour during their abode in these bounds.

XV.

Sess. 10 et ult. January 12, 1697, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the late General Assembly.

The General Assembly of this National Church, having heard the report of a committee of their own number appointed to consider, revise, and examine the actings and proceedings of the commissioners appointed to meet at Edinburgh by the late General Assembly, and after serious consideration thereof, subscribed by Mr John Moncrief, clerk thereto; do evidence much wisdom, prudence, and diligence; and that the commission hath orderly and formally proceeded in everything according to their commission and instructions. Therefore, this General Assembly, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the said register thereof, beginning the seventh day of January 1696, and ending the third day of December thereafter now last bypast, consisting of an hundred and eighteen pages.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act approving Overtures anent and Instructions to a Commission for the more full and expeditious Planting of the North.

This day the following Overtures and Instructions were read in presence of the General Assembly; the tenor whereof follows:—

1. That when any parish on the North side of Tay, or of the town and Presbytery of Perth, and Presbyteries of Auchterarder and Dunkeld, in the Synod of Perth, shall call any minister belonging to any parish on the North side of Tay, they may, without sending any commissioner of their own parish to prosecute the same, send the call approved of and concurred with by the Presbytery of the bounds to the Moderator of the Commission of this Assembly; who, for greater expedition, shall cause double the said call, and attest the copy, and send the same, with the reasons of the desired transportation, in a letter to the Moderator of that Presbytery, to whom the minister called doth belong.

2. That the Moderator of the said Presbytery, upon the receipt of the said letter, shall be obliged to transmit the said call, with the reasons thereof, to the minister called, and shall cause summon the said minister and the parish he belongs to, the next Sabbath, in the ordinary way, to appear before the said Presbytery, and answer the said call and reasons thereof.

3. That if the Presbytery, after they have maturely considered the affair, shall not grant the desired transportation, the agent for the Kirk, or any person who shall under his hand be deputed by him, (who is hereby authorised for that effect,) may appeal from the said Presbytery and their sentence to the Synod of the bounds, or the next quarterly meeting of the Commission which shall first happen; and thereby the said Presbytery shall be obliged to transmit the said call and whole process, with their sentence and reasons of the same, to the Synod or quarterly meeting of the Commission which shall first happen, and cite the minister called and parish he belongs to, for that effect, which Synod or Commission are hereby empowered in that case to judge the said cause, and determine therein as they shall judge reasonable.

4. And if, when the Synod hath considered such a process, and yet do not transport the minister called, that there may lie an appeal by the agent for the Kirk, or his depute, in manner above, to the Commission of this Assembly, whereby the Synod

shall be, and hereby is obliged to transmit the whole affair to the next quarterly meeting of the Commission, and to cite all parties concerned.

5. That when any such process cometh thus before the Commission, they shall finally determine the same, nor shall these processes go to any ensuing Assembly either by reference or any other way.

6. That the minister transported by any of the above judicatories, in the manner above, shall obey the said sentence with certification, conform to former acts of Assemblies.

7. That seeing the Assembly hath by their act determined and ordained, that the number of eighteen ministers shall be sent quarterly to the North, from the Synods in the South, the Assembly doth recommend to these several Synods to send likewise an equal number of probationers to the North, especially those who have had their birth there, and that these stay six months; and the Assembly recommends it to the Commission to take care that the several Synods and probationers do effectually answer the same, as they will be answerable to the next Assembly.

8. That all ministers and probationers who shall be sent to supply the North shall not only labour in preaching of the Gospel, but likewise in visiting and catechising the people, in such method as the Presbytery of the bounds shall direct.

9. The Assembly do require the several Presbyteries on the South side of Tay to forbear to settle any probationers within their bounds who had their birth on the North side of Tay, at least until the meeting of the next Assembly; and do require the Presbyteries on the North side of Tay to exhort and stir up the people in their bounds to call probationers who may be settled amongst them, with more ease to themselves, and less difficulty to the Church; and the Assembly do recommend it to the Commission to see due obedience given hereunto.

10. That the Commission do from time to time consider, and take all the amicable and obliging ways to facilitate the settling of the vacant parishes in the northern bounds above specified; and as often as they shall think it fit, that they send a delegated number of the most experienced of their own members, to these parts or any corner thereof, to join with and assist the Presbyteries in these bounds, to facilitate the planting of these vacancies, and to deal with the heritors and others concerned for that effect, and that they report from time to time their diligence herein, that the Commission may proceed accordingly.

11. That this Commission, as often as they shall see cause, do apply to the Government or any magistrate for their countenance of and concurrence with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, particularly for settling vacant congregations.

12. That the Commission have power to settle Presbyteries in Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland, so soon as any competent number of ministers shall be settled there, and to give them such instructions at their first erection as shall be needful for the good of these bounds.

13. That all Presbyteries be very deliberate in their proceedings with any of the late conforming ministers, either in proceeding against any of them, when accused of gross uncontroverted scandals, or proceeding in order to their reception into the government, on their applications in the Terms of the Acknowledgment, settled by the Assembly, 1694, and take the advice and assistance of some of the neighbouring Presbyteries, and of the Commission. And that the Commission and all other judicatories in their proceedings, as to reception of any into the government, do exactly keep by the method and the terms of the above mentioned act of the General Assembly, 1694, particularly the sixth overture and instruction to the Commission appointed by that Assembly.

All these overtures and instructions above written, being maturely considered, the General Assembly of this National Church did, and hereby do, approve of the same, and recommends and appoints according thereto in all points.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against the Deists, &c.

The General Assembly recommends to all ministers and church judicatories to observe and put in execution the 21st act of the late General Assembly, entitled “Act against the Atheistical Opinions of the Deists,” and for Establishing the Confession of Faith.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is to be held at Edinburgh upon the second Tuesday of January, 1698.

The General Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by me,
J. BANNATYNE, *Cls. Syn. National.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, JANUARY 11, 1698.

I.

Sess. 1, Edinburgh, January 11, 1698.—The Recording of his Majesty's Commission to the Lord Carmichael for Representing his Majesty in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this National Church being convened, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, his Majesty's Commission, under the Great Seal of this kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly, which was publicly read in their audience with all due honour and respect, and the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, the same to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—“GULIELMUS,” &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The said day, his Majesty's High Commissioner produced his Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this Assembly, which was publicly read in their hearing with all due honour and respect, and appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. We are so well satisfied with your proceedings at the last General Assembly, that we agree to your meeting now, though another time had been more convenient for our affairs. And we have again made choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved Councillor, John Lord Carmichael, to be our Commissioner, of whose fidelity and zeal for our service we have had experience on former

occasions, and who we know will be acceptable to you; and we doubt not but you will act in such a manner in this Assembly, as that we shall have new reason to be satisfied with you; and we do renew our assurances of our protection and countenance to the Presbyterian government, now settled in the Church of Scotland.

You know it is our inclinations, and we do recommend to you, to assume the Episcopal ministers, whose lives and doctrine do render them useful to the Church; and likewise, the planting the Churches in the North with the most prudent and pious of your ministers; and that you send some of your number who are best qualified to preach in the remote Highland parishes where ministers are not provided, and where there appears to be so much need of a reformation, both from Popery and profanity, in all which, we expect to hear of your care and performance; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Kensington, the fifth day of January 1697-98, and of our reign the ninth year.

By his Majesty's command,

TULLIBARDINE.

To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Ministers and Elders, Commissioners of the General Assembly of the Church of our ancient Kingdom of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, January 13, 1698.—The General Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The satisfaction your Majesty vouchsafes to signify by your most gracious letter to this Assembly, with the proceedings of the former; your Majesty's renewed assurances of your protection and countenance to the Presbyterian government now settled in this Church, and your having agreed to our meeting at this time, when so many other weighty affairs call forth and employ your royal care, do lay such obligations on us to our duty, as we shall endeavour better to express our sense thereof in the course of our actings, than now we are able to do by words.

Nor is it one of the least testimonies of your Majesty's fatherly regard to this Church, that as you have formerly recommended and encouraged the suppressing and restraining of all vice and profanity, so your Majesty doth now testify a special concern for planting a well qualified ministry in those places that want it, and that you are pleased to excite us to a cheerful management of all the matters that lie before us by the continued choice of the Lord Carmichael to represent your royal person now again in this Assembly, whose unblemished faithfulness and steady zeal to your Majesty's service, joined with a constant good affection to this Church, have always very signally, and to us most obligingly appeared.

The General Assembly is still ready to assume such ministers as served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines render them useful in the Church, and who apply to them in the terms and methods proposed by former Assemblies, and shall recommend the same to inferior judicatories.

In the planting of the North, such progress as could be attained hath been made since the last Assembly; and to proceed in this good work, and provide for the remote Highland parishes, we reckon an important part of our present duty, and do resolve to apply ourselves thereto with that diligence, and so to demean ourselves therein, and in our whole conduct, through Divine assistance, that we trust this Assembly shall not prove unworthy of the continuance of your Majesty's favourable opinion of us.

That the great God, by whom kings reign, may daily multiply his best blessings

upon your royal person and government, is, and shall be the most sincerely affectionate and fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders, met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

GEO. MELDRUM, *Moderator.*

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—To his Most Excellent Majesty, the humble Address of the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

As the commissioners of the former Assembly, under a just sense of duty, did address your Majesty upon your happy auspicious arrival to these your kingdoms, so we, the present representatives of this National Church, do now, for ourselves, and in name of that Church which we represent, with most humble adorations and thankful praises to our good God, acknowledge his inestimable mercy to us in sending your Majesty to be our deliverer and restorer, (a blessing never to be forgotten by us nor our posterity,) in conducting and preserving your Majesty through the long tract of a most just and necessary, but most hazardous war, (undertaken to assert and vindicate the oppressed liberties of Christendom,) whilst you were exposed to the most open and formidable dangers, in keeping you safe in the hidings of his own power, and in returning you to your loving and longing people, adorned with the best of triumphs, (the effect of your deep wisdom as well as of your matchless valour,) a solid and honourable peace.

No expressions can reach the fulness of our loyal hearts upon this great occasion, nor that sincere joy that is raised in us by the hopes of your Majesty's applying yourself, with Christian princely vigour, to maintain that holy religion, (given us by the God who hath called, upheld, and established you,) to curb the enormities of a debauched and profligate age, and to quell the monsters of profanity and atheism, that have dared so boldly to bid defiance to heaven and all that is sacred. From these doth arise our greatest danger, lest wrath be upon us from the God of heaven; in subduing these a yet higher pitch of courage, steady resolution, and true greatness of mind is required, than in overcoming the greatest armies in the field of battle. This noble achievement seems to be reserved for your Majesty, as the peculiar glory of your now peaceful reign, both by your authority and royal example to render piety and virtue in the eyes of the world (as indeed they are in themselves) the true point of honour, and all impiety and vice (though in persons of most elevated quality and station) matter of infamy and disgrace, without which no effectual reformation of degenerated manners can ever be expected.

May the divine Majesty, of whom is the salvation of kings, (who hath done wonders for you, and wrought wonders by you, whose great and happy instrument you are,) long preserve, richly bless, and prosper your Majesty, and render you no less illustrious in all the arts of peace than you have been in these of war; and when he shall have served his own great and gracious ends by you in this world, may you be translated to inherit the glories of that kingdom of purity and peace that can never be shaken. So we pray, with the most fervent affection of dutiful and sincere hearts, who are,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

GEO. MELDRUM, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, January 15, 1698, ante meridiem.—Act and Declaration for Vindication of the Church of Scotland from the Calumny of Thomas Gipps, Rector of Bury, in a Sermon preached by him.

The General Assembly of this National Church, being informed that the Presbyterians (particularly those of Scotland) are charged, in a sermon preached by Thomas Gipps, Rector of Bury, in England, now printed and published, as corrupters of the Word of God, with design to support the people's power in setting up ministers over themselves, and that this corruption is made by them, in Acts vi. 3, by causing it be printed, "Whom ye may appoint over this business," instead of "Whom we may appoint;" and, therefore, the General Assembly do unanimously declare, that, as they allow no power in the people, but only in the pastors of the Church, to appoint or ordain church-officers, so they disclaim the above mentioned error of the press, if any such be found in any Bibles printed in this nation; and do declare they do not own any other reading of that text to be according to the original, but "Whom we may appoint," &c. Nor do they know, nor can learn, that ever any in this nation did publicly use or apply that text to prove the people's power in ordaining their ministers.

VI.

Sess. 8, January 18, 1698, post meridiem.—Act for punctual sending of Commissioners to the General Assemblies, and their Attendance during the Sitting thereof.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overture transmitted by the last Assembly to Presbyteries, anent punctual sending of commissioners to General Assemblies, and their attendance during the sitting thereof; and having heard the report of the several commissioners from Presbyteries, to whom the consideration of the same was recommended, in order to its being more ripely advised and determined in this Assembly—the General Assembly do appoint Presbyteries to choose their commissioners for the General Assembly a competent time before the sitting thereof, at least forty days, and that each General Assembly appoint a committee of censures to cognosce upon the dates of commissions, and the attendance of those commissioned; to the end that such Presbyteries as do not make their election in due time, as likewise, such commissioners as do not attend duly from the beginning, and through the whole diets of the General Assembly, and the committees which they may be put upon, not having a relevant excuse, may be censured as the General Assembly shall think fit. And, lastly, the General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to choose such ruling elders to be their commissioners as may attend, and seriously to exhort them when chosen to make conscience of attending upon General Assemblies; and recommends the punctual observance of Act 4th, General Assembly, 1694, anent the giving in commissions, and making up the rolls, the night before the Assembly meet, or the next morning, for which purpose the clerk is to attend in the Assembly-House at that time.

VII.

Sess. 12, January 21, 1698, post meridiem.—Act anent the Deficients in supplying the North.

The General Assembly, having inquired how the 6th Act of the last Assembly, anent those ministers who had not obeyed the appointment of the Assembly, 1696, concerning the mission to the North, was observed; and Mr Joseph Drew, minister at New Monkland, being heard, his excuse for not going (hitherto) was sustained; but he is appointed to fulfil the time of his mission, conform to the said act, and if there be any inevitable impediments in his way, appoints the Presbytery of Hamilton to send one in his room, and that the commission see this done. And, farther, refers

to the commission to see the Presbytery of Paisley fulfil the time of the mission of their two ministers, conform to the said act of the last Assembly. And, lastly, refers to the said commission to inquire how the supplies appointed by the last Assembly were sent up; and, likewise, to see that any supplies that shall be appointed by this Assembly be punctually sent from the several Synods, and to censure the deficients.

VIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act approving Overtures for Planting of the North.

Seeing the mission of the forty-four ministers hath so far come short of the designed transportation of actual ministers from the South to the North, and the necessity of that country continues, the Assembly declares that twelve ministers shall be transported from the South to some of the following posts, (which are either considerable in themselves, or by reason of their circumstances, necessarily to be speedily supplied,) now vacant; three of the said ministers to the province of Angus and Mearns, to any of the posts following, viz., Montrose, Brechin, Meigle, Elliot, Longfor-gan, Farnell, or Fetteresso; six of them to the province of Aberdeen, to any of these posts following, viz., New and Old Aberdeen, Peterhead, Foveran, Rathven, Mortlach, Boyndie, Upper Banchory, Oven, or Old Meldrum; and three to the province of Moray, to any of these posts following, viz., Inverness, Elgin, Duffus, or Keith.

That in order to the above end, the Presbyteries in the foresaid provinces endeavour to get ordinary calls; and in case these parishes above mentioned shall neglect to give the same, the Assembly declares that calls by the Presbytery of the bounds to which any of these places belongs, shall be sustained as sufficient, the said Presbytery attesting that there are probable grounds that the people will submit to the ministry of the minister so called, when settled among them. And the person thus called is to be loosed and transported according to the method proposed by the last Assembly, in the Overtures contained Act 16; only where it is granted by the last Assembly, that such calls should be pursued by the kirk-agent, or his deputes, this Assembly allows also a commission from the parish or Presbytery calling, to be sufficient to any other person whatsoever to pursue the said transportation. And the General Assembly does seriously recommend it to the ministers of the North to use all tenderness and caution, as to the seats of Universities, the actual residences of noblemen, and principal royal burghs, and that before they proceed to moderate a call to any of these twelve ministers thus to be transported, they consult with some of the most prudent and experienced men in the same Synod to which the minister called belongs. And, on the other hand, the Assembly seriously recommends to these Presbyteries, Synods, and Commission, who shall have occasion to judge in any of these transportations, that they consider the clamant condition of the North. And that in effect, the competition betwixt the parishes called from and called to be not reckoned, but between the parish called from and the necessitous condition of the North; and that they consider the many disappointments the North hath met with already.

4. The Assembly further declares, that these twelve ministers thus to be transported are to be taken out of the Synods after mentioned, viz., five of them out of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, four of them out of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, two of them out of the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, and one of them out of the two Eastern Presbyteries of the Synod of Fife, viz., the Presbyteries of Cupar and St Andrews.

5. That the Assembly nominate twenty probationers to go immediately to the North, and these probationers born in the North to be named in the first place; and to help to defray the charges of their journey thither, that they be allowed each of them one hundred merks out of the King's gift for defraying the public expenses of the Church, besides the allowance given by Act of Parliament to preachers in vacant congregations; and to these who go to Orkney two hundred merks; and that five of these be sent to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Aberdeen, four of them to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Angus and Mearns, four of them to supply

the vacancies of Moray, two of them to supply Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and two to Orkney, and three of them to supply Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld vacancies, and all of them to continue in the North for twelve months. And it is hereby referred to the commission to be appointed by this Assembly to consider and determine what probationers are to go to these respective provinces above mentioned, together with the time of their stay and abode in each province. Which twenty probationers are hereby obliged to accept of calls, whether popular or Presbyterial, when presented to them by the Presbyteries of any of the said provinces, with certification, if they refuse the same, the Presbyteries within whose bounds they are called shall have power to take their licence from them until the next Assembly.

6. This Assembly doth hereby continue the former supplies of the North, by the Synods of the South, granted by the fourteenth Act of the last Assembly, defaulting only three ministers of the eighteen formerly allowed, five of which are to supply Aberdeen province, four to supply Moray, three to supply Angus and Mearns, one to supply Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and two to supply Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; unto which supply the Synods expressed in the foresaid act are liable in the way and manner therein expressed. And because there are three of the number taken down, the Synods of Dumfries and Galloway, with the Presbyteries of Stirling and Dunblane, are exempted from the said supply.

7. It is overtured, that a numerous commission be appointed by this Assembly, with power to them to divide themselves into as many committees as they shall see fit; and to send them to any parts of this Church, South or North; which commission is to meet quarterly, and when or where they shall see cause. And that all the members thereof shall give punctual attendance at the said quarterly meetings, and an exact account to be taken of the absentees therefrom.

8. That it be recommended to some to name and draw up a list of the members of the said commission, and to draw up instructions to be given unto them.

That the said committees to be appointed by the general commission have power to visit the bounds they are sent unto, and to receive complaints from Presbyteries, and redress grievances of particular ministers or Presbyteries, and to inflict censures, and to do every other thing competent to visitations. The Presbytery of the bounds where the said committee shall come being always to be reckoned members thereof, while within their bounds.

The General Assembly approves of the overtures above written.

IX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Printed Overtures concerning the Discipline and Method of Proceeding in Ecclesiastic Judicatories, offered to the last Assembly by a private hand.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the opinion of the commission of the last Assembly, dated the 5th day of January instant, anent the overtures concerning Church discipline, and the method of proceeding in Ecclesiastic Judicatories; as also having heard the report of a committee of this Assembly's own number appointed to consider the same; the General Assembly thinks fit to appoint, and hereby appoints, Mr Gilbert Rule, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Mr William Dunlop, Principal of the College of Glasgow, Mr Robert Wylie, minister at Hamilton, Mr George Meldrum, and Mr William Crichton at Edinburgh, Mr John Veitch, Mr Andrew Cameron, and Mr George Barclay, *Ministers*; Sir James Stewart, his Majesty's Advocate, Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, and Sir Colin Campbell of Aberuchle, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, *Ruling Elders*, to be a committee for considering the said overtures, and the animadversions made thereupon, and compare them with the Word of God, Books of Discipline, and Acts of the General Assemblies of this Church, and to consider what is wanting, or to be added thereto, or altered therein, and to set out a new edition of the said overtures, that the several Presbyteries may have opportunity to ani-

madvert thereon, and appoints them to send their judgment thereanent to the commission of this Assembly, who are to prepare the same against the next General Assembly.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the late General Assembly.

The General Assembly, having this day had reproduced in their presence the register of the actings and proceedings of the commissioners appointed by the last Assembly; and having heard a report of a committee of their own number, appointed to revise, consider, and examine the same, with their observations thereupon, all the members of the said commission were removed; and the General Assembly having seriously considered the said report and answers made by the members of the commission to the said observations, and finding thereby that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions of the said commissioners, contained in the register thereof, subscribed by Mr John Moncrieff, clerk thereto, consisting of one hundred and sixty-eight pages, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, and diligence; and that the said commission have proceeded orderly and formally in every thing, according to their commission and instructions, and that the said register is very accurate: Therefore, this General Assembly, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the said register thereof, beginning the 13th day of January 1697, and ending the 5th day of January instant, inclusive of both days.

XI.

Sess. 13, January 22, 1698.—Recommendation anent Subscribing of Synod Records.

The General Assembly recommends to all Synods for hereafter to take care that their registers be completely filled up always before the sitting of the General Assembly; and that the proceedings of every Synod be signed both by the moderator and clerk thereof; and, lastly, appoints the Synod books, thus filled up and subscribed, to be timeously produced to the General Assembly yearly, in order to their being revised.

XII.

Sess. 14, January 24, 1698, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Churches in the North, and some other particular Affairs committed to them by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering that there are yet many vacant churches on the North side of Tay, as likewise that there are several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot now overtake: Therefore, the General Assembly finds it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant kirks, and doing what other affairs shall be referred to them; and for that end do hereby nominate and appoint Mr Andrew Cameron, minister of the Gospel at Kirkcudbright, &c. &c., to be commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with full power and commission to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any fifteen of the said commissioners, whereof nine are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten of the clock in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Wednesdays of March, June, September, and December, and oftencr, where or when they shall see needful, during the continuance of this commission; and the General Assembly requires all the members of this commission to attend punctually the meetings thereof, with power to the said commission to choose their own moderator and clerk: And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises the said commissioners, or their

quorum, to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given unto them by this Assembly, as fully and freely as if the same were in these presents at full length inserted and set down; as also, to consider, cognosce, and finally determine, in all references, appeals, and other matters, particularly remitted to them by any act or order of this Assembly, all which are holden as herein expressed: And the General Assembly do hereby prohibit and discharge the said commissioners to meddle in any other matter than what is contained herein; declaring also, that in and for their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, declares that this commission shall endure until the meeting of the next General Assembly.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions to the Commission appointed by this Assembly for Planting of the Vacant Churches in the North, &c.

1. That this commission do what in them lies to render effectual the overtures passed in this Assembly for more speedy planting of the North, and exercise all the power that is committed to them for that end.

2. That this commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurrence with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, particularly for settling vacant congregations, and redressing any grievances which may fall out.

3. That when any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines may render them useful to this Church, do apply for reception unto the government, the General Assembly, in prosecution of the assurances given to his Majesty, in their letter written to him, do empower and recommend to this commission, and the other judicatories of this Church, that they be ready to receive them, according to the thirteenth paragraph of the sixteenth act of the last General Assembly.

4. That this commission, in disposal of his Majesty's gifts to this Church, do particularly take care that the encouragement granted by this Assembly to the probationers who are to go to the North to preach be rendered effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges that several ministers of the North have been at, in carrying on the planting of the North, and other public affairs of the Church there; and for defraying the charges of such ministers or probationers as shall yet be sent to Orkney, or other remote places of the North.

5. That if the commission shall see cause to appoint committees upon occasion for visitation of particular kirks and Presbyteries, or trial of persons, then the said committees as to trials may proceed *usque ad sententiam*, but no farther; but that in that case they report their procedure to the commission, who are to pass sentence as they shall see cause.

6. This commission may likewise, on the desire of any Presbytery or Synod, send committees for assisting them in visitation of kirks within their bounds, which committees may be assisting to the said Presbyteries or Synods, either in processes and censures, if need be, or in redressing the grievances of particular ministers or parishes within their bounds.

7. The commission are to cognosce, and finally determine, in all references made to them by this Assembly, and in all appeals for transporting ministers to the North, which shall be orderly brought unto them, according to the overtures thereanent, passed in this Assembly.

8. This commission is also to correspond with the State, anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

9. The commission is to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act appointing some Ministers to go for the Supply of the North, until the next Assembly.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their consideration that there are yet many vacancies in the North, and that the ministers which are settled there are not in a condition to supply the same in a suitable manner; therefore, they have ordained, and hereby ordain, that the Synods be-South Tay after named shall send to the bounds of the Synods of Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and the Presbyteries of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld, within the Synod of Perth, the number of fifteen ministers, every four months, according to the proportions after mentioned, viz., that two be sent to supply the vacancies of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; three to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Angus and Mearns; five to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Aberdeen; four to supply the vacancies of the Synod of Moray; and one to supply the vacancies of the Synods of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness: And the Assembly declares, that these above supplies of fifteen ministers be sent every four months by the Synods after mentioned, according to the following proportions, viz., that from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale there be sent three each four months, and that to the Synod of Angus and Mearns;—the Synod of Lothian shall send four, two of them to Aberdeen, and two of them to Moray, as the said Synod of Lothian shall determine;—that the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr shall send five, viz., one to Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld, three to Aberdeen, and one to Moray;—that the Synod of Fife shall send three; one to Perth, one to Moray, and one to Caithness, Ross, and Sutherland, as the said Synod of Fife shall determine: And further, because it is necessary that the said supplies who shall go for the first four months shall be there sooner than the next ordinarily meeting of Synods, therefore, the Assembly appoints the Presbyteries after named to send a minister to the bounds of the Synods after mentioned, to supply the vacancies there, and that such as shall be by them appointed be there against the first Sabbath of March next, viz., the Presbyteries of Chirnside, Jedburgh, and Selkirk, within the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, to send each of them one to supply the vacancies in the bounds of the Synod of Angus and Mearns; that these five nominated already by the Synod of Glasgow to go in March, do go to their respective posts, and that these appointed by the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale to go in March, do go to their respective posts appointed them; and, lastly, from the Synod of Fife, the Presbytery of Cupar to send one to Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness; the Presbytery of Dunfermline and Kirkaldy to send one to Moray; the Presbytery of St Andrews to Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; but in case that any of the said Synods have already appointed their supplies according to the Act of the last Assembly, and if, in obedience thereunto, any Presbytery have already nominated the persons who are to go, then, and in that case, the Assembly doth hereby homologate and ratify the said appointments and nominations, and hereby ordains all such, as either are already appointed, or shall be hereafter appointed, by Synods or Presbyteries for this or the succeeding four months' supply, that they repair to the respective bounds as above set down against their respective times allotted unto them, and be directed by the Presbytery and ministers of the respective Synods they repair to, as to what particular congregations they shall apply themselves unto, and that for the space of four months above mentioned, viz., from March to July next: And the Assembly doth farther ordain the above written Synods in the South to send to the places and in the manner above mentioned, a new supply of as many ministers more, to continue from the first of July next till the first of November following, and so forth, aye and until the sitting of the next General Assembly; and the respective Presbyteries are to take care that their kirks be supplied according to the fourteenth Act of the last General Assembly: And, lastly, the Assembly ordains these ministers sent in supply to the North to catechize and do all appointed by the former Acts of Assembly, under the certifications contained in the said acts, and that they get and produce to their own Presbytery a testimonial from the Presbytery within the bounds

where they did supply, of their having fulfilled their appointment, and of their carriage and behaviour during their abode in these bounds; and the Assembly also declares that these named by the Synods or Presbyteries in this supply who may be upon the commission, this shall be no excuse for them to elude the said appointments.

XV.

Sessio 15 et ultima, January 24, 1698, post meridiem.—Overtures against Profaneness.
(An Act on this subject was passed in 1699.)

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Overtures against Popery.
(These Overtures were passed into an Act in 1699.)

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Overtures for Planting the Highlands.
(These Overtures were passed into an Act in 1699.)

XVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Overtures anent Proclamation of Banns.
(Passed into an Act in 1699.)

XIX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act appointing some Probationers to go North.

The said day the General Assembly, taking into their consideration their former act, anent sending probationers to the North, do nominate and appoint these probationers after named to go to the provinces and Presbyteries after mentioned, viz., Mr William Christie, &c.; and because Mr Patrick Melvill and Mr Archibald Hamilton were nominated for Aberdeen, Mr Thomas Fraser for Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, and Mr James Short for Orkney, and that there were some objections made by them against it; therefore, the General Assembly refers to their commission* to consider the said objections, and, if they shall see cause, to exempt them, and to name some other probationers in their rooms, to go to the provinces above specified, conform to the former Acts of this Assembly.

XX.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh upon the 20th day of January, 1699 years.

The Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by me,
J. BANNATYNE, *Cl. Syn. National.*

* The Commission made certain alterations on these appointments, as appears from an advertisement subjoined to the original edition of the Acts of 1698. The Commission of that year, agreeably to an appointment contained in Act XV. 1698, did also prepare and transmit to Presbyteries certain "Overtures concerning the method and form of the procedure of the Judicatories of the Church against scandalous persons," which overtures, with a few amendments, were subsequently passed into an act. See Act IV. Assembly 1705.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, JANUARY 20, 1699.

I

Sess. 1, January 20, 1699.—The Recording of his Majesty's Commission to the Lord Carmichael, for representing his Majesty in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this National Church being convened, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, John Lord Carmichael, his Majesty's commission, under the Great Seal of this kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which was publicly read in their audience, with all due honour and respect; and the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, the same to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—"GULIELMUS," &c.

II

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The which day his Majesty's High Commissioner presented his Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read in their hearing, with all due honour and respect, and appointed to be recorded in their registers, the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. We have thought fit to allow and countenance your meeting at this time, that you may have the opportunity to do what is necessary for promoting religion, and regulating order and discipline. And we do again earnestly recommend to you to fall upon effectual methods for planting vacant churches with pious and learned ministers, which is so necessary for suppressing error and immorality; in the doing whereof you shall have from us all due encouragement and assistance. We have again chosen our right trusty and entirely-beloved councillor, John Lord Carmichael, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly. And as we have sufficient experience of his fidelity to us, and of his abilities and fitness to discharge this trust, so we know that he is acceptable unto you. We have fully instructed him in all things that we think needful, and therefore you may give him entire trust and credit. We are well satisfied with your proceedings in the former Assembly, and we doubt not but your management in this will be suitable to our expectation. We leave what further is necessary to our Commissioner; and we assure you of our royal protection and assistance in all your concerns. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Kensington, the 7th day of January 1698-9, and of our reign the 10th year.

By his Majesty's Command,

SEAFIELD.

To the Right Reverend and well-beloved Ministers and Elders, met in the
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 4, January 24, 1699, post meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The renewed testimonies of your Majesty's care and concern for this Church, so amply signified by your gracious letter, are received by us with all satisfaction and acknowledgment, and cannot but engage us to double our diligence in prosecuting the duties of promoting religion, order, and discipline, planting of vacant churches, and suppressing of error and immorality, which your Majesty particularly recommends, with the most obliging assurances of all due encouragement and assistance.

What your Majesty recommended to the last Assembly, as to the planting of the North, hath been minded by them, and their commission and committees empowered for that effect, to the remotest parts of the kingdom, and even to the Isles of Orkney and Zetland, with a considerable progress: And we are firmly resolved to continue our best endeavours for accomplishing so good and necessary a work; nor can we omit to notice that your Majesty's royal bounty did very seasonably contribute to make our labours in that matter more easy and effectual.

Nothing can be more rejoicing to us than to see your Majesty's zeal against error and immorality, which makes us presume to beg for your renewed commands to those concerned, that your excellent laws against profanity (that to our great grief still grows) may be put to vigorous execution, without exception. And we earnestly pray and hope that God, who preserved your Majesty during a long and dangerous war, and blessed your conduct and valour with the conclusion of a happy peace, will still support and assist your royal endeavours in reforming the manners of this profligate age, and preserve you till that great work be accomplished.

We do also acknowledge the good choice that it hath pleased your Majesty to make of the Lord Carmichael to represent your royal person in this Assembly, whose faithfulness to your Majesty, as well as his kind affection to us, do render him most acceptable.

That your Majesty's reign may be long and happy; that all your subjects may continually make suitable returns of duty and gratitude for all the labours and dangers you have undergone for their tranquillity; and that truth and peace may ever flourish in your days, are, and shall be, the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE HAMILTON, *Moderator.*

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act Annexing some Parishes to the Presbyteries of Stranraer and Wigton.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the opinion of the Committee for Overtures, did by their vote disjoin the parishes of Ballantrae and Colmonell from the Presbytery of Ayr, and annexes them to the Presbytery of Stranraer; and likewise disjoins the parishes of Kirkmabreck, Kells, Dalry, and Carsphairn, from the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, and annexes them to the Presbytery of Wigton, which Presbytery of Wigton may meet at Minnygaff frequently, and this without prejudice to the Presbyteries of Ayr and Kirkcudbright, or any others concerned, to be heard against the continuation of this alteration, at the next or any other ensuing General Assembly; and it is appointed and declared, that this act, as to the said disunion

and annexation, shall commence at the first day of March next to come: And the General Assembly ordains the ministers of the respective parishes above named, so disjoined and annexed, to be advertised hereof, and to give obedience thereto, as they will be answerable; and that letters be written to the Presbyteries concerned for that end.

V.

Sess. 5, January 25, 1699, post meridiem.—Act anent Proclamation of Banns.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overtures passed in the last Assembly, dated the 24th day of January 1698, entitled, "Overtures anent Proclamation of Banns;" the tenor whereof follows:—

The General Assembly, being informed that several abuses have crept in, in the way and manner of proclaiming the banns of persons to be married, do, for preventing the same, overture and declare, that before any proclamations be made, the names and designations of the persons to be married, and their parents, tutors, or curators, if they any have, be given up to the minister of the bounds in which any of them live and reside, that thereby it may be known if their parents and friends give consent thereto; and that the minister being satisfied herein, order the proclamation to be made three several Sabbaths, which, when made, shall be immediately before divine worship begin in the forenoon, and the persons to be proclaimed, their names and full designations, such as they are designed by in writs or contracts of marriage, be fully and audibly expressed, and that where there are more churches collegiate in the place or town, the proclamations be made in all and every one of the churches within the city or town where they or any of the persons to be married reside; and this to be attested to the minister that marries them; with certification of the censures of the church against the transgressors herein.

And the General Assembly having heard the report of the several commissioners from Presbyteries now present, to whom the consideration of the said overture was recommended, in order to its being more ripely advised and determined in this Assembly; and finding that the several Presbyteries were satisfied therewith: Therefore, this General Assembly, by their vote, unanimously did, and hereby do, approve of the said overtures, and appoints the same to have the full force and strength of an Act of the General Assembly in all time coming; and, that none may pretend ignorance, appoints the same to be intimated in all the parish kirks of this kingdom.

VI.

Sess. 6, January 26, 1699, post meridiem.—Act of the General Assembly anent a solemn National Fast and Humiliation.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration that the many grievous and most heinously aggravated sins and abominations abounding and still continuing in this land, have procured and drawn from the hands of the just and holy Lord the lamentable stroke of dearth, and unseasonable weather in seed-time and harvest, which, as it hath reduced many families of the nation already into great straits, so, if mercy prevent not, threatens dreadful famine. As likewise considering the sadly distressed state of some of the Reformed Churches abroad under grievous persecution, and the dangerous condition of others of them, which loudly call for our humbling ourselves for our own sins, and for sympathy with others, and frequent prayer for ourselves and them; have, therefore, thought it a necessary and seasonable duty to set apart, and hereby do set apart and appoint the day of March next, being Thursday, for solemn humiliation and prayer, that God would pardon our sins, turn away and avert his wrath from this and other churches—command deliverance for his afflicted people under persecution—bless and preserve our King, under whose government we enjoy so much peace and tranquillity, and liberty of Gospel ordinances,

dispensed with purity and freedom—that God may continue the same with us, and bless the Gospel with success—grant a seasonable seed-time, and bless the seed with increase, that the poor may be satisfied with bread;—obtesting and beseeching all ranks of persons to search and try their ways, and, by unfeigned repentance and reformation, turn to the Lord with all their heart, that the Lord may return to us, and have mercy upon us and the land: And it is most seriously recommended to all ministers to be very explicit and particular in the acknowledgment of the national and epidemic crying sins, especially those that seem to abound in the respective places where ministers serve. And the General Assembly ordains all ministers to intimate this publicly from the pulpit a Sabbath or two before the said day of humiliation. And, lastly, the General Assembly appointed, and hereby appoints, Mr William Dunlop, Mr George Meldrum, Mr John Law, Mr Thomas Wilkie, Mr Gabriel Semple, *Ministers*; Mr John Campbell, brother to the Earl of Argyle, Sir John Riddel of that Ilk, Sir Thomas Kilpatrick of Closeburn, and John Alexander of Blackhouse, *Ruling Elders*; to apply to the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council for their civil sanction to the observation of the said fast, and leaves it to their Lordships to name the day of the month of March for the said fast.

VII.

Sess. 9, January 30, 1699, ante meridiem.—Act against Profaneness.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overtures against profaneness, passed by the last Assembly, January 24, 1698, Sess. 15, and having heard the report of commissioners present from the several Presbyteries of this National Church, to whom the consideration of the said overtures were recommended; and the General Assembly being well and ripely advised thereanent, did, by their vote, and hereby do, approve of these overtures after mentioned, whereof the tenor follows:—

1. The General Assembly, considering the lamentable growth of profanity, ignorance, and irreligion, that is too manifest in this land, and the woful decay of the life and power of godliness, with the small success of the Gospel, that is to be observed every where at this time, the General Assembly, in a deep sense of these things, and for the remedying of them, do, in the first place, in the awe and dread of God, beseech, exhort, and require all ministers, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that they take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, and endeavour to be ensamples to the people in all piety, purity, and holiness, and in all manner of conversation.

2. That they be frequent and fervent in secret prayer for themselves and the people committed to them, joining sometimes fasting with prayer. And the General Assembly recommends to ministers and elders in their several parishes, and ministers in their several presbyteries, to meet sometimes together in their parishes and presbyteries respectively, for private fasting and prayer, and conference anent the state of the Church, and that part of it in which they have special interest, with respect to the growth or decay of godliness, and success of the Gospel therein.

3. That Presbyteries be more accurate in managing their privy censures, and that a day be set apart for that purpose only, and spent in fasting and prayer together.

4. That Presbyteries be very cautious in admitting intrants to the ministry, and be accurate and exact in the trial, not only of their literature, but of their piety, prudence, and former godly conversation and walk.

5. That ministers be painful in catechising, frequent in visiting of families, and in private personal conference with those of their charge about the state of their souls, and that ministers be more frequent in administration of the Lord's Supper, and always edifying in their converse and discourse; and that they deal with heads of families to engage them to piety, and a care to reform their families, and to set up and to keep up the worship of God therein; and, in particular, that ministers endeavour, by all prudent and gaining Gospel methods, to engage persons of honour and power to fall in love with holiness, and reckon it, as indeed it is, their greatest honour; and that, in dealing with such of them as are vicious, an humble and yet holy

boldness and zeal be used in admonishing them, in order to their recovery; and that herein Presbyteries appoint some others of their number to concur with the minister of the place as may be most for edification.

6. The General Assembly recommends to the Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries the vigorous, impartial, and yet prudent exercise of Church discipline against all immorality, especially drunkenness and filthiness, cursing and swearing, and profaning the Lord's Day, which too much abound; and that they apply to the magistrate for the execution of the good laws made against immorality and profaneness.

7. That seeing it is observed, that in burghs, especially those of greatest resort, as Edinburgh, many sit too late in taverns, especially on the Saturday night, and men of business pretend they do it for relaxation of their minds, through which some neglect the public worship on the Lord's Day in the forenoon, and others attend the worship drowsily; therefore, the General Assembly recommends to all ministers where such sinful customs are, to represent to the people, both publicly and privately, the sin and evil thereof, and to call them to redeem that time, which they have free from business, and to employ it for converse with God about their soul's state, and in preparation for the Sabbath, which will yield more delight than all sensual pleasures can do.

And the General Assembly beseecheth and exhorteth all magistrates of burghs to be assistant to ministers in inquiring into and reforming such abuses.

And suchlike, the General Assembly revives the act of the General Assembly, dated the 11th January 1697, Sess. 8, entitled, "Act against Profaneness," and approves of the overture therein contained, anent censuring such ministers and members of sessions as are negligent in pursuing scandals.

And the General Assembly recommends and enacts the punctual observation of the said acts and overtures, and obedience thereto by all Presbyteries, ministers, elders, and sessions, as they are concerned in their several stations, as they will be answerable.

VIII.

Sess. 10, Eodem die, post meridiem.—Act against Popery.

The General Assembly taking into consideration the overtures against Popery, passed in the last Assembly, January 24, 1698, the tenor whereof follows:—

1. That ministers study Popish controversies more.
2. That all due endeavours be used to unite Protestants amongst themselves, seeing the adversaries get advantage by our division.
3. That ministers endeavour faithfully to watch the flock committed to them, and by public preaching, and private instruction and conference, to prevent apostacy that way.
4. That ministers deal wisely and convincingly with the consciences of those that have fallen to Popery and other corrupt principles, for their recovery.
5. That when other means are ineffectual, Presbyteries would proceed to Church censures, when they see it may be for the edification of the Church.
6. That according to the acts of former General Assemblies, and acts of Parliament, the names of Popish priests and Jesuits, and trafficking Papists, and of those who have sent their children to Popish colleges and countries, be given in to each Provincial Synod, and by them transmitted, as Act, Charles II., Parl. 3, cap. 6.
7. That the General Assembly apply to the Privy Council for the vigorous execution of the laws against Papists, particularly seminary priests, Popish schoolmasters, mistresses, governors, and pedagogues, and Popish meetings; and for seeing to the training up of Popish youth in the Protestant religion; in all which, some inferior magistrates are justly complained of, as very defective; and that the said address be presented by such as the General Assembly shall appoint.

And the General Assembly having heard the opinion of the commissioners from the several Presbyteries concerning the said overtures, and finding that there

was no objection made against any thing therein contained; and that application being made to the Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, conform to the seventh paragraph of the said overtures, their Lordships were graciously pleased to emit a proclamation thereupon against Papists; and the General Assembly being well and ripely advised anent the premises, they by their vote unanimously did, and hereby do, approve of the said overtures, and appoint the same to have the full force and strength of an act of the General Assembly, and to be observed in all time coming, and ordain application to be made to the civil magistrate, conform to the said seventh paragraph, as often as need requires.

IX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Planting of the Highlands.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overtures passed in the last General Assembly, January 24, 1698, Sess. 15, entitled, "Overtures for Planting the Highlands;" the tenor whereof follows:—

1. That ministers and probationers who have the Irish language be sent to the Highland parishes, and that none of them be settled in the Low Country till the Highland places be first provided.

2. That ministers and ruling elders who have the Irish language be appointed to visit these parts.

3. That where in any Highland congregation many understand English, and there used once a day to be a sermon in English, Presbyteries be careful to supply them sometimes by preaching in English; and that they catechize them who understand not, by an interpreter, when they cannot get one to preach to them in Irish; and that those, whether ministers or probationers, who have somewhat of the Irish language, but not a facility to preach in it, be sent to these places for the ends foresaid, that by converse they may learn more of the language, and ability to instruct therein.

4. That English schoolmasters be erected in all Highland parishes, according to former acts of Parliament and General Assemblies; and for this end, the General Assembly recommends to their commission to address the King and Parliament, to take such course for this, and other pious uses, in the more northern Highland places, as is granted to these of Argyle, and that as they shall think fit.

5. That it be recommended to Presbyteries and Universities to have a special regard in the disposal of their bursaries for educating such as it is hoped may be useful to preach the Gospel in the Highlands; and that the commission address the Lords of the Treasury, and recommend the same to the Town Council of Edinburgh, and other patrons, for this end.

And the General Assembly, having heard the report and the opinion of the commissioners present from the several Presbyteries anent the said overtures, did, by their vote, and hereby do unanimously approve thereof, and appoint and recommend according thereto; with this addition, that the Presbyteries of Dumbarton, Dunblane, Auchterarder, Dunkeld, Inverness, Abernethy, Aberlour, Tain, Dingwall, Dornoch, and Caithness, are hereby enjoined to have bursars who have the Highland language, if they can be had, and that the universities where such students are be wrote to, to give an account what students having that language they know of, that deserve encouragement; and that they recommend them to any of the above Presbyteries, and that care be taken that any so to be recommended be piously disposed, and of sound principles.

X.

Sess. 11, January 31, 1699, ante meridiem.—Recommendation to Presbyteries and Synods anent Schools.

The General Assembly, considering that there are many good laws and acts of Parliament, and acts of General Assemblies, for erecting schools in every parish, and

ways laid down for maintaining thereof, and being informed that, notwithstanding thereof, there are several parishes, even in the Lowlands, that want schools; therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, recommend to the several Presbyteries within this National Church to use their endeavours that schools be erected in every parish within their respective bounds, conform to the acts of Parliament and General Assembly; and it is recommended to Synods to make particular inquiry how this recommendation is observed.

XL

Sess. 16, February 3, 1699, ante meridiem.—Overtures for Planting the North, with the approbation thereof.

The which day there was read in presence of the General Assembly the overtures underwritten, which were transmitted to the General Assembly by their Committee for Overtures, and upon the 31st of January last read in open Assembly, and the consideration thereof remitted to the said Committee, and any persons that had any thing to offer thereanent were desired to attend that Committee, and represent the same to them; the tenor of which overtures follows:—

1. That any of the twenty probationers appointed by the last General Assembly, who have not obeyed in going North, or not stayed in the North twelve months, but returned from it without the allowance of the Presbytery of the bounds where they were sent, shall, upon the desire of that Presbytery to the Presbytery where they now reside, be sent back to fulfil the twelve months.

2. That when any one of those who were born on the North side of Tay is licensed by any Presbytery on the South side of Tay, he be sent North by that Presbytery within four months after his licensing, and it be remitted to the Commission to appoint the place to which he should go, and the time of his stay; and that no probationers born on the North side of Tay be settled in any congregation as minister be South Tay, until the next General Assembly, unless they be of those who have been twelve months in the North, according to the appointment of the last General Assembly; but such who, during the twelve months of their mission, having received no call from any congregation in the North, are declared free to come South, and accept of an orderly call from any congregation in the South side of Tay; it is also allowed to the town of Edinburgh, that if they call any North country probationer, he may be settled in that city, notwithstanding of this overture.

3. And the General Assembly hereby dischargeth any Presbytery on the South side of Tay to settle any probationer born on the North side of Tay within the fore-said time, except in the cases above excepted; with certification that the Presbytery shall be censured by the Commission or General Assembly; and the probationer so settled is hereby declared, *ipso facto*, transportable, and that the Commission of this Assembly appoint him immediately to repair to the North, and any place thereof they think fit, as an extraordinary supply, and if a call be given to him, the Commission transport him to the North.

4. It is overtured that other twenty probationers be sent this year to the North also, and of these twenty, as many as can be had of such who were born on the North side of Tay, and that they be sent in the proportion following, viz., three to the Presbytery of Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld; six for the province of Angus and Mearns, because there are most vacancies there; four to the province of Aberdeen; three to the province of Moray; two to Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness; and two to Orkney; and that there be a committee of one or two out of each Synod to nominate these twenty probationers, or the same referred to the Commission.

5. That these probationers so nominated go how soon possible without delay to the places to which they are sent, and to stay in the North for twelve months; and it is hereby referred to the commission to be appointed by this Assembly, to consider and determine of the provinces they should go to, and of the time of their stay and abode in each province.

6. That for the encouragement of each probationer who shall be thus sent, and to

help to defray the charges of his journey, the General Assembly do allow, out of the King's gift for defraying the public expenses of the Church, to those who go to Perth, Auchterarder, and Dunkeld, 40 pounds each one; to those who go to Angus, 50 pounds; to those who go to Aberdeen, 100 merks; to those who go to Moray, 80 pounds; to those who go to Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, 100 pounds; to those who go to Orkney, 200 merks.

7. That these probationers be obliged to accept of calls, whether popular or Presbyterial, when presented to them by the Presbyteries of any of the said provinces; with certification, if they refuse the same, the Presbyteries within whose bounds they are called shall have power to take their licence from them until the next Assembly; yet that it be recommended to all Presbyteries not to make use of a *jus devolutum* for the planting any congregation till all other means be essayed.

8. That, besides these probationers, there be sent from the Synods of the South some actual ministers for the supply of the North; and seeing diverse places of the North are better planted than formerly, the number of these ministers to be sent for this year for each four months be eleven, in manner after following, five to Angus and Mearns, four to Aberdeen province, two to Moray, out of the Synods following, viz., from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale two, to the province of Angus; out of the Synod of Lothian three, two to Aberdeen, and one to Moray; out of the Synod of Glasgow four, two to Angus, and two to Aberdeen; out of the Synod of Fife two, one to Moray, and one to Angus, and if the Commission find it needful to send one to Caithness, they be empowered to send one from the Synod of Lothian for the months of April, May, and June, and one from the Synod of Glasgow for July, August, and September.

9. That when an orderly call is designed to any minister on the South side of Tay, by any of the places privileged by the 8th act of the last General Assembly, yet vacant, the process of transportation may be carried on after the same manner prescribed in the said act; and the Assembly renews the recommendation mentioned in the said act to all judicatories, who shall have occasion to judge in any of these transportations; and that they have a special respect to those places privileged by the Assembly when they represent any call, seeing ministers are freed from the fear of Presbyterial calls.

10. That in regard of the vacancies of the town of Aberdeen, and that place is so considerable, and of such influence on the Northern parts, the General Assembly recommends to the Synods of Lothian and Glasgow, that at least one of their supplies each quarter for the province of Aberdeen be a grave and experienced man, suited for the supply of the town of Aberdeen; and that when the town of Aberdeen presents a call to a minister before any church judicatory, they have a special and tender regard to the planting of that place; and likewise, the General Assembly doth recommend to and appoint Mr William Moncreiff, minister at Largo, to go and supply the town of Aberdeen for the months of April and May, and this over and besides the ordinary supply of that Synod.

11. That Mr Hugh M'Hendry and Mr John Macculloch be sent to Angus or Perth, and have the allowance for their journey out of the King's gift.

12. That it be referred to the Commission to send Mr Robert Burnet to Angus after May next.

13. That seeing it is regretted by some who are sent as supplies, that they have much toil in travelling betwixt the vacant parishes of the Presbyteries of Strathbogie and Presbytery seat of Moray: Therefore, the Assembly recommends to the united Presbyteries of Turriff, Fordyce, and Alford, to take care of the supplies of these vacant parishes, with the concurrence of Mr William Chalmers, minister at Gartly, until the next General Assembly; but that the planting of these vacant parishes be with the consent and concurrence of the Presbytery of Moray, seeing the Presbytery of Strathbogie is within the bounds of the province of Moray: And that it be recommended to the Commission to send up one probationer more, if they have need; and if any difficulty arise in planting parishes, it be referred to the Commission.

14. That it be recommended to Presbyteries to be careful that the allowance granted by the act of Parliament to them who supply the North be punctually paid;

and that the Presbytery be careful to provide commodious places for ministers and probationers, where they may reside when sent to supply any parish, seeing they are to stay there for some time ; and to catechize the people according to the 16th act of the General Assembly, January 12, 1697, Sess. 10 *et ult.*, paragraph 8.

15. That it be recommended to the Synods of Dumfries, Merse, and Glasgow, to supply the Presbyteries of Wigton and Stranraer with ministers and probationers, and that they be careful to send such as, for prudence and piety, may be judged fittest for that country ; and that it be recommended, in particular, to Mr John Good, minister of the Gospel, to go to Galloway, in case that he be not shortly settled in a parish elsewhere.

And the General Assembly having duly and maturely considered the said overtures, they, by their vote, unanimously did, and hereby do, approve of the same, and recommends, refers, and appoints, according thereto, in all points.

XII.

Sess. 17, Feb. 3, 1699, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly, 1698.

The General Assembly having this day had re-produced in their presence the register of the actings and proceedings of the commissioners appointed by the last Assembly, and having heard the report of a committee of this Assembly's own number, that were not members of the said Commission, but appointed to revise, examine, and consider the said register, with their observations thereupon, all the members of the said Commission were removed, and Mr James Hutcheson was chosen Moderator, and Mr David Ewing Clerk, *pro tempore*, (the Moderator and Clerk of this Assembly being members of the said Commission, and therefore removed ;) and the General Assembly, having seriously considered the said report and answers made by the moderator and other members of the Commission to the said observations, and finding thereby that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the register, subscribed by Mr John Moncrieff, clerk thereto, beginning at page 169, and ending at page 354, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, and diligence, and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in everything, according to their commission and instructions, and that the said register is very accurate ; therefore, this General Assembly, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the said register thereof, beginning January 15, 1698, and ending January 18, 1699, inclusive of both days ; and the members of the Commission being called in, the same was intimated to them, and the moderator gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service, and then the moderator and clerk of this Assembly took their place.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent subscribing the Confession of Faith.

The General Assembly recommends to all Synods and Presbyteries to inquire what ministers or probationers, or schoolmasters, within their respective bounds, have not subscribed the Confession of Faith, conform to former acts of the General Assembly, as the confession of their faith ; that those who have not done it may be put thereto, and thinks it necessary that there be a new impression of the Confession of Faith in folio for that end.

XIV.

Sess. 18 et ultima, February 4, 1699, ante meridiem.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Elders, for Planting of vacant Kirks in the North, and other Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering that there are yet many vacant churches on the North side of Tay, as likewise that there are several weighty affairs which the said Assembly cannot overtake; therefore, the General Assembly finds it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant kirks, and doing what other affairs shall be referred to them, and for that end do hereby nominate and appoint Mr Andrew Roger, minister at Galston, &c. &c., to be Commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with full power, &c. (The powers granted to the Commission are the same as in 1698.)

XV.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions to the Commission appointed by the General Assembly for Planting the vacant Churches in the North, &c.

1. That this Commission do what in them lies to render effectual the overtures passed the last Assembly, for the more speedy planting of the North, and exercise all the power that is committed to them for that effect, except in so far as they are, or shall be altered by this Assembly; and that they cognosce and finally determine in all references made to them by this Assembly, and in all appeals for transporting ministers to the North, which shall be orderly brought in to them, according to the above or any other overtures passed in this Assembly.

2. That this Commission, as often as they see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurrence with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, particularly for settling vacant churches, redressing any grievances which may fall out, and that they correspond with the State anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

3. That when any ministers, who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines may render them useful to this Church, do apply for reception to the Government, the Assembly do empower and recommend to this Commission, and the other judicatories of this Church competent, that they may be ready to receive them, according to former acts of the Assembly.

4. That this Commission may dispose of his Majesty's gifts to this Church, and in the disposal thereof that they do particularly take care that the encouragement granted by this Assembly to the probationers who are to go to the North to preach be rendered effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges that several ministers of the North have been at, in carrying on the planting of the North, and other public affairs of the Church there; and for the defraying the charges of such ministers or probationers as shall yet be sent to Orkney, or other remote parts of the North.

5. That this Commission, on the desire of Presbyteries or Synods, or as they shall see cause, may appoint committees upon occasion, for visitation of particular kirks and Presbyteries, or trial of persons, and do all things proper for any visitation, who are to act in conjunction with the Presbytery of the bounds; and that they proceed to censure as they see cause.

6. The Commission is to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery applying to them in difficult cases.

7. That this Commission inquire who are defective in sending supplies to the North, and see them fulfil their mission, and that they endeavour that the supplies appointed by this Assembly be made effectual, under the certifications contained in acts of prior Assemblies thereanent, and, for this effect, that each Synod and Presbytery send in quarterly to the Commission an account of the names of the persons

they appoint for supplies, and the places to which they are sent; and that another double thereof be each four months sent to the Presbytery or Province to which they send.

8. That this Commission shall have power to add to or alter the instructions given to the Presbyteries of Orkney and Zetland, as they shall see cause, particularly with reference to transportation of ministers, because of the sad circumstances that some ministers there are in; that they be ready to give advice and assistance to these Presbyteries as they are required, because they have not Synods in these bounds.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—*Overtures for promoting the Knowledge of God in the Highlands, and for rendering the Act made Sess. 10 of this Assembly the more effectual.*

1. That each Presbytery give up yearly to the General Assembly a distinct account of probationers and students of divinity within their bounds who have the Irish language.

2. That inquiry be made what ministers are settled in the Lowlands who have the Irish language, that they may be sent on supply to vacant and Highland places; and if they get orderly calls they be transported to the Highlands.

3. That seeing a great number of Bibles have been, on the charges of diverse charitable persons in England, and some in Scotland, translated and printed in the Irish language, and sent down to this kingdom to be dispersed, chiefly for the use of the poor, and many of them are not yet distributed, and diverse parishes in the Highland parts have gotten none of them, it be recommended to Mr David Blair, Mr William Crichton, Mr John Law, Mr Gilbert Rule, Mr George Meldrum, Mr John Moncreiff, Mr George Hamilton, Moderator, and to the Earls of Sutherland and Tullibardine, the Lord Aberuchill, and Laird of Grant, to inquire how many of these Bibles, whether printed in the Roman or Irish character, are already distributed, and how, and to whom, and how many do yet remain, and to make distribution of them to different parts of the Church, in such proportion as may be most for edification; and that they be delivered and distributed by the order of any three of this committee, on sufficient receipt by the receiver, and that Presbyteries and ministers of each parish be careful of the due distribution of what is received, and an account thereof sent to the next General Assembly.

4. That it be recommended to all, but especially to Presbyteries who have Highland parishes, to consider what may be done for getting a fund for a new impression of the Bible in the Irish language, and of the Psalms in metre, and of the Shorter Catechism.

5. That seeing it is informed there were 1000 pounds Scots given by the Lords of his Majesty's Treasury for binding of these Bibles, and other charges anent them, it be recommended to the foresaid committee, or to the commission, to inquire to whom that money was given, and on what terms, and how employed; and if there be any of it yet remaining, after the defraying of the charges foresaid, that it be allotted for the help of a fund for a new impression.

6. That it be recommended to the Synod of Argyle to translate the Confession of Faith of this Church, and the Larger Catechism, in the Irish language, the Lesser Catechism and Psalms being translated already in that language; and that they exactly notice any typographical errors which may be found in the late impression of the Bible in the Highland language, that they may be amended in a new impression.

7. That it be recommended to the Synod of Argyle that as they have done worthily hitherto, in visiting the country and islands within their bounds, so they would continue and abound more and more, and be ready to assist their neighbours as they are called and have opportunity.

8. That there be a Committee for visiting the Highland parishes of Dumbarton, Stirling, and Perth Shires, of the persons following, viz., Mr John Anderson, minister at Drymen, Mr Robert Anderson at Perth, Mr John Campbell at Monivaird, Mr

David Shaw at Aberdalgie, Mr Alexander Douglas of Logie, Mr Alexander Dinning at Abernethy, *Ministers*; the Earl of Tullibardine, Viscount of Dupplin, Lord Ruthven, Sir Colin Campbell of Aberuchill, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, the Laird of Meggins, and Lauchlan Macintosh, *Elders*.

9. And that the Synod of Aberdeen, at their meeting in April next, do appoint some of the ministers and elders in their bounds to be a committee to visit the few Highland parishes in their province.

10. And that Mr David Cumming, minister at Edinkillie, Mr Alexander Forbes at Dyke, and Mr Donald Macintosh at Duthil, *Ministers*; together with the Lairds of Grant, Brodie, and Culloden, *Elders*; with any other that the Presbytery of Moray may appoint of their own number, to be a committee to visit the Highland parishes within the Province and Synod of Moray.

11. And that Mr William Innes, minister at Thurso, Mr Walter Denoon at Golspie, Mr John Monro at Reay, Mr John Macpherson at Farr, Mr William Stewart at Kiltarn, and Mr Hugh Duff at Fearn, with the Lairds of Foulis and Dalpholey, and William Ross of Aldie, be a committee to visit the Highland parishes of Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness.

12. And that these committees visit the kirks, manses, glebes, and, if need be, perambulate the parishes, and consider how they may be more commodiously divided or annexed; or where there is need of new erections, and how the same may be most conveniently accomplished.

13. And that they visit the schools within the said bounds, and endeavour to get schools erected, according to the act of Parliament, where they are not; and apply to those who have the care and charge of disposing of the King's gift out of the Bishopric of Dunkeld, or any other gift his Majesty may grant to other places for that end, that where it is needful they may have more schools in one parish, where it is large and spacious, than those provided by act of Parliament.

14. And that they do all and every thing proper for a committee for visitation to do, and to report their diligence to the next General Assembly, and from time to time to the commission appointed by this Assembly, who are hereby empowered to give them advice on all occasions, and to draw the several commissions to the respective committees, to the effect above specified, and appoint the time and place of their first meeting respectively; with power to the commission to add such of their number as they shall think fit; with power also to the above mentioned committees to choose their own moderators and clerks, and to appoint the diets and places of their after-meetings.

15. That the King be addressed for the effect of his royal munificence, in favour of the more northern Highland places, as he hath done to the Synods of Argyle and Perth; and the concurrence of the nobility and gentry concerned be desired for this end.

The General Assembly having several times heard and considered the above-written overtures, they by their vote unanimously did, and hereby do, approve thereof; and appoints, refers, and recommends, according thereto, in all points.

XVII.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh upon the first Friday of February, 1700 years.

The Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by me,

J. BANNATYNE, *Cls. Syn. National*.

[In the original Edition of the Acts of 1699 there are appended the following overtures, transmitted to Presbyteries for their consideration, viz., 1. Anent revising

of the Registers of Church Judicatories; 2. Anent Schoolmasters; 3. Against Witchcraft, Charming, &c.; 4. Anent Scandalous and Contumacious Persons; 5. Anent the Emolumentary Writs of Ministers, Kirks, Schoolmasters, &c.; 6. Anent the making of Acts, and due care to observe them when made; 7. Discharging the Printing of any Paper to be presented to the Assembly without allowance; 8. Anent Censuring Scandalous Persons; and, 9. Anent Papists. The greater number of these overtures having been approved by Presbyteries, were passed into Acts of the Church in the following year.]

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN
AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, FEBRUARY 2, 1700.

I.

Sess. 1, February 2, 1700.—The Recording of his Majesty's Commission to the Viscount of Seafield, for representing his Majesty in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the Ministers and Elders of this National Church being convened, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, James Viscount of Seafield, principal Secretary of State for this kingdom, his Majesty's Commission under the Great Seal of this kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which was publicly read in their audience, with all due honour and respect; and appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—"GULIELMUS," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The which day, his Majesty's High Commissioner presented his Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read in their hearing, with all due honour and respect, and appointed to be recorded in their registers, the tenor whereof follows:—"WILLIAM," &c.

III.

Sess. 4, February 7, 1700, ante meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to his Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 11, February 13, 1700, ante meridiem.—Act Disjoining the Presbytery of Strathbogie from the Synod of Aberdeen, and Annexing the same to Moray.

The General Assembly agreed that the Presbytery of Strathbogie be disjoined from the united Presbyteries of Turriff, Alford, and Fordyce, and again annexed to the province of Moray as formerly; in respect the cause of its former disjunction from Moray is now removed.

V.

Sess. 12, February 14, 1700, post meridiem.—Act anent a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their serious consideration the many dreadful tokens of the Lord's anger, evidenced particularly in the continued pinching dearth, (notwithstanding of a favourable harvest, and relief thereby in some measure,) whereby the number of the poor and their necessities have been and are greatly increased;—the great and unusual sickness and mortality which hath gone over all the land, and doth yet in part continue;—the rebukes from God on the nation, in disappointing several undertakings to advance the trade and wealth thereof, and particularly in several cross providences that the African and Indian Company's Colony in America hath met with, notwithstanding of the many fervent prayers made in their behalf;—and by a stupendous burning, within these few days, of so considerable a part of Edinburgh, the capital city of the kingdom;—and, lastly, under all these, by the woful heart-plagues of impenitency and security: And considering that all the judgments we groan under are the sad effects and bitter fruits of our heinous sins against God, such as the fearful backslidings and persecutions of the late times, mentioned in our former causes of humiliation, and not yet sufficiently mourned for, our continued unfaithfulness to God, notwithstanding of our Solemn Covenants and Engagements, and many professed resolutions to the contrary; the Atheistical and execrable principles, subversive of all religion, so much vented and spread amongst us—the gross immoralities of uncleanness of all sorts, drunkenness, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and unrighteous dealing among men, and that amongst persons of all ranks and qualities, and these abounding and continued in, notwithstanding of many endeavours used to reclaim and reform transgressors—the excessive prodigality and profuseness of some, when others are afflicted with so much want and poverty—the great slighting of Christ, offered in the Gospel, and not receiving of him in our hearts, and walking worthy of him in our lives and conversations—the great contempt and despising of church discipline—the froward opposition in many places to the planting of churches and the progress of the Gospel—our ungrateful forgetfulness of the merciful and signal deliverances that God hath wrought for us, and our repining at God's afflicting providences, instead of submitting to his mighty hand lifted up against us: And the Assembly, likewise considering the deplorable state of the reformed Churches in France, Piedmont, the Palatinate, and other places, where our brethren, and the reformation among them, are either brought to desolation and ruin, or are in extreme danger, by cruel and long continued antichristian persecution; which, instead of abating upon the late peace of Europe, the great benefit of which we enjoy, hath, on the contrary, greatly increased: Therefore, the General Assembly, under the serious and deep sense of the above mentioned sins and judgments, hath thought fit to set apart a day for solemn fasting and humiliation, and the exercise of repentance and unfeigned purposes of amendment, which they appoint to be kept upon the day of March next to come, being the Thursday of the said month, over this whole Church and kingdom; beseeching and obtesting all the Lord's people, sincerely and seriously to prepare themselves thereto, as in the sight of the holy and jealous God, lest either carelessness, formality, or sinistrous ends, turn our performances into sin, and, by adding to the provocation, draw upon us yet more dreadful strokes; and that they make more particular confession of the fore-mentioned sins and all others, with a deep sorrowing for and hearty detestation of the same; as also, with humble submission to, and acceptance of, the punishment of our iniquities in the judgments above mentioned, or any others that may be peculiar to congregations or particular persons: And that every one, in the most sincere and unfeigned manner, resolve and vow amendment, both of themselves and others, as may be incumbent upon them, whether as magistrates or ministers, or otherwise, in their respective stations: And that all and every one do, in like manner, resolve and vow the bringing forth fruits meet for repentance in their after lives, carriages, and administrations;—that fervent application be made and continued in to the throne of grace, through

our Lord Jesus Christ, for the pardon of sin to each particular person, and to the whole land ;—that earnest prayers and supplications be made that the Lord would graciously return to us in Gospel ordinances, and by the breathings of his Spirit render them more savingly successful ;—that our rulers and ministers, and all others, may be directed and animated to more effectual and vigorous endeavours for discouraging, suppressing, and punishing, all ungodliness, and for reforming both themselves and the land without exception ;—that our King may be long continued a happy instrument for God's glory, and for the benefit and comfort of this nation ;—that he may be blessed and preserved in his person and government, and all wicked designs and contrivances against either may be discovered, prevented, and confounded ;—that all dissension, jealousy, and discord, may cease, and we all become one in the Lord ;—that bowels of compassion may be drawn forth for relief of the poor and needy, and proper means effectually used for recovering them from idleness and want, and reducing them to labour and order ;—that the spring and seed-time may be blessed ;—that God would countenance and bless, and bring to a happy issue, all just and lawful designs and endeavours for advancing the trade of the nation ; and be graciously pleased to preserve, protect, and prosper, those who are lately gone from us upon the great national concern of a plantation abroad, and that the same may, through the Divine blessing and favour, prove a happy and successful mean for propagating the Gospel, and converting the heathen in those parts ;—and that the ministers sent from this Church may be supported and strengthened for their work, and ever encouraged in the Lord against all difficulties, and we refreshed with a comfortable account of them, and all with them ;—that our brethren in captivity anywhere may be comforted and relieved ; that losses both at home and abroad may be sanctified, and also made up unto those who most immediately suffer by them. And, lastly, that our Protestant brethren of the neighbouring churches under persecution, may be supported and refined in the furnace, preserved faithful in adhering to the truth, and in the Lord's good time delivered.

Some members of the Assembly being appointed to apply to the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council for their Lordships' civil sanction to the Fast, and for naming the day, did, upon the 16th day of February 1700, report, that their Lordships had granted their civil sanction, and named the 28th day of March next, being the last Thursday of that month, for the said Fast, and ordered a Proclamation to be emitted thereanent.

VI.

Sess. 13, February 15, 1700, ante meridiem.—Letter from the General Assembly to Mr Alexander Shields, Mr Francis Boreland, Mr Archibald Stobo, and Mr Alexander Dalgleish.

Reverend and dearly beloved Brethren,

We, the ministers and elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, are much refreshed with the account given us, by the Commission of the preceding Assembly, of your ready submission and willingness to undertake the hazardous but honourable service upon which they sent you, and with what we have heard since our meeting, by letters of November 9, from one of yourselves to some of our number, of your being got safe forward in your voyage the length of Mountserat ; that, through the mercy of God, you were then still alive and most of you in health, though dangerous sickness had afflicted you and many of your company by the way, and carried some off by death.

At your setting out, you could not but reckon upon losses and difficulties, but we heartily bless our God with you, that they have not been sorer and greater. We would not omit this occasion, offering at the very time of our sitting, to assure you, our dear brethren, that you are much upon our hearts, and the hearts of all the godly in this Church, who cease not to pour out fervent prayers at the throne of grace in your behalf, and in the behalf of the great Gospel work in which you are engaged.

We have with sorrow heard of the distresses that came upon our countrymen who

went before you, and therein cannot but be sensible of the displeasure of the righteous Lord, justly gone forth against them and us, for our and their iniquities, as loudly calling us all to humiliation and reformation, to dependence on and trust in the Lord.

We doubt not but you are endeavouring to improve so bitter and astonishing dispensations to the same blessed ends, both upon your own spirits and those of your people, and so as not to faint under the chastisements and rebukes of Providence, but to encourage yourselves in the Lord your God, who, though he smite for sin, yet will return in mercy to a penitent reforming people. He will, according to his promise, make the ends of the earth to see his salvation, and we hope will yet honour you and this Church, from which you are sent to carry his name among the heathen. We are likewise exceedingly grieved to consider that there was so much profanity and irreligion observable in the company that you went with, which we fear doth in great measure continue, and is a heavy burden and grief of heart to you; yet it is comfortable to hear that there are serious and godly persons among you, whom we desire, together with you, to encourage in the Lord, and that you may persevere in your joint endeavours for reclaiming the rest; in order to which, we hope these here shall not be wanting, by taking all suitable care for the future, both with respect to those who may hereafter be sent to you, and by sending requisite instructions from hence for strengthening your hands.

We have appointed a day of solemn national humiliation and prayer to be set apart in this your mother church, for several weighty causes, and, among the rest, upon your account, and have ordered that continual mention be made of you in public prayers; and we hope that, through the mercies of our gracious God, you being safely arrived in Caledonia or to any happy settlement, where God, in his providence, shall direct, you have not omitted the instructions given you by the late Commission, of keeping a day, together with all the people there, for solemn prayer and fasting, bewailing former sins, renewing baptismal engagements, and, with the greatest seriousness, dedicating yourselves and the land unto the Lord: And that you do not neglect to pray daily for the Church of Scotland by name, and to pray for and stir up the people under your charge to be dutiful and loyal to our and their Sovereign Lord, King William.

We know the Commission hath given you such farther instructions as may be of use in the various exigencies of your work, and expect you will be careful, by every occasion, to transmit an account of your whole state to the Commission, we resolve to leave for your and other affairs, who, we doubt not, will acquaint you from time to time, as occasion may offer, of what may be further condescended on for your encouragement.

And now, dear brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; to whose rich grace and tender mercies we commend you, and his honourable work in your hands, earnestly praying that you may be preserved, directed, and supported by Him, and not terrified through any amazement, but established in your duty, and your labours crowned with success.

Signed in the name, and at the appointment, of the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

D. BLAIR, *Moderator*,
JO. BANNATYNE, *Clerk*.

Directed—To the Rev. Mr Alexander Shields, Mr Francis Boreland, Mr Archibald Stobo, and Mr Alexander Dalgleish, the Ministers sent by the Commission of the former Assembly to the African and Indian Company's Colony in Caledonia, in America, or wherever they are.

Recommended to the care of the Directors of the said Company.

VII.

Sess. 14, February 15, 1700, post meridiem.—Act of the General Assembly, and Reference to the Commission thereof, in favour of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland.

The General Assembly, considering that the brethren of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland, are but few in number, and that they cannot conveniently meet in a Synod for mutual advice and assistance, do, therefore, continue the advices and instructions given to the said Presbyteries at their erection, and refers to the Commission of the General Assembly at Edinburgh, to add to or alter the same, as they shall find cause; and empowers the said Commission to give advice and assistance to the said Presbyteries, or any of them, as they shall be applied unto or find needful; and to determine in all references, appeals, or petitions, made or to be made to them by the said Presbyteries, or any minister or parish within the bounds of the said three Presbyteries: And, particularly, to be assisting in purging and planting kirks, and in application to the civil magistrate for repairing and building kirks and manses, and settling of schools in these bounds; and likewise, to send probationers to the said Presbyteries, and give them the allowance appointed by the last Assembly and Commission thereof, upon application for that effect; and, in general, to do all things needful, with respect to the said Presbyteries, that other commissions might have done, or that was committed to them by former Assemblies.

VIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the General Assembly, 1699.

The General Assembly, having this day had reproduced in their presence the register of the actings and proceedings of the Commissioners appointed by the late Assembly, and having heard the report of a committee of this Assembly's own number, that were not members of the said Commission, but appointed to revise, examine, and consider the said register, with their observations thereupon, all the members of the said Commission were desired to remove, and Mr John Lawrie was chosen Moderator, and Mr Thomas Russell, Clerk, *pro tempore*, the Moderator and Clerk of this Assembly having been members of the said Commission, and therefore removed; and the General Assembly having seriously considered the said report, and answers made by the Moderator of the Commission, and other members thereof, to the said observations, and finding thereby that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commissioners, contained in the registers subscribed by Mr John Bannatyne, Clerk thereto, beginning the sixth day of February last, and ending the thirty-first of January last, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, diligence, and faithfulness, and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in the things that came before them, according to their commission and instructions; therefore, this General Assembly, by their vote did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commissioners, contained in the register thereof; and the members of the Commission being called in, the same was intimated to them, and the Moderator gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service; and then the Moderator and Clerk of this Assembly did again take their places.

IX.

Sess. 15, February 16, 1700, ante meridiem.—Act anent Revising of the Registers of Church Judicatories.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overture transmitted by

the late General Assembly to Presbyteries, concerning the revising of the registers of Church judicatories, and having heard the same several times read in their own presence; as also having heard the report of the Committee for Overtures concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereanent; and the General Assembly considering the great import to this Church that all its registers be exact and well kept, do require all Provincial Synods and Presbyteries to be careful in revising of the registers of the judicatories under their immediate inspection; and that they appoint a competent number of the most fit and experienced ministers for that work; and when they find nothing to challenge in any register, they give the same the attestation following, viz. :—

“The Provincial Synod of _____ having heard the report of those appointed to revise the Presbytery book of _____, and having heard their remarks thereupon, and the said Presbytery’s answers thereto; and it having been inquired by the Moderator if any other had any complaints to make against the actings of the said Presbytery, and nothing appearing censurable, ordered the Clerk to attest this in their Presbytery book.”

And so for the registers of Provincial Synods and Kirk-Sessions, *mutatis mutandis*; but if there be anything truly censurable in the said book, and in itself material, with respect to discipline, that it be recorded as censured, both in the Synod book and attestation.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Schoolmasters, Chaplains, Governors, and Pedagogues.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overture transmitted to Presbyteries by the late General Assembly, concerning schoolmasters, chaplains, governors, and pedagogues, and having heard the same read over in their own presence, as also the report of the Committee for Overtures thereanent, and concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereupon, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint all Presbyteries to take special, particular, and exact notice, of all schoolmasters, chaplains, governors, and pedagogues, of youth within their respective bounds, and oblige them to subscribe the Confession of Faith of this Church as the confession of their faith; and in case of continued negligence, (after admonition,) error, or immoralities, or of their teaching erroneous principles, or not being careful to educate those under their charge in the Protestant Reformed religion; the Presbytery, with respect to schoolmasters, is to apply to the civil magistrate in burghs, and heritors in landward; and with respect to governors, chaplains, and pedagogues, to masters, for removing such persons from these offices; and if this be not remedied by them, that the Presbytery, with respect to schoolmasters, apply to the Commission of Parliament for Visitation of Schools and Colleges. And it is hereby appointed that an account be given in every half year to the Presbytery by ministers, what schoolmasters, chaplains, governors, pedagogues, are in their respective parishes; and the General Assembly recommends to Masters of Colleges to take care and use their authority for the same ends, that the delinquents may be proceeded against by their respective Presbyteries, and censured upon clear evidence of their guilt.

XL

Sess. 16, February 17, 1700, ante meridiem.—Act anent subscribing the Confession of Faith.

The General Assembly appoints, that all ministers and ruling elders belonging to this National Church subscribe the Confession of Faith as the confession of their faith, according to the Act of Assembly, 1690, and the Formula agreed upon in the Assembly held in the year 1694, Act 11, paragraph 6; and that this be done betwixt and the next General Assembly.

XII.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders to visit the Bounds of the Provinces of Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross.

The General Assembly of this National Church, taking into consideration how requisite it is that some ministers and elders be appointed for visitation of kirks on the North side of Tay, and discussing such affairs as this Assembly shall think fit to refer thereto; doth, therefore, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr Patrick Cumming, minister at Ormiston, Mr John Stirling at Greenock, Mr Hugh White at Larbert, Mr James Haddow, Professor of Divinity at St Andrews, Mr James Ramsay at Eyemouth, Mr Samuel Charters at Inverkeithing, Mr Joseph Drew at New Monkland, and Mr Andrew Brown at Spott, *Ministers*; Walter Stewart of Pardovan, and James Pringle of Buckholm, *Ruling Elders*; to be a commission of this Assembly for the effect foresaid, and appoints them to have their first meeting in the church of Dundee, upon the second Wednesday of June next, at two of the clock in the afternoon, and then to proceed through the provinces of Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross. And it is hereby declared, that the ministers and ruling elders of the bounds are to be members of the said Commission within their respective Presbyteries, unless any of them be found parties, with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator and clerk; and the said Commission are hereby empowered to visit Presbyteries and parishes, purge and plant churches, redress grievances, and call to an account and try persons disseminating erroneous principles and heretical doctrines; and, generally, to do all things conform to the instructions given to the Commission sent North in the year 1694, and the Committee sent to Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney, in the year 1698. And the said Commission are hereby appointed to make inquiry what growth Popery makes in these bounds; and in case they find trafficking Papists or Priests, and Jesuits, in any of these bounds, that they apply to the magistrates of the place for execution of the laws against them. And the General Assembly exhorts and requires the said Commission to act deliberately in all their procedure, and for that end to stay a competent time in each province they come to, as the exigency of the bounds requires; and the Presbyteries of the several bounds are desired and required to prepare any business they have to be cognosed by the said Commission; and for that end to cite parties, in the name of the said Commission, to appear before the same, thereby to gain time. And in case the Commission find it convenient, that any of the brethren of the Presbyteries, in whose bounds they shall be for the time, concur with them to visit the bounds of the next Presbytery, that then, upon the Commission's desiring the same, the said Presbytery, in whose bounds they are, are hereby required to nominate some of their number to join with the said Commission in visiting the neighbouring Presbytery, and that they discuss all references and appeals that shall be remitted to them by this Assembly; and the said Commission are prohibited to meddle in any thing but what is hereby committed to them. And, lastly, they are to be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly for all their actings.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and a Ruling Elder to visit Zetland, Orkney, and Caithness.

The General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland, taking into their consideration a reference made to them by the Commission of the late General Assembly, anent sending a committee to visit Zetland, and having heard some letters from the brethren of the Presbytery there, earnestly desiring the same; and being convinced of the great need there is of sending some ministers to these bounds, did, and do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint Mr James Hart, minister at Ratho, Mr John Brand at Borrowstounness, Mr John Sandilands at Dolphington, Mr Alexander Lauder at Mordington, Mr James Graham at Holm, in Orkney, Mr Patrick Guthrie

at Sanday there, Mr William Blaw at Westray there, *Ministers*; and Samuel Maclellan Stewart, Principal of Orkney and Zetland, *Ruling Elder*; to be a Commission for visiting the said Presbytery of Zetland, churches within the bounds thereof, and for assisting the brethren of the said Presbytery in their presbyterial work; and appoints the brethren of the said Commission above named that live be-South Tay to meet at Edinburgh, upon the first day of April next, and be in readiness to take their voyage, and with the first fair wind thereafter to go to Zetland, and as soon as they can to meet with the brethren of the Presbytery thereof, (who are hereby declared to be members of the said Commission,) with power to them to choose their own moderator and clerk; and they are hereby empowered to do, and required to observe, what is committed to them by the particular instructions to be given them by this Assembly, or Commission thereof, appointed to meet at Edinburgh; and to proceed, in all things that come before them, according to the constitutions of this Church, and Acts of the General Assemblies thereof; and in case they shall find convenient, either to go by Caithness and Orkney, or return that way, they are hereby empowered to do all things in these Provinces for the good of the Church, that they have by their Commission to do in Zetland. And, lastly, appoints the said Commission to report an account of their diligence in the said affairs to the next ensuing General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable for all their actings.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act in favour of the Ministers sent North on the several Commissions.

The General Assembly declares that the brethren named to go North upon Commissions, and that shall go to the places appointed according to their Commissions, shall be exonerated from going in supplies to the North when it comes to their turn; and the Presbyteries from whom they go are hereby appointed carefully to supply the churches of the said brethren with preaching, during their absence on the said Commissions.

XV.

Sess. 17, February 19, 1700, ante meridiem.—Act anent Scandalous and Contumacious Persons.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overture transmitted to Presbyteries by the late General Assembly, concerning scandalous and contumacious persons; and having heard the same read in their own presence, as also the report of the committee for overtures thereanent, and concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereupon; the General Assembly did, by their vote, and hereby do, allow Presbyteries, if they find cause, to send in to the General Assembly, or Commission thereof, the names of scandalous persons, of whatever quality, guilty of gross immoralities, and contumacious to church discipline, with a full extract of the process, that they may proceed against them as they see cause.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Method of making Overtures and Acts of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overtures transmitted to Presbyteries by the late Assembly, concerning the method of passing overtures and Acts of Assembly; and having heard the said overtures read in their own presence, as also the report of the committee for overtures thereanent, and concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereupon; the General Assembly did, by their vote, and hereby do, enact and appoint, that when any thing of public concern and great weight

is proposed to the General Assembly, to be passed as overtures or acts, for a standing rule to the Church, after the first reading, it be delayed till the next day of the Assembly's sitting, and lie on the table, to be seen and considered by all the members; and likewise, when any thing is passed as overtures by the General Assembly, it is ordained that all and every Presbytery read them publicly in their Presbyterial meeting once before the first meeting of the Synod next after the General Assembly, and consider of them; and that this be recorded in their Presbytery Book, and inquired into by their Synods in visiting Presbytery Books; as also, it is hereby recommended to all Presbyteries to send in an account of their judgment and opinion thereanent, with their Commissioners, to the General Assembly, in writing, but as briefly as may be, and the overtures to be printed after the Acts; and, lastly, it is hereby enacted and appointed, that each minister and kirk-session have a copy of all the printed Acts of the General Assembly, and that inquiry be made into this at Presbyterial and Synodical censures, and their diligence recorded.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act Discharging the Printing of any part of Ecclesiastical Processes without Allowance.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overture transmitted to Presbyteries by the late Assembly, against the printing of any paper to be presented to church judicatories without allowance; and having heard the said overtures in their own presence, as also the report of the committee for overtures thereanent, and concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereupon, the General Assembly did, by their vote, and hereby do, prohibit and discharge any person or persons to presume to print any petition, address, appeal, reasons, or answers, or any part of any process, to be brought in to the General Assembly, or any other church judicatory, without leave given by the respective judicatories before whom the same is in dependence; with certification that no respect shall be had thereto, in case they contravene this by reading or considering the same.

XVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act Regulating the Reception of such as come off from Popery.

The General Assembly took into their consideration the overture transmitted to Presbyteries by the late Assembly concerning Papists, and having heard the same read in their own presence, as also the report of the committee for overtures thereanent, and concerning the opinion of Presbyteries thereupon: The General Assembly did judge, that a private acknowledgment of a Papist renouncing that religion verbally, is not sufficient to admit them to church privileges; and, therefore, appoints that the reception of any that comes off from Popery to the communion of this Church be the deed of a church judicatory, and that they subscribe the Confession of Faith as the confession of their faith.

XIX.

Sess. 18, February 19, 1700, post meridiem.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Elders, to meet at Edinburgh, for Planting Vacant Kirks in the North, and other Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, considering that there are yet several vacant churches on the North side of Tay, as likewise that there are several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot undertake, do, therefore, find it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant churches, and doing what other affairs shall be referred to them; and for that end, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr Daniel Campbell and Mr Daniel Mackay for the Presbytery of Inverary, &c. &c., to be Commissioners, &c., with full power, &c., (the powers granted are the same as in the two preceding years.)

XX.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions to the Commission appointed by the General Assembly to meet at Edinburgh.

I. That this Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church in what the law allows, and for putting the laws in execution against profaneness, and regulating the poor by providing maintenance and labour for them; and particularly, anent settling vacant congregations, and redressing any grievances which may fall out.

II. That when any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines may render them useful to this Church, do apply for reception into the Government, the General Assembly do empower and recommend to this Commission that they receive them, according to the thirteenth paragraph of the sixteenth act of the General Assembly, 1697.

III. That this Commission, in disposal of his Majesty's gifts to this Church, do particularly take care, that the encouragement granted by the last Assembly to probationers who are to go North to preach be rendered effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges that several ministers of the North have been at in carrying on the planting of the North, and other public affairs of the Church there; and for defraying the charges of those sent on commissions, and of such probationers as shall yet be sent to the North, particularly Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland.

IV. The Commission is to cognosce and finally determine in all references made to them by this Assembly, and in all references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, which shall be orderly brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent the last Assembly.

V. This Commission is also to correspond with the State anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

VI. This Commission is to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

VII. That this Commission be careful to supply with good and able ministers the ships and colonies of the African and Indian Company, as they shall be applied unto by the Court of Directors of the said Company from time to time, and to send ministers to them, either by mission, ordination, or transportation; and it is referred to this Commission to facilitate, by all means possible, their provision with ministers, and to do every thing for the encouragement of those that are or afterwards shall be sent, in regard this General Assembly cannot overtake it.

VIII. This Commission is empowered to inquire how the ministers transported by this General Assembly, or shall be transported by their Commission, obey; and, in case of disobedience, that they suspend the disobedient persons for three months; and in case they do not obey after the three months are elapsed, that then they be deposed *simpliciter*; and this particularly to be applied in the case of Mr David Pitcairn, formerly transported from Creich to Forres, if he disobey.

IX. This Commission, or their moderator, in the intervals of the Commission, are empowered to receive calls legally proceeded in, and to transmit them to the respective Presbyteries interested; and, in case of references or appeals to the said Commission, that they finally determine therein, according to the former acts of Assemblies for expediting transportations to the North.

X. This Commission is to give all due encouragement and assistance to any proposals that may be made to them anent endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the effectual curbing of profanity; and that they apply in a competent manner to the Government for that end.

XI. This Commission is to look out for some persons who may be fit to be clerk to the General Assembly, and propose them to the next Assembly.

XXI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Supply of the North with Ministers and Probationers.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration, that there are yet several vacant kirks in the North, did, and hereby do, enact and appoint that nine actual ministers be sent, in manner after mentioned, for supplying thereof each four months, until the next Assembly, beginning the first day of March next; five whereof to the province of Angus and Mearns, of which three to the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar, and two to the united Presbytery of Brechin, Aberbrothwick, and Mearns: *Item*, two to the province of Aberdeen, till Mr Thomas Blackwall be admitted there, and one only thereafter: *Item*, two to the province of Moray, to be proportioned as follows, viz., the provincial Synod of Glasgow and Ayr is to send three actual ministers, of which one to the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar; one to the united Presbyteries of Brechin, Aberbrothwick, and Mearns; and one to Aberdeen: *Item*, the Provincial Synod of Fife is to send one actual minister to the province of Moray; and the Provincial Synod of Perth and Stirling is to send one actual minister to the province of Aberdeen: *Item*, the Provincial Synod of Merse and Teviotdale is to send one actual minister to the Presbyteries of Brechin, Aberbrothwick, and Mearns: *Item*, the Provincial Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale is to send three actual ministers, whereof one to the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar, one to Aberdeen, and one to the Province of Moray; but after Mr Thomas Blackwall is settled at Aberdeen, the said Synod of Lothian is to be eased of the supply of that place.

And likewise, the General Assembly does hereby enact and appoint, that eighteen probationers be sent North, of which six are to be sent to the province of Angus and Mearns, viz., three to the united Presbyteries of Meigle, Dundee, and Forfar; three to the united Presbyteries of Brechin, Aberbrothwick, and Mearns: *Item*, five to the province of Aberdeen, whereof one is to have the Irish language: *Item*, five to the province of Moray, whereof two are to have the Irish language: *Item*, one to the Presbytery of Zetland; and, lastly, one having Irish to the bounds of the Presbytery of Dunkeld. And it is hereby declared, that the said probationers are to be sent on the same terms and conditions, and with the same encouragements, that the twenty probationers were sent by the last Assembly.

XXII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Recommendation anent Mortifications and Visitations of Parishes.

The General Assembly recommends to all Presbyteries to be diligent and careful in visiting the parishes within their bounds, and take particular notice how all sums of money mortified, or otherwise belonging to the poor of the parish, have been managed, and applied from time to time; and if they shall find any dilapidations of any such sums, that those guilty thereof may be pursued according to law; and that the several Synods take account of the Presbyteries within their bounds as to their diligence therein.

XXIII.

Sess. 19, February 20, 1700, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for visiting the Presbytery of Middlebie.

The General Assembly, having heard the report of the Committee for Overtures, anent the grievances represented by the commissioners from the Presbytery of Middlebie, judged, that in regard the grievances of the said Presbytery are so exceedingly great, it is expedient that a committee should be appointed to go thither against the end of July to consider these grievances, and to do what they can for remedy thereof; and that betwixt and that time the Synod of Dumfries, either by themselves or com-

mittee, do what they can to remedy these grievances ; and that, accordingly, if they obtain any good effect, the said Presbytery is to advertise the Committee of this Assembly not to come. And the General Assembly does hereby declare, that there shall be no transportations from that Presbytery till the next General Assembly, without their own consent, upon any calls to be given ; but it is always declared that this is without prejudice of any processes already commenced. And the General Assembly nominates and appoints Mr Gabriel Semple, minister at Jedburgh, Mr John Bannatyne at Lanark, Mr George Mullekine at Moffat, Mr Matthew Reid at Northberwick, Mr Alexander Orrock at Hawick, Mr Nicol Edgar at Hobkirk, Mr James Guthrie at Irongray, and Mr Robert Blair at Holywood, *Ministers* ; the Laids of Falnash and Whitelaw, *Ruling Elders* ; to be members of the said committee, to meet at Langholm the last Wednesday of July next, with the members of the said Presbytery of Middlebie : And the said committee are hereby empowered to choose their own moderator and clerk, and to proceed against all persons guilty of gross immoralities, according to the Acts of the General Assembly, and order and discipline of this Church, and to endeavour to remove the grievances of the brethren of the said Presbytery ; and in order thereunto to visit the said Presbytery in the usual manner, and endeavour to obtain the assistance of persons of interest and quality in these parts, to render the actings and proceedings of church judicatories the more effectual ; and this committee is to be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly.

XXIV.

Sess. 20, February 20, 1700, post meridiem.—Act for rendering effectual the Supplies of the North.

The General Assembly does hereby declare that all former acts for rendering effectual the supply of the North with ministers, not expressly rescinded, shall be in full force ; and refers to the Commission to see to the execution thereof.

XXV.

Overtures transmitted by the General Assembly, held in the year 1700, to the several Presbyteries within this National Church, that they may consider the same, and send their opinion thereanent to the next General Assembly, who may pass the same in Acts, if the more general opinion of this Church agree thereunto.

[These Overtures relate to “ Commissioners to the General Assembly, and their subscribing the Confession of Faith,” also to “ Citations in Cases of Transportation of Ministers.” They were passed into standing laws in 1704.]

XXVI.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh, the 19th day of February 1701.

The Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing the 122d Psalm, from 6th verse to the end, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by me,
J. BANNATYNE, *Clk. Syn. National.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, THE 19th DAY OF FEBRUARY 1701.

I.

Sess. 1, February 19, 1701.—The recording of His Majesty's Commission to William Earl of Annandale, for representing his Majesty's Royal Person in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this National Church being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by a noble Lord, William Earl of Annandale, his Majesty's commission, under the Great Seal of this kingdom, nominating and appointing him to be his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which was publicly read in their audience, with all due honour and respect; and appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—
“GULIELMUS,” &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The which day his Majesty's High Commissioner presented his Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read in their hearing, with all due honour and respect, and appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The proofs we have had of your affection to our person and government, and of your good conduct and management in the last and former Assemblies, gives us full confidence of your meeting at this time in the same good disposition. We think it not necessary, on this occasion, to repeat the assurances we have often given you of our resolution to maintain the government of the Church, as it is now established, not doubting but you are sufficiently convinced of it; as also of our readiness to countenance and protect you in your endeavours to preserve the purity of the Christian doctrine, to promote piety, and settle good order in the Church. We have thought fit to appoint our right trusty and entirely-beloved cousin and councillor, William Earl of Annandale, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, whose abilities and fitness to discharge this trust will (we doubt not) render him acceptable unto you; him we have fully instructed in what may be further necessary, and therefore you may give him entire trust and credit. So, recommending to you calmness and unanimity in your proceedings, and the avoiding unseasonable questions and debates, which you must be sensible may be of bad consequence in this juncture, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Kensington, the 7th day of February 1701, and of our reign the 12th year.

By his Majesty's Command,

RO. PRINGLE.

To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 4, February 24, 1701, ante meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to His Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The renewed and repeated evidences of your Majesty's tender care and concern for this Church, so fully signified in your gracious Letter, have been received and entertained by us with all satisfaction and thankful acknowledgment. And we do further acknowledge the signal proof we have lately had thereof by your Majesty's giving the royal assent, in this last session of Parliament, to the acts therein made for ratifying and further confirming our Confession of Faith, and the present established Presbyterian government of this Church, for the more effectual preventing of the growth of Popery, and for suppressing profaneness and immoralities; all which do lay a new obligation on us to endeavour the preserving of the purity of the Christian doctrine, the promoting of piety, and the settling of good order in the Church, which we acknowledge to be already our duty, according to the trust committed to us by our great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the only Head of this Church, and in doing whereof your Majesty is pleased to assure us of your royal protection and countenance. We are resolved also, by the grace of God, and through his strength, to observe that calmness and unanimity in our proceedings, which do so much become us in the station wherein God has placed us, and which your Majesty recommends unto us; and to avoid unseasonable questions and debates, which we are all convinced and persuaded would be a matter of bad and dangerous consequence at all times, and especially in this juncture.

The Earl of Annandale, whom your Majesty has made choice of to represent your royal person, and to give countenance and protection to this Assembly, is, for his fitness and abilities, as also for the good offices he has done this Church, in the other honourable stations wherein he hath been employed under your Majesty, very acceptable.

Give us leave, great Sir, to take notice, that the last Assembly having given commission to some ministers of their number to travel to the most northern parts of this your ancient kingdom, the islands of Orkney and Zetland, for planting churches, and advancing the knowledge of God amongst that people, they have, in a good measure, executed the same; and we are sensible of the favour of your Majesty's bounty for promoting so good and necessary a work, and which we know will not be wanting to advance and render it complete.

That your Majesty's reign may be long and prosperous; that you may be guided and directed of God, in the great and weighty affairs of your government, and that your councils and undertakings may be still successful for preserving and defending the Reformed religion, and the Protestant interest at home and abroad, are the earnest and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
THO. WILKIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Overtures transmitted by the last General Assembly to Presbyteries.

(This Act appoints the said overtures to be re-transmitted.)

V.

Sess. 8, February 27, 1701, ante meridiem.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission of the last General Assembly, appointed to meet at Edinburgh.

The General Assembly, having had this day reproduced in their presence the register of the actings and proceedings of the Commissioners appointed by the late General Assembly to meet at Edinburgh, and having heard the report and observations of a committee of this Assembly's own number (that were not members of that Commission) appointed to revise, examine, and consider the said register, all the members of the said Commission (whereof the Moderator was one) were desired to remove, and Mr James Hay being chosen Moderator *pro tempore*, it was desired by him, that if any persons had any thing to object against the conduct or proceedings of the said Commission, they might propose the same; and the Assembly having heard all that was represented to them thereanent, together with the answers made thereto by the Moderator and other members of the said Commission; and having seriously and maturely considered the same, and finding by the said report that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commissioners, contained in the said register, subscribed by Mr George Meldrum, Moderator, and Nicol Spence, under-clerk of the said Commission, beginning the 21st day of February 1700 years, and ending the 18th of February current, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, diligence, and faithfulness, and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in the things that came before them, according to their commission and instructions; therefore, this General Assembly, by their vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the said actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commissioners, contained in the register thereof; and the members of the Commission being called in, the same was intimated to them, and the Moderator gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service, and then the Moderator of this Assembly took his place.

VI.

Sess. 13, March 4, 1701, ante meridiem.—Act anent the Supply of the North with Ministers and Probationers.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration that there are yet some vacant kirks in the North, did, and hereby do, enact and appoint that four actual ministers be sent, in manner after mentioned, for supplying thereof, from the first of April next till the next General Assembly; two whereof to be sent to the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar; one to the united Presbyteries of Brechin and Aberbrothwick; and one to the province of Moray, to be proportioned as follows:—viz. the Provincial Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale to send one actual minister quarterly, to supply the province of Moray; the Provincial Synod of Glasgow and Ayr to send one actual minister quarterly, to supply the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar; the Provincial Synod of Fife to send one actual minister quarterly, to supply the united Presbyteries of Brechin and Aberbrothwick; the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, with the Synod of Perth and Stirling, to send one actual minister quarterly, to supply the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar, viz.: Merse and Teviotdale for the first three quarters, and Perth and Stirling for the last quarter. And because the foresaid Synods cannot now meet to send up the first three months' supply timeously, therefore, the General Assembly do hereby appoint the said first three months' supply to be made as follows:—viz. by Mr Walter Allan, minister at Colinton, for the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale; by Mr Francis Finlayson, minister of Kilmarnock, for the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr; by Mr Patrick Tullidolph, minister at Ferry-Port-on-Craig, for the Synod of Fife; and by Mr William Millar, minister at Chirnside, for the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale. And such-like, the General Assembly do hereby enact and appoint that seventeen probationers be sent North; of which two to the united Presbyteries of Dundee, Meigle, and Forfar; two to the united Presbyteries of Brechin and Aberbrothwick; four to the pro-

vince of Moray, two of them having the Irish language, three to Ross and Sutherland, all of them having the Irish, three to Caithness, one to Orkney, and two to Zetland. And it is hereby declared, that the said probationers are to be sent on the same terms, and with the same encouragement given to probationers sent by former Assemblies and their Commissions. And what further relates to the nomination, and other things requisite to this mission of probationers, the General Assembly refers the same to their subsequent commission.

VII.

Sess. 13, March 4, 1701, ante meridiem.—Act disjoining the Provincial Synod of Angus and Mearns from the Synod of Aberdeen.

The General Assembly, having heard the opinion of the Commission sent by the last Assembly to the provinces of Angus, Mearns, and Aberdeen, anent the affair after mentioned; and finding that there are now a competent number of ministers legally settled in the said provinces, do therefore appoint them to meet in time coming, in two distinct Synods, in their usual places of meeting, according to the Act of the General Assembly held in the year 1638, entitled, "Act anent the Order of the Provincial Assemblies in Scotland, according to the Presbyteries therein contained;" and that the next meeting of the Synod of Aberdeen be at the time and place appointed at their last sederunt. And as to the Synod of Angus and Mearns, the General Assembly does hereby appoint their first meeting to be at Dundee, upon the third Tuesday of April next, and that the Synods after named send the following number of ministers as Correspondents to the Provincial Synod of Angus and Mearns, viz.; the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale two, the Synod of Perth and Stirling three, the Synod of Fife four, and the Synod of Aberdeen two, and this correspondence to continue till the General Assembly shall see cause to alter it.

VIII.

Sess. 14, March 4, 1701, post meridiem.—Recommendation to Synods anent maintaining Bursars of Theology having the Irish Language.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the great scarcity of probationers having the Irish language to supply the vacancies of the North Highlands, notwithstanding there are several young men who might be useful in these places if they had due encouragement to prosecute their studies; therefore, the General Assembly recommend to the Synods after mentioned, that they maintain bursars of theology having the Irish language, besides the usual Presbytery bursars, and that out of the ministers of the said Synods their own proper money, and that this be done as follows: viz., That the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, the Synod of Argyle, the Synod of Perth and Stirling, and the Synod of Fife, each of them maintain one bursar; the Synods of Dumfries and Galloway one; and the Synods of Angus and Mearns and Aberdeen one: And it is recommended to the foresaid Synods to proportion the *quota* of the maintenance to be given to the said bursars among themselves, which is at least to be ten pounds sterling, the one-half whereof to be collected and advanced at every Synod, beginning at the next ensuing Synod; and that the said Synod books bear an account of their diligence in the same, and that each of the said bursars continue four years at the profession of theology, as other bursars do; and it is hereby recommended to all Presbyteries, that they search out for any such well qualified young men who have passed their course of philosophy at some university, and send in their names to the Commission of the General Assembly, with sufficient testimonials, that they may be by them recommended to the said Synods; and the foresaid act to continue during the Assembly's pleasure: And for enlarging of the said funds, the Ge-

neral Assembly renews and revives the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1699, "Anent Planting of the Highlands."

IX.

Sess. 14, March 4, 1701, post meridiem.—Act for a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation.

The General Assembly of this National Church, laying seriously to heart the many tokens of God's displeasure that are gone forth against this land; as the many years of dearth and scarcity that we have been under whereby many have perished, the land greatly impoverished, and the number of the poor vastly increased; the amazing and astonishing rebukes against and blasting of the undertaking of the African and Indian Company of this nation, for advancing the wealth and trade thereof, and relief of the poor, and that in a great measure from the visible and immediate hand of God, though by that undertaking there was a fair prospect of spreading the Gospel amongst infidels, together with the loss of many of our countrymen, and even some of our dear and worthy brethren in the ministry, and of a great part of the nation's treasure and substance; as also, the stupendous wasting fire in the city of Edinburgh, whereby its best buildings have been laid in ashes, and many families reduced to extreme poverty; considering also the many sad and great calamities which threaten not only this, but all other reformed and Protestant Churches, from the present alteration of the state of Europe so lately fallen out, whereby the hands of the implacable enemies of our religion seem to be greatly strengthened, and occasion given for executing their wicked designs, in order to the ruin of the reformed religion and Protestant interest; by all which the reformed and Protestant Churches everywhere, and more eminently in these nations, together with our brethren in the United Provinces of the Low Countries, are sadly threatened: And the Assembly, considering that our holy and gracious God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, nor doth he without cause threaten his people with such sad things; we have therefore too good ground to infer, that our sins must be great and heinous in the sight of God, which is also obvious to every discerning eye, the land being filled with wickedness and abominations, violences and disorders amongst persons of all ranks and degrees, for whose sins our holy and jealous God may justly contend with us, which are so much the more aggravated, that they are against so many solemn repeated vows and engagements unto and Covenants with our God, which have been openly violated and broken by persons of all ranks, and treated with public contempt, indignities, and affronts, the particulars of which are too many to be here inserted; but having been by other Assemblies largely and particularly enumerated in causes of fasts by them emitted, especially 1690 and 1700: This Assembly thereto refers, in so far as they quadrate with our present circumstances, and recommend to ministers to give an account of the same; yet one thing farther is greatly to be lamented, that though the Lord hath been for many years calling to weeping and to mourning, and public national fasts have been from time to time appointed, that we might truly humble ourselves before God, confess our sins, repent of and turn from them, by renewing our engagements unto God, and covenanting with him for that end, yet the most part have instead thereof given themselves over to jollity and wantonness, few having fasted unto the Lord, and returned to him with all their hearts.

Upon all these considerations, this Assembly have thought fit to set apart a day for solemn fasting and humiliation, and the exercise of sincere and unfeigned repentance, and for serious, fervent, and earnest prayer to the throne of grace, which they appoint to be kept upon the twenty-fourth day of April next to come, being the last Thursday of the said month: And do hereby earnestly obtest, and in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, exhort and beseech all people and of all ranks, suitably to prepare themselves for so solemn a work, to deal unfeignedly and sincerely with the Lord in this matter, to put away the evil of their doings, and flee unto Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and seek in and through him to be reconciled unto God, to take on sincere resolutions and engagements, that henceforth they will be the Lord's, humbly depending upon him for grace to perform accordingly, that they may

earnestly and vigorously set about sincere and thorough reformation of their lives, as they would themselves find mercy in the day of the Lord, and have the present strokes upon the land removed, and judgments threatened averted. And for that end, we recommend to all ministers within this Church, that they be plain, full, and free, in holding forth the evil of the sins that abound, according as they are enumerated in the Causes of Fasts above specified, and what sins else may be peculiar to any congregation, to the end that they, and all who sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ, may earnestly apply to the throne of grace, that a spirit of grace and supplication and of sincere and unfeigned repentance may be poured out upon the inhabitants of the land, and for a day of the Mediator's power upon the hearts of many, making them a willing people, that so they may flee to him, and make application of his blood for the purging and pardoning of their sins;—that the Lord would shine upon us in Gospel-ordinances, and by the powerful enlivening breathings of his Spirit, make them more successful for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, and destroying Satan's kingdom, that in some places so much prevails, even by witchcraft, sorceries, &c.;—that of his great bounty, and in pity and compassion to this poor land, he would give seasonable weather, and thereby prevent the return of scarcity and dearth, and that he would also avert the other sad and heavy judgments which threaten us for our sins;—that the Lord would deliver such of his poor churches or people as are already under the feet of cruel enemies, and protect others that are in great and imminent hazard; and, for that end, break the power of their enemies, make their wrath to praise him, defeat their counsels, and turn them into foolishness, that all may know that he whose name alone is Jehovah is the most high over all the earth;—that God would preserve and protect our King, bless him in his person and government, animate him more and more with true heroic courage and zeal for the defence of the true religion and Protestant interest;—that he would direct his councils, and those of other Protestant princes and states, to such measures as may, at this juncture, be for the glory of God, the preservation of the true religion and Protestant Churches, and the peace of Europe;—that piety may flourish in this land, and effectual ways may be fallen upon for that end, and both magistrates, ministers, and others in their stations, animated vigorously to prosecute them, for suppressing the sins and immoralities that abound in the land; and for restraining idleness and vagabonds, being the occasion and nursery of much sin and wickedness, and for reducing these to order, labour, and industry, and supplying the necessities of indigents; and that this Church may yet prosper, both peace and truth still flourish in her, so as the Lord may yet take delight in us, and glory may dwell in our land, and have her habitation there.

X.

Sess. 15, March 5, 1701, post meridiem.—Act Condemning the Book, entitled, An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration a reference made by the Commission of the late General Assembly sent to Angus, Mearns, Aberdeen, &c., anent Doctor George Garden in Aberdeen, alleged to be the author of a book entitled, “An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon,” with an abbreviate made by the said Commission of the errors contained in the said book, they did appoint a committee of their own number to consider that affair, and to compare the said abbreviate with the foresaid Apology, and to bring their report and opinion to the General Assembly anent the whole; and the General Assembly having this day heard the report and opinion of the foresaid committee, and also having heard read in their presence an abbreviate and abstract of several errors excerpted forth of the said Apology by the foresaid committee; and having likewise had produced in their presence the said book itself, the General Assembly found the same to contain a mass of dangerous, impious, blasphemous, and damnable errors; and, therefore, by their unanimous vote did, and by these presents do, condemn the said book called “An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon;” and for preventing the spreading of the said errors therein contained, the General Assembly did, by their unanimous vote, and hereby do, seriously

recommend to all Synods and Presbyteries within this National Church, and particularly to the Synods of Aberdeen and Perth, to advert to, and inquire anent the spreading of the said errors, and to use all effectual means for preventing the same, conform to Acts of former Assemblies made against spreading of errors, and particularly the Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1647, entitled, "Act discharging the Importing, Vending, or Spreading of Erroneous Books and Papers." And, moreover, the General Assembly recommend to the said judicatories, that in perusing of the said book, and inquiring anent the spreading of the errors therein contained, any thing found to fall under the 11th Act of the fifth Session of the current Parliament, or under any other Act of Parliament made against blasphemy, &c., be represented to his Majesty's Advocate, to the effect the said laws may be put to due execution.

XI.

Sess. 15, March 5, 1701, post meridiem.—Sentence of Deposition against Dr George Garden in Aberdeen.

The which day, the General Assembly of this National Church, taking into their consideration the proceedings of the Commission of the late General Assembly appointed for visiting the bounds of Angus, Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross, and finding a process raised by the said Commission against Dr George Garden in Aberdeen, and a sentence of suspension passed by them against him upon weighty grounds, with a reference of him for further censure to this Assembly, to which he was cited by order of the said Commission; all which the foresaid sentence does at more length bear, and the Assembly having caused call the said Dr George Garden, several times at the most patent door of the church, and he not compearing, they entered upon the serious consideration of the particular grounds of the said sentence of suspension, and of the whole proceedings of the said Commission in that affair; and did, likeas they hereby do, find that he has not only given great ground to suspect his being tainted with dangerous and blasphemous opinions, in causing a certain book called "An Apology for M. Antonia Bourignon" to be bound, and selling the same, and causing it to be sold by others for his use, and recommending the perusal thereof, without giving a caveat against the errors contained therein, and that he refused to disown his being the author of that book, when questioned thereupon by the said Commission; and that he likewise declined to give a positive answer, when asked by them if he judged M. Antonia Bourignon to have been divinely inspired as she pretends, but also that he hath given clear and evident proof of his being led away with the spirit of error and very gross delusions, and infected with impious, blasphemous, and damnable error, by declaring openly before the said Commission, that the said Apology, as to the bulk of the book, did represent the great end of Christianity, which is to bring us back to the love of God and charity, and further declared, that the essentials of Christianity are set down in the said book, and that the accessories contained therein are not contrary thereto; and further he added, that he had a high esteem of the writings that go under the name of M. Antonia Bourignon, because they represent the essentials of Christian religion, and direct us to a Christian temper, with more force and vigour than many writings of this age he had seen, and for her singular sentiments, they ought not to be reckoned heresies, for they contradict no article of the Christian religion; and further, he subjoined that her sentiments tended to unite Christians in their differences, and to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and on that account he values them, and heartily embraces them, and that the design of the apologist, in representing the accessory sentiments of M. Antonia Bourignon, was to vindicate them from the misrepresentations of others, that the world may know what they are; yea, he had the confidence to carry it so high before the said Commission, as to say he counted it his honour to be singled out for owning the principles of M. Antonia Bourignon, which have such a tendency to promote Christian love and charity: The Assembly also finds, that the writings which go under the name of the said M. Antonia Bourignon are fraught with impious, pernicious,

and damnable doctrines, as they are represented in the very Apology, that exhibits to the world an epitome of them in the fairest dress; such as, *1mo*, The denying of the permission of sin, and the infliction of damnation and vengeance for it. *2do*, The ascribing to Christ a twofold human nature, one of which was produced of Adam before the woman was formed, the other born of the Virgin Mary. *3tio*, The denying of the decrees of election and reprobation, and the loading of those acts of grace and sovereignty with a multitude of odious and blasphemous aspersions, particularly wickedness, cruelty, and respect of persons. *4to*, That there is a good spirit and an evil spirit in the souls of all men before they are born. *5to*, That the will of man is unlimited, and that there must be in man some infinite quality whereby he may unite himself to God. *6to*, The denying of the doctrine of Divine prescience. *7mo*, The assertion of the sinful corruption of Christ's Human Nature, and a rebellion in Christ's Natural Will to the Will of God. And, *8vo*, The asserting a state of perfection in this life, and a state of purification in the life to come; that generation takes place in Heaven; that there are no true Christians in the world, and several other errors contained in the said book; upon which grounds, together with his contumacy in not appearing before this Assembly, the General Assembly of this National Church, after mature deliberation, being moved with love to the truth of God, and zeal for his glory, as also an earnest desire for purging this Kirk of error and heresy, and every thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, did, and hereby do, ratify and confirm the sentence of suspension passed by the said Commission against the said Dr George Garden; and further did, and hereby do, in the name and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head and King of the Church, and the only Lord and Lawgiver of the same, according to the power entrusted by him to them, and his peremptory command, actually depose the said Dr George Garden from the office of the ministry, prohibiting and discharging him from exercising the same, or any part thereof, in all time coming, under pain of the highest censures of the Church, appointing public intimation to be made hereof from all the pulpits in the Synod of Aberdeen, after sermon in the forenoon, upon such a Lord's day as the said Synod shall appoint.

XII.

Sess. 15, March 5, 1701, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission sent by the last Assembly to Zetland, Orkney, and Caithness.

The General Assembly, having this day had reproduced before them the register of the actings and proceedings of the Commissioners sent by the late General Assembly for visitation of the bounds of the Presbyteries of Zetland, Orkney, and Caithness; and having heard the report and observations of a committee of this Assembly's own number, appointed to revise, consider, and examine the said register, with the answers made thereto by the Moderator and other members of that commission, they were removed; and the General Assembly having seriously and maturely considered the same, and finding by the said report that the actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners contained in their register now produced, subscribed by Mr James Hart, Moderator, and Mr John Sandilands, Clerk thereto, beginning upon the eighteenth day of April last, and ending the twenty-fourth day of June thereafter, consisting of 190 pages, do evidence the great pains and diligence of the said commissioners, and the great danger they were exposed to in their voyage by sea, and likewise the fatigue they had by land, in travelling to accomplish the design they were sent on, and that they have proceeded orderly and formally in the things that came before them, according to their commission and instructions, and thereby given proof of their wisdom, prudence, faithfulness, and zeal: Therefore, this General Assembly, by their vote, unanimously did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners contained in their register; and the members of the said commission being called in, the premises were intimated to them, and the Moderator, according to appointment, gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—*Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission sent by the last Assembly to Angus, Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross.*

The General Assembly, having this day had reproduced before them the register of the actings and proceedings of the commissioners sent by the late Assembly, for visitation of the bounds of the Presbyteries in the provinces of Angus, Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, and Sutherland; and having heard the report and observations of a committee of this Assembly's own number, appointed to revise, consider, and examine the said register, with the answers made thereto by the Moderator and other members of that commission, they were removed; and the General Assembly having maturely considered the same, and finding by the said report, that the actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in their register now produced, subscribed by Mr Patrick Cumming, Moderator, and Mr Hugh White, Clerk thereto, beginning upon the twelfth day of June last, and ending upon the twenty-second day of August thereafter, consisting of 190 pages, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, diligence, zeal, and faithfulness; and that the said commissioners have proceeded orderly and formally in every thing according to their commission and instructions: Therefore, this General Assembly, by their vote, unanimously did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said commissioners, contained in the register thereof; and the members of the said commission being called in, the same was intimated to them, and the Moderator, according to appointment, gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service.

XIV.

Sess. 18, March 7, 1701, ante meridiem.—*Act against Persons who shall be Irregularly Licensed or Ordained.*

The General Assembly, upon report of their committee for overtures, did, by their vote, and hereby do, enact and declare, that any persons who shall for hereafter receive either licence or ordination from any of the late Prelates, or any others not allowed by the authority of the Church, shall be incapable of ministerial communion for the space of three years *simpliciter*, and even after that time, ay and until the Presbytery to which he shall apply be satisfied concerning his repentance.

XV.

Sess. 20, March 8, 1701, ante meridiem.—*Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting vacant Kirks, and other Affairs remitted to them.*

The General Assembly, considering that there are yet some vacant Churches on the North side of Tay, as likewise that there are yet several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot overtake; do therefore find it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant Churches, and doing what other affairs shall be referred to them; and for that end do hereby nominate, commissionate, and appoint Mr Robert Elliot, minister at Kinglassie, &c., &c., to be Commissioners, &c., with full power, &c., (the powers granted to the Commission are the same as in the corresponding acts of the three preceding years.)

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—*Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.*

1. That this commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judica-

tories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting the laws in execution against profaneness, regulating the poor by providing maintenance and labour for them, and particularly anent settling vacant congregations, and redressing any grievances which may fall out.

2. That, when any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines may render them useful to this Church, do apply for reception into a share of the government of the Church, the General Assembly do empower and recommend to their Commission to receive them, according to the 13th paragraph of the 16th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1697: And that the said Commission be careful to get due information from the Presbyteries where the said person applying does, or did officiate, and for the time resides.

3. That this Commission, in disposal of his Majesty's gifts to this Church, do particularly take care, that the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, *anno* 1699, to probationers who are to go North to preach, be rendered effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges that several ministers of the North have been at in carrying on the planting of Churches, and other public affairs of the Church there.

4. The said Commission is to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made, or to be made, to them by this Assembly, and in all references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, which shall be orderly brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent by the General Assembly, *anno* 1699.

5. This Commission is also to correspond with the State anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

6. This Commission is to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect: As also, this Commission is empowered to proceed according to the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, made in favour of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland.

7. This Commission is empowered to inquire how ministers transported by former Assemblies and their Commissions, or by this General Assembly and their Commission, have obeyed, or shall obey, and, in case of disobedience, that they suspend the disobedient persons for three months, and, in case they do not obey after these three months are elapsed, that then they be deposed *simpliciter*, and this particularly to be applied in the case of Mr David Pitcairn, formerly transported from Creich to Forres, if he disobey.

8. This Commission is to give all due encouragement and assistance to any proposals that may be made to them anent endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the effectual curbing of profanity; and that they apply in a competent manner to the Government for that end.

9. This Commission, or their Moderator, in the intervals of the Commission, are empowered to receive calls legally proceeded in, and to transmit the same to the respective Presbyteries interested; and, in case of references or appeals to the said Commission, that they proceed and finally determine therein, according to the former acts of Assemblies for expediting transportations to the North.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act for rendering effectual the Supplies of the North.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the 24th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, "For rendering Effectual the Supplies of the North," do declare the same to stand still in full force, and refers to the Commission to see to the observation thereof.

XVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against Intruders into Kirks.

The General Assembly appoints Presbyteries to send in to the Commission an

account of such ministers or preachers as intrude into parishes, that application may be made to the Government for removing them according to law.

XIX.

Eadem Sessione.—Recommendation anent the more frequent Administration of the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to take care that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be more frequently administered within their bounds, and that the number of ministers to serve thereat be restricted, so that neighbouring churches be not thereby cast desolate on the Lord's Day.

XX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against Abuses at Likewakes, Penny-Bridals, and Promiscuous Dancing.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, revive the act of the General Assembly, 1645, against Likewakes, as also the act of the said Assembly for restraining Abuses at Penny-Bridals, and likewise the act of the General Assembly, anno 1649, discharging promiscuous dancing; and appoints the said acts to be read in churches before the congregation, and that Synods inquire at Presbyteries concerning their diligence anent the observance of the said acts, and recommends to Presbyteries to have their thoughts upon what further may be necessary for suppressing and preventing abuses at such occasions, and give their opinion thereanent to the next General Assembly.

XXI.

Overtures transmitted by the General Assembly, held in the Year 1701, to the several Presbyteries within this National Church, that they may consider the same, and send their Opinion thereanent in Writing to the next General Assembly, who may pass the same in Acts, if the more general Opinion of this Church agree thereunto.

[These Overtures are, 1. Anent Scandalous Persons turning Popish; 2. Protestants marrying Papists; 3. Anent Excommunication; 4. Anent irregular absolving of Scandalous Persons; 5. Anent Students passing Trials; 6. Against Profaneness, with a Reference to the Commission thereanent. The greater part of these appear to have been passed into Acts in 1704.]

XXII.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh the sixth day of March, in the year 1702.

The Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing the 132d Psalm, from the 11th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by me,
 DAV. DUNDAS, *Cls.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MARCH 6, 1702.

I.

Sess. 1, Edinburgh, March 6, 1702.—The Recording of his Majesty's Commission to Patrick Earl of Marchmont, Lord High Chancellor of this Kingdom, for Representing his Majesty's Royal Person in this Assembly.

This day, the General Assembly of the ministers and elders of this National Church being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by Patrick Earl of Marchmont, Lord High Chancellor of this kingdom, his Majesty's Commission, under the Great and Privy Seals thereof, making and constituting him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly, which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint the same to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, therein to remain *ad futuram rei memoriam*, whereof the tenor follows:—
“GULIELMUS,” &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—His Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

The said day, his Majesty's High Commissioner presented his Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

WILLIAM R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The full satisfaction we have had from the proceedings of the former Assemblies does very much encourage us to countenance your meeting at this time, and as we take this occasion to renew to you the assurances we have often given you of our resolutions to maintain the government of the Church as it is now established, so we recommend to you calmness and unanimity in your proceedings, and that you will carefully avoid such disputes as may in this juncture be improved to the disturbance of the peace of Church and State, especially after the late attempt that has been made towards the subversion of both, of which we know you have the same sense with our other good subjects, which has sufficiently appeared in the several addresses presented to us.

We have appointed our right trusty and right entirely beloved cousin and councillor, Patrick Earl of Marchmont, our Chancellor, to represent our royal person in this Assembly; his experience and fidelity, which have appeared in the several eminent trusts discharged by him, as they have made us choose him, so we doubt not but they will render him acceptable to you. We have instructed him fully with our mind in every thing needful, and, therefore, recommending to you to give him entire trust and credit, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Kensington, the 23d day of February 1701-2, and of our reign the thirteenth year.

By his Majesty's command,

HYNDFORD.

Direct.—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, March 9, 1702.—Act anent the Production of Synod Books to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly appoints that all the Synod books not as yet produced be brought to the next meeting, and that in time coming all Synod books be punctually brought in, and presented to the General Assembly yearly, in the beginning thereof, according to the ancient laudable custom.

IV.

Sess. 5, March 11, 1702.—Appointment of the General Assembly anent a Commission, and drawing Instructions thereto.

His Majesty's High Commissioner having represented to the General Assembly the sad and melancholy news he had received from Court this morning, of the indisposition and dangerous state of health of the King's Majesty, his master, our gracious Sovereign, was under, and how inconvenient it might prove if any sudden account of his Majesty's death (which God avert) should happen to come during the sitting of this Assembly, and that, therefore, it was his Grace's opinion and desire (though it was resolved this Assembly should have had due time to go through their affairs deliberately and with leisure) that now they should with all expedition dispatch such necessary business as was in dependence before them, and likewise fall upon some method to keep a public and established course of discipline and order in the Church, whatever might fall out. The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration what was thus represented by his Majesty's High Commissioner, and being convinced of the inconveniences that may arise, if, during the sitting of this General Assembly, and at this juncture, any such account of the King's death (which the Lord, in mercy, prevent) should come to hand, and yet how necessary it is that there be a public and established course of discipline and order kept up in this Church by a judicatory, consisting of such members as may make up an equal representation thereof, whatever, at the pleasure of Almighty God, may fall out; do, therefore, nominate and appoint these following, viz., Mr Charles Gordon at Askirk, Mr John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, Mr William Crichton at Edinburgh, Mr James Brown at Glasgow, Mr John Anderson, jun. at St Andrews, Mr Thomas Blackwell at Aberdeen, Mr Alexander King at Elgin, and Mr Thomas Wilkie at Canongate, *Ministers*; the Lord Advocate and Laird of Megginch, *Ruling Elders*; to be a committee to retire instantly for nominating ministers and elders to be members of a Commission of this Assembly and National Church, and also for drawing up of instructions to the said Commission, and report to this Assembly so soon as possible: And it is recommended to the said committee to nominate, in the first place, all those old and experienced ministers yet alive that were ministers in the year 1661; and, next, all those of most experience and ability, with a just proportion and representation from the several Presbyteries of this Church, and bring in the draught of a Commission, and instructions, accordingly.

V.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Recommendation anent Ministers' Stipends, &c.

There being brought in to the General Assembly the following overture from the committee for overtures, the same was voted and approven, and the General Assembly did, and hereby do, recommend and appoint according thereto; the tenor whereof follows:—

Overtured that recommendation be made by the General Assembly to the Commission of Parliament for Plantation of Kirks, &c., for giving due dispatch and encouragement to all processes for modification and locality of stipends, that so mini-

sters may have a suitable maintenance and a competency for communion elements, and ready access thereto; and that it be recommended to the several Presbyteries to send in an account to the Clerk of the General Assembly, or Agent for the Kirk, of such parishes in their bounds as either want legal stipends, or want decreets for their stipends and communion elements, and to send therewith an account of the state of such parishes, and of the church, manse, and glebe thereof; and, likewise, it is over-tured to the General Assembly, that in all transportations in time coming, previous inquiry be made if there be a legal stipend, and a decreet therefor, in the parish craving the transportation.

VI.

Sess. 5, March 11, 1702, post meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to His Majesty's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your royal letter, expressing your full satisfaction with the proceedings of our former Assemblies, and the renewed assurances your Majesty is pleased to give us of your resolution to maintain the government of the Church as now established, are accepted by us with all thankfulness, and lay upon us the deepest obligations to use our best endeavours to perpetuate to this Church so great a blessing.

We have hitherto, through the favour of God, behaved with all possible calmness and unanimity, and do hope, through the same Divine grace and assistance, and with that due respect we owe your Majesty, to avoid everything that may be improven to the least disturbance, or give any advantage to your Majesty's and our adversaries.

The great concern of the Protestant religion, now in such visible hazard from the attempts of common enemies, doth certainly oblige us not only to be aware of all unseasonable diversions, but also to give your Majesty, whom God hath so eminently raised up to be its great protector, as well as our gracious deliverer, all the assurances of our most hearty and dutiful concurrence and service.

The Lord High Chancellor, whom your Majesty hath been pleased to appoint to represent your royal person in this Assembly, hath not only approven himself to your Majesty, by his fidelity in discharging these eminent trusts wherewith he hath been so deservedly honoured; but was so constant and faithful a partaker in our late sufferings, and hath ever since appeared so true a friend to this Church, that your Majesty's choice is to us most acceptable: and we are hopeful, through the blessing of God, and the countenance your Majesty is pleased to give us, to dispatch the affairs of this Assembly to your Majesty's entire satisfaction.

But, while we are dispatching this return, we have the surprising and most afflict-ing news of your Majesty's dangerous condition, by reason of sickness, which not only prevents the design we had of an humble address of duty and affection to your Ma-jesty, for adhering to and maintaining your Majesty and your most rightful govern-ment over us against all adversaries, but obliges us to betake ourselves wholly to most earnest supplication to God for your Majesty's preservation; and that it may please Him, of his infinite mercy, to this and all the churches of Christ, to restore you to perfect health, and yet to bless us with your long and prosperous reign, for the good of all your dominions.

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obe-dient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders, met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

D. WILLIAMSON, *Moderator.*

VII.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Kirks, and other Affairs remitted to them.

The General Assembly, considering that there are yet some vacant churches on

the North side of Tay, as likewise several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot overtake, doth, therefore, find it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant churches, and doing what other affairs shall be referred to them; and for that end, do hereby nominate, commissionate, and appoint, Mr William Mitchell, minister at Dundee, &c. &c., to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect in Act IV., and before and after mentioned; with full power to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any fifteen of the said commissioners, whereof nine are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Wednesdays of June, September, December, and March, and oftener when and where they shall think needful and convenient; with full power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said commissioners, or their quorum, to receive, consider, cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in everything contained in and conform to the instructions given by the General Assembly, held in the year 1701, to their Commission, which are hereby renewed and holden as expressed; and this Commission is appointed to proceed according thereto, as fully and freely as if the said instructions were in these presents at full length inserted and set down; and farther, they are by these presents empowered to cognosce upon, and determine in all references and appeals made to this Assembly from any inferior judicatory of this Church, and particularly, in such references as were made to this Assembly by the late Commission of the General Assembly, 1701, of the affairs that were by them left undiscussed, and such other particulars as have been tabled before this Assembly, and not as yet determined; and to be careful to send some to supply vacant churches in the North; and, generally, with power to the said Commission to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, and that the Church do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which belongs to them to prevent, as they will be answerable to the next General Assembly. And they are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what is herein contained. Declaring also, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, declares, that this Commission shall continue until the meeting of the next General Assembly.

VIII.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh the tenth day of March, in the year 1703.

This Assembly being closed, the members were dismissed with prayer, singing the 46th psalm, from the beginning to the 6th verse, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

DAV. DUNDAS, C^{ls}.

ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN ON HER ACCESSION TO THE THRONE BY THE COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, EDINBURGH, MARCH 13, 1702.

May it please your Majesty,

As we were greatly afflicted with the sad account we had of the death of our late Sovereign, King William, of ever blessed and glorious memory, by whom and under whose happy government, through the favour of God, we enjoyed many signal blessings, so we desire heartily to bless God for his having set your Majesty, a true Protestant Queen, upon the throne to rule over us.

And we humbly tender your Majesty our hearty thanks for the early and full assurance which your Majesty is pleased to give in your gracious letter to your Privy

Council, of your firm resolution during the whole course of your reign, to protect all your people of this kingdom, not only in their laws and liberties, but also in their religion, and in the established government of this Church, both which we are persuaded are founded upon the Word of God, and; therefore, most dear and precious to us.

We farther presume to assure your Majesty, that we do own and acknowledge your Majesty's title to the crown as most undoubtedly lawful and rightful; and that in our places and stations we will assert and maintain the same to the utmost of our power, against all pretenders whomsoever, and will use our best endeavours with the people committed to our charge, to keep and preserve them in their duty and loyalty to your Majesty.

Our constant and fervent prayer to God shall be, that he may preserve and bless your royal person and government, guide and direct all your counsels, and still more and more endue your Majesty with all Christian and royal gifts and graces, that so your reign may be long and every way happy and prosperous over us, and your people, under you, may enjoy peace and truth, the greatest of blessings, to the glory of God, and your Majesty's entire satisfaction.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

D. WILLIAMSON, *Moderator.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MARCH 10, 1703.

I.

Sess. 1, March 10, 1703.—The Recording of the Queen's Commission to James Earl of Seafield, Lord High Chancellor of this Kingdom, for representing her Majesty in this Assembly.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this National Church, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by James Earl of Seafield, Lord High Chancellor of this kingdom, her Majesty's commission, under the Great and Privy Seals thereof, making and constituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly; which commission being publicly read, with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly appointed the same to be recorded in their registers, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—
“ANNA,” &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented her Majesty's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read, with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

ANNE, R.

Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The time appointed by our proclamation, dated the 5th day of February 1703, for the sitting of the General Assembly now approaching, we have made choice of our right trusty, and right well-beloved cousin and counsellor, James Earl of Seafield, our High Chancellor, to be our Commissioner to this Assembly, of whose fidelity, sufficiency, and zeal for our service, we have had good experience on several occasions, and especially he having been very acceptable to a former Assembly.

We earnestly recommend to you to be solicitously careful of what may advance the interest of the Reformed Protestant Religion, and for suppressing the growth of Popery. We renew the assurance given by us for protection of the Presbyterian government, as that which we find acceptable to the inclinations of our people, and established by the laws of the kingdom. We are confident that you will act in this Assembly so as we shall have new reasons to be satisfied with you and your conduct ; and that you will carry so with others of the Reformed Protestant Religion, albeit differing from you in forms of Church policy, that by your meekness and charity they may be the more inclined to live peaceably and dutifully under us, and in brotherly love and respect towards you and the Established Church ; wherein, if they fail, we shall recommend to our Privy Council to proceed diligently in censure against such delinquents ; but we hope better things of them. We likewise recommend to you the placing of well qualified ministers amongst the remoter Highlanders and Islanders, we looking upon that as the greatest and best mean of rooting out the Popish errors, immoralities, and profanity ; and withal, we shall give directions to our Privy Council for the exact application of our royal authority and laws to these good ends ; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 5th day of February, and of our reign the first year, 1702-3.

By her Majesty's command,

TARBAT.

Directed—To the Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 4, March 13, 1703, ante meridiem.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

After the afflicting death of our late Sovereign, King William, of ever blessed and glorious memory, by whom, and under whose happy government, through the favour of God, we enjoyed many signal blessings never to be forgotten ; your Majesty's happy succeeding in the throne of this your ancient kingdom, was a most comfortable relief ; and since your accession to the crown of your royal ancestors, the ministers of this National Church have constantly, both in their public and private addresses to God, heartily blessed and praised his holy name for setting over us your Majesty, a Protestant Queen, to be a nursing-mother to this Church.

And we do offer to your Majesty our humble and hearty thanks, for allowing to us the countenance and protection of your royal authority in this National Assembly ; and that your Majesty hath been pleased, in your gracious letter to us, (which was received and read with all duty, honour, and respect,) to refresh and encourage us, by renewed assurances of your protection of the Presbyterian Government of this Church, so happily established, as agreeable to the Word of God, which we are persuaded will endear you more and more to the hearts of the generality of them who fear God, and are truly faithful to your Majesty's interest and government in this land.

Your Majesty's entrusting the Earl of Seafield, the Lord High Chancellor of this your ancient kingdom, to be your Majesty's Commissioner to represent your royal person in this Assembly, is very acceptable to us, he being of approved ability, fidelity, and loyalty, and of whose kindness this Church hath had good experience.

We bless God, who puts it in your royal heart, and bless you in the name of the Lord, that you recommend to us, that which is so much our duty, to be solicitously careful of what may advance the interest of the Reformed Protestant Religion, and for suppressing of the growth of Popery, and the placing of well qualified ministers

amongst the remoter Highlanders and Islanders, which your Majesty is pleased to say, on good grounds, that you look upon as the greatest and best mean of rooting out the Popish errors, immoralities, and profanity. We shall endeavour to apply ourselves to these things as our great work, and do humbly supplicate your Majesty, according to your gracious promise, that it may be recommended to your Majesty's Privy Council, and all inferior magistrates, that your good laws may be exactly applied for these good ends, and vigorously executed, especially against Popery and immorality.

Your Majesty also is pleased to recommend to us to behave with meekness and charity toward those of the Reformed Religion, albeit differing from us in forms of Church policy. We own meekness and charity to be the duty of all, especially of pastors and office-bearers in the church of Christ, and shall, through grace, follow after these things as we have hitherto done. But we wish that all the differences were merely about Church policy, (though even for this we be sorry,) and that there were no difference about our confession of faith towards God, and our duty towards your Majesty.

We are encouraged by the law of the land, and do rely on your Majesty's gracious promises, that all practices and endeavours which tend to the subversion or prejudice of the established government of the Church, shall be discouraged and restrained; and it shall be our endeavour, by the grace of God, so to act in this Assembly, that we may approve ourselves to God and to your Majesty, and to give such new proofs of our duty and loyalty, that your Majesty may never have cause to repent of your royal favour showed to this Church.

That God may long preserve your sacred person, direct and prosper your councils, make you a blessing to your own people, and a defence to all the reformed churches; that, while war continueth, God may bless your forces, and those of your allies, both by sea and land, with success; that in due time you may be a blessed mean to restore the peace of Europe; and that religion and righteousness may flourish in your days, is and shall be the prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

GEO. MELDRUM, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 7, March 18, 1703, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Kirks in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and other Affairs remitted to them.

The General Assembly, considering that there are yet some vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and in the Highlands, as likewise several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot overtake, do therefore find it needful that there be a commission granted to some ministers and elders for planting these vacant churches, and doing what shall be referred to them, concerning the Highlands and Islands, and other matters; and for that end, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Messrs Thomas Thomson at Old Machar, &c., to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect before and after mentioned; with full power to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said commissioners, whereof fourteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon; and afterwards to meet the first Wednesdays of June, September, December, and March, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own Moderator; and suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall

see cause, in every affair referred, or to be referred to them, and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions given to them by this General Assembly. And, finally, with power to the said commission to advert to the interest of the Church on every occasion, and that the Church do not suffer or sustain any prejudice, which belongs to them to prevent, as they will be answerable to the next General Assembly; and they are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are herein committed to them; declaring also, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next ensuing General Assembly of this Church. And, lastly, declares that this Commission shall continue until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

V.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

That this Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances, particularly the contempt of the censures of the Church inflicted upon scandalous persons, and for settling vacant congregations, and regulating the poor, by providing maintenance and labour for them, and to meet when the Parliament sits.

2. That when any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrines may render them useful to this Church, do apply for reception into a share of the government of the Church, the General Assembly do empower and recommend to their Commission to receive them, according to the 13th paragraph of the 16th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1697; and that the said Commission be careful to get due information from the Presbyteries where the said person applying does or did officiate, and for the time resides.

3. That this Commission, in disposing of her Majesty's gift to this Church, do particularly take care that the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, *anno* 1699, to probationers who are to go North to preach, be rendered effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges and expenses that several ministers of the North have been at in carrying on the planting of churches, and other public affairs of the Church there.

4. The said Commission is to cognosce, and finally determine in all references already made, or to be made, to them by this Assembly, and references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North and the Highlands and Islands, which shall be brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and that transportations to any parish in these places, whether privileged by former Acts of Assemblies or not, be carried on, and that in the most expeditious way.

5. This Commission is also to correspond with the State anent fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

6. This Commission is to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect; as also, this Commission is empowered to proceed according to the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, made in favour of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland.

7. This Commission is empowered to inquire how ministers transported, or to be transported by the General Assembly, or their Commissions, have obeyed, or shall obey; and in case of disobedience, that they suspend the disobedient persons for three months; and in case they do not obey after these three months are elapsed, that then they be *simpliciter* deposed.

8. This Commission is to give all due encouragement and assistance to any proposals which may be made to them anent endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the effectual curbing of profanity.

9. That the said Commission shall see to the effectuating, whatever shall be by

this Assembly committed to them, concerning the Highlands and Islands and vacant churches in the North ; for erecting schools, and what else may tend to the encouragement of religion and advancing of reformation in these places.

VL

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the better Attendance of Members of the Commission.

The General Assembly, considering that the affairs referred by them to their Commission are of great moment and importance to the Church, do therefore require and ordain the members thereof to give all due attendance thereon, as they will be answerable and do hereby enjoin the several Presbyteries to send up such of their number as are members thereof to each quarterly meeting of the same ; and do ordain the clerks of the Commission to record lists of the absents from each quarterly meeting, and from the meetings in time of Parliament, (without a reasonable excuse,) or who shall go away therefrom without leave first obtained, and send an extract of their names to the respective Synods, who are impartially to inquire into the reasons of their absence, and to censure them as they shall see cause, and make report thereof to the next General Assembly. And to this effect, that the clerks of the Commission do lay before that Assembly the lists of these absents ; and the General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to supply the charges of the ministers who are members of this Commission, during their attendance thereon.

VII

Sess. 8, March 19, 1703, post meridiem.—Approbation of the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1701.

The visitors of the commission-book made report, that they had revised the records of the Commission of the Assembly, anno 1701, wherein they found that the Commission had been at great pains and diligence in the many and weighty affairs referred to them, and gave in their observations upon the said book ; and the moderator having been a member of that Commission, removed from the chair, and Mr Alexander Hastie, at the desire of the Assembly, did moderate *pro tempore*. Then the General Assembly took under consideration the proceedings of the said Commission contained in their book, subscribed by Mr Thomas Wilkie, Moderator, and Nicol Spence, Sub-Clerk ; and having heard the visitors' remarks thereon, together with the moderator of that Commission and members thereof, their answers thereto, it was put to the vote, Approve the proceedings of the said Commission, or not ; and it carried in the affirmative : Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, approve of the actings and proceedings of the said Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1701, and appoints their clerk to attest the same at the end of the register of the said Commission.

VIII

Sess. 9, March 22, 1703, ante meridiem.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to the Queen.

May it please your Majesty,

The entire confidence we repose in your Majesty's stedfast zeal for the true Protestant religion, and in the renewed gracious assurances we have from your Majesty to maintain and protect the Presbyterian government of this Church, as at present established, with the sense of the duty we owe to God, and to his Church in this nation, and to your Majesty, our undoubted and rightful sovereign, do embolden us in pursuance of those Christian ends recommended to us by your Majesty in the beginning of this Assembly, to lay before your Majesty, in all humble duty, those things

that endanger the safety, and obstruct the success of religion, and trouble the quiet and peace of this Church and kingdom.

We humbly crave leave to represent to your Majesty, that our reformation from Popery was by Presbyters, whereby the Presbyterian government, in an equal parity, without any superiority among them, was at that time settled. And for this constitution and Church government the constant persuasion, zeal, and concern of the ministry and people of this National Church, is sufficiently known to your Majesty and to the world, God having always signally blessed the Presbyterian government of this Church and the discipline thereof, for the suppressing of profaneness, and curbing of error in this your ancient kingdom.

Upon these considerations at the late happy Revolution, and for remedying of the many evils we had suffered, and preventing the like in time coming, the claim of right did declare against Prelacy, as a great and insupportable grievance and trouble to this nation, and for Presbyterian parity in this Church; and by the acts of Parliament thereon ensuing Presbyterian government is settled, as agreeable to the Word of God, and most conducive to the advancement of true piety and godliness, and the establishing of peace and tranquillity; and, therefore, to be the only government of Christ's Church within this kingdom.

And of this Government, as well as of the true Protestant religion, we have, through the infinite mercy of God, under the protection of our late Sovereign Lord King William, and of your sacred Majesty, enjoyed the peaceable and comfortable possession, with much concord and tranquillity.

Notwithstanding whereof, it is our extreme sorrow that we find ourselves constrained to represent to your Majesty, for your gracious help and relief, 1st, The extraordinary growth of Popery, and bold and insolent trafficking of Popish priests and Jesuits in several parts of this kingdom; and that not only by secret practices, but by avowed keeping of mass-meetings and houses, and insulting of some of our ministers, and daring even to set up schools, to the corrupting and poisoning of youth, and many other unaccountable attempts, as if in a Popish country, to the great dishonour of God, the violation of your Majesty's good laws, the increase of disaffection to your royal Government, and the grief and disquiet of the hearts of your faithful subjects.

2^{dly}, Though we acknowledge ourselves to be unquestionably bound as Christians, and more especially as ministers of the Gospel of peace, to maintain charity and forbearance toward those who peaceably differ from us, and contain themselves within the just limits of sobriety and reason, yet we cannot but complain of the disorders of some of the Episcopal clergy, who, with a few of their abettors that have given as little evidence of their affection to your Majesty's Government as to the Established Church, transgress your laws by preaching, though not qualified to your Majesty's Government—by despising sentences of deprivation by the Privy Council, and deposition by Church judicatories—by invading settled churches—by intruding into vacant churches—and by irregular baptizings and clandestine marriages, and several other gross abuses; all which tend to the weakening and frustrating the good ends of discipline, the increase of licentiousness and irreligion, and the spreading of error and doctrine contrary to our Confession of Faith, ratified in Parliament.

And of these things we have, in the sincere discharge of our duty to God and your Majesty, drawn up a particular condescendence to be given in to your Majesty's Privy Council, whereof we have transmitted just doubles to your secretaries for your Majesty's better and more full information.

3^{dly}, We must also regret the abounding of immorality and profaneness, notwithstanding the clear light of the Gospel that we enjoy, and the many laudable laws that have been made to restrain them.

These being the heads of our grievances, wherein your Majesty sees how much the glory of God, the purity of religion, the obedience to your laws, the honour of your Government, and the peace and quiet of this Church and kingdom are concerned, we do, in all humility, most earnestly entreat that your Majesty will be pleased, in your royal wisdom and goodness, to appoint that the laws against Papists may be exe-

cuted with vigour by all the officers of the law, in all parts of the kingdom; and that all unwarrantable and illegal attempts of dissenters against the established government of this Church, and the peace of the kingdom, be punished and prevented according to law; and that a proclamation in your Majesty's name be issued out for that effect; and for the strict execution of the laws against immorality and profaneness in persons of all ranks; and that all magistrates and officers of justice give due and ready assistance as law ordains, for making the sentences and censures of the Church and its judicatories effectual.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the defence of the true Protestant religion, the comfort of all the churches of Christ, and the welfare and prosperity of this Church and kingdom, shall be the constant and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
GEO. MELDRUM, *Moderator*.

IX.

Sess. 9, March 22, 1703.—Act approving some Overtures concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and supplying thereof with Ministers and Probationers, and promoting Religion and the Knowledge of God in these places.

1. That the Commission of the General Assembly be empowered to send ministers and probationers to any Presbytery in the North, or Highlands or Islands, and to take special care to find out and send thither probationers having the Irish language, when called for.

2. When any congregation in the Highlands shall call any minister, having the Irish tongue, settled in the Lowlands, that the commission be empowered to consider the affair, and determine therein as they shall see cause; and special regard is to be had to former acts of the General Assemblies thereanent.

3. That, during the vacancy of the kirks of the town of Aberdeen, the Synods of Lothian and Tweeddale, Glasgow and Ayr, supply the same quarterly, *per vices*, till the next Assembly; and that Mr Henry Shaw, minister of Cockburnspath, formerly appointed, do go thither against the first day of April next, from the Synod of Lothian, for the first quarter.

4. That the case of Brechin, and speedy planting thereof, be recommended to the special care of the Commission; as also, the planting of the vacant kirk of Inverkeillour and others, within the province of Angus and Mearns.

5. That the Presbytery of Dunkeld be declared to have the same privilege with the North and Highlands; and that the punctual supplying of the vacancies therein be recommended to the Synod of Perth and Stirling. And, particularly, that the Presbytery of Perth take the burden of supplying of two of these vacancies until the next Assembly; and that it be recommended to the Commission to send thither probationers having Irish, when called for, particularly one to the parish of Weem.

6. That the Commission be appointed and empowered to give all due encouragement to any proposals made, or to be made, anent erecting schools and libraries in the Highlands, and apply to the Government thereanent, as they shall see cause.

7. That the Commission be empowered, as they shall find convenient, to send some ministers having Irish, and others, to visit and supply the vacant kirks in the Highlands, and stay there for some time, especially in the summer season, and to catechise the people, and be at pains with them, to concur in advancing a reformation; and, in order thereunto, to encourage the erecting of schools, and endeavour to prevail with parents to send their children to be taught to read; which ministers are, from time to

time, to send an account of their diligence and success, and of the state of the country they are supplying in, to the Commission, especially anent Papists, that application may be made to the Government thereanent.

8. That the Commission be empowered, when they get notice of students having Irish, fit to be entered on trials for the ministry, to recommend such students to Presbyteries, in order to pass; and when they pass, to send them to the Highlands, with the ordinary allowance: And this may prevent their being settled in Lowland congregations.

The General Assembly having heard and considered the overtures above written, they did, by their vote, and hereby do, approve thereof, and enact, ordain, and recommend according thereto in all points.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Reception of Converts from Popery.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the 18th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1700, entitled, "Act anent Regulating the Reception of such as come off from Popery," which appoints, that the reception of any that comes off from Popery to the communion of this Church should be the deed of a Church judicatory, do now declare, that by judicatories in the said act is not meant any below a Presbytery.

XI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act for supplying and preserving the Registers and Papers belonging to the General Assemblies, Committees, and Commissions thereof.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the great loss the Church hath sustained by the burning of several of their registers and some papers, in that dreadful fire which happened in the Lawnmarket of Edinburgh, upon the 28th day of October 1701, do, for making up that loss, as far as may be, and for the better preservation of their registers in time coming, enact and appoint that there be two authentic copies thereof, both subscribed by the Moderator and Clerk, one copy whereof to lie in the Clerk's custody, and the other copy to be sealed, and laid in some secure place in the New Church of Edinburgh, or where the General Assembly or Commission shall appoint: As also, that a subscribed extract of the proceedings of each General Assembly be sent, a little after the rising thereof, to the several Synods within this Church, to be by them recorded in a book; and all this to be done upon the public charges of the Church. And recommends to such persons as have any of the old registers or papers belonging to the General Assembly, Commissions, or Committees thereof, in their custody, to deliver up the same to the Clerk of the Assembly, to be by him kept for the public use of the Church; and that Ministers and Presbyteries be at pains in dealing with persons for that effect; and it is recommended to the Commission to gratify those who shall bring in to their Clerk any of the papers or registers foresaid, as they shall find such persons deserve.

XII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Overtures concerning Church Discipline.

The which day, the Committee appointed by this Assembly for considering the printed overtures concerning the methods and forms of procedure in ecclesiastical judicatories, reported that they found that the committees appointed in the years 1698, 1699, 1700, and 1701, having received the remarks of some Presbyteries upon the said overtures, they compared the same with these overtures, and had made their own observations, deleting many superfluous overtures, amending others, and sometimes

adding; and that the said Committee of this Assembly, having read part of the said overtures, with the observations and alterations of the said Committees, 1698, 1699, 1700, and 1701, do judge their remarks pertinent and judicious, and were of opinion that a committee should be chosen out of the bounds of the Synods of Lothian, Glasgow, and Fife, or any others the General Assembly shall please, yet to revise the said printed overtures, with the remarks, and cause transcribe and reprint them, with the alterations and additions, leaving out all superfluous overtures, sentences, and words; and that they be appointed to revise the two other chapters concerning Synods and General Assemblies, their Committees, and Commissions, not yet printed, and add the same to the printed overtures, and present the whole to the Commission of this Assembly, at their quarterly meeting in June next, that they may cause print and transmit the same to the several Presbyteries within this National Church, that the said Presbyteries may send in their opinions thereanent to the next General Assembly; which report being heard and considered by the General Assembly, they unanimously agreed thereunto, and accordingly nominate the Rev. Mr George Meldrum, Moderator, Mr William Crichton, Mr George Hamilton, Mr John Law, Mr David Blair at Edinburgh, Mr George Barclay at Uphall, Mr Robert Wylie at Hamilton, Mr John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, Mr Thomas Linning at Lesmahagow, Mr Archibald Hamilton at Cambuslang, Mr John Anderson, Principal of the Leonardine College of St Andrews, Mr John Anderson junior, minister there, Mr James Haddow, Professor of Divinity there, and Mr Hugh White at Larbert, *Ministers*; the Right Honourable Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North-berwick, Lord President of the Session, Sir James Stewart of Gutters, her Majesty's Advocate, Sir Colin Campbell, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, and Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, *Ruling Elders*; to be a committee for the effect foresaid; and the General Assembly refers to their Commission to name the time and place of the said committee's first meeting.

XIII.

Act Reuniting the Parishes of Dalry and Carsphairn to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered a petition from Mr William Boyd, minister of Dalry, and Mr John Reid, minister of Carsphairn, craving that their said parishes might be reunited to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, from which they were disjoined by the 5th Act, General Assembly, *anno* 1699, and annexed to the Presbytery of Wigton; and having also considered the reasons for the said re-annexation of the said parishes, and answers made thereto for the Presbytery of Wigton, did, by their vote, and hereby do, again disjoin the said parishes of Dalry and Carsphairn from the Presbytery of Wigton, and reunite and again annex the same to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright.

XIV.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh, the 16th day of March 1704.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MARCH 16, 1704.

I.

Sess. 1, March 16, 1704.—The Recording of the Queen's Commission to William Lord Ross, for representing her Majesty in this Assembly.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this National Church, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by William Lord Ross, her Majesty's commission under the Great Seal of this kingdom, making and constituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly; which commission being publicly read, with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly appointed the same to be recorded in their registers, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—"ANNA," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented the Queen's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read, with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The satisfactory accounts we have had of your good conduct and management in the last Assembly, give us full confidence of your meeting at this time in the same good disposition. And we doubt not but you will improve this opportunity to do what may be further necessary for promoting the true reformed Protestant religion; and we earnestly recommend to you to take effectual methods for planting of vacant churches with pious and learned ministers, which is so necessary for suppressing of error and immorality; in the doing whereof, you shall have from us all due encouragement and assistance. We have thought fit to appoint our right trusty and entirely-beloved councillor, William Lord Ross, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, whose abilities and fitness to discharge this trust will, we doubt not, render him acceptable to you. We have fully instructed him in what may be further necessary, and therefore you may give him entire trust and credit. So, recommending to you calmness and unanimity in your proceedings, and the avoiding unseasonable debates, which you must be sensible will be of bad consequence in this juncture, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 29th day of February 1704, and of our reign the 2d year.

By her Majesty's Command,

CROMARTY.

Directed—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, March 18, 1704.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We bless God for his goodness in giving to us your Majesty, a Protestant Queen, to reign over us, and we judge it our duty to offer to your Majesty our humble and hearty thanks for the good effects of your government, and all the favour showed to this Church; and, more particularly, for giving your royal assent in the last Session of Parliament, to the act for ratifying the Protestant Religion, and Presbyterian Government of this Church, and for your late gracious and most seasonable letter to your Council, for ordering the redress of our grievances, as to Popery and immorality, and other disorders, and restraining all attempts against the present legal constitution of this Church; as, likewise, that we are now again, with your Majesty's countenance and favour, met in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in a National Assembly, under your Majesty's shadow and protection.

Your Majesty's entrusting the Lord Ross to be your Commissioner to represent your royal person in this Assembly, is very acceptable to us, he being of known and entire fidelity and loyalty to your Majesty, and of whose kindness this Church hath great confidence.

Your Majesty's gracious letter to us was received and read with all due honour and respect, and we do acknowledge you recommend nothing to us but what is our duty; and we bless God, who puts it in your royal heart to excite us to improve this opportunity to do what is necessary for promoting the true Reformed Protestant Religion; and, in order to that, the planting vacant churches with pious and learned men, graciously promising your Majesty's encouragement and assistance therein, and we shall endeavour to apply ourselves thereto, as our great work.

And withal to study, by the grace of God, calmness and unanimity, and to shun, as hitherto we have done, unseasonable debates, which (as your Majesty is pleased to express it) would be of bad consequence in this juncture.

Now that God may long preserve your sacred person to reign over your people, as a blessing to them, and a defence to all the Reformed Churches, and make you in due time a blessed mean of restoring the peace of Europe; and that, while war continueth, God may prosper and bless your forces, and those of your allies, for the above mentioned ends, both by sea and land, with success; and that religion and righteousness may flourish among your people in your days, is, and shall be, the prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

THO. WILKIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 7, March 23, 1704, post meridiem.—Act Joining the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland, in one Synod.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered an overture transmitted to them from the Committee for Overtures, for reviving the act of the General Assembly, 15th of June 1646, adjoining the Presbyteries of Orkney and Zetland to the Provincial Synod of Caithness, after reasoning thereabout, and some amendments made thereupon, they did, by their vote, and hereby do, unanimously approve of the said overture. And, accordingly, for the more orderly managing of affairs in the Presbyteries of Orkney, Caithness, and Zetland, and restraining and correcting of abuses that have fallen, or may hereafter fall out in these places, do hereby revive the foresaid Act of Assembly, dated the 15th of June 1646, entitled, "Act for Joining the Presbyteries

of Orkney and Zetland to the Provincial of Caithness ;” and do appoint their diets of meeting to be upon the first Tuesday of June yearly, during the continuance of this act, and their first meeting to be and begin upon the first Tuesday of June next, 1704, in the town of Thurso in Caithness ; and do appoint and ordain the Synod of Aberdeen to send one, and the Synod of Ross and Moray each of them two ministers, and the like number of ruling elders, to correspond with the said Synod, at their first meeting only : And the Assembly does ordain the said Synod to inquire diligently into the state of affairs in Zetland ; and, in particular, that at the first meeting they do consider, cognosce, and determine, in the two processes against Mr Hugh Leigh and Mr John Cumming, referred by the Presbytery of Zetland to this Assembly ; which two processes the General Assembly do hereby remit and refer to the said Synod : And the General Assembly does hereby declare that this present act shall obtain and stand in force, ay and until the same be recalled by a subsequent General Assembly, and that notwithstanding of the Act of Assembly, the 9th of August 1648, disjoining the Presbytery of Zetland from the said Synod : And the General Assembly does also declare, that, notwithstanding of this present annexation, the Presbytery of Dornoch shall still continue to meet and act Presbyterially with the Presbytery of Ross, as formerly : And the Assembly appoints letters to be written to the Synod intimating the premises to them.

V.

Sess. 8, March 24, 1704, ante meridiem.—Act anent Lecturing and Expounding the Holy Scriptures.

The General Assembly do hereby appoint and ordain the several ministers of this Church to observe the 9th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1694, “ Anent Reading and Expounding of the Scriptures in their Congregations ;” and recommends it to Presbyteries, at their privy censures, to inquire how the said Act has been observed by the several brethren within their bounds : And ordains an account of their diligence thereanent to be inserted in their Presbytery books, and likewise recommends to Synods, at their privy censures, to inquire how Presbyteries have observed the said recommendation.

VI.

Sess. 10, March 27, 1704, post meridiem.—Act anent Commissioners to the General Assembly, and their Subscribing the Confession of Faith.

The General Assembly, for the better ordering of elections of their members in time coming, appoints and ordains that all commissions to ministers and ruling elders from Presbyteries, Universities, and Royal Burghs, to subsequent Assemblies, bear that they have subscribed the Confession of Faith of this Church, according to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1700 ; and suchlike, that no minister or elder be nominated and commissioned to be a member of the General Assembly of this Church, by any Presbytery, Burgh, or University, but such as usually reside in or have a relation to the Presbytery, Burgh, or University, they are commissioned from.

VII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Citations in cases of Transportations of Ministers.

The General Assembly, to prevent rabbling of messengers by the people, and horrid profanation of the Lord's Day, which frequently falls out in cases of transportations, when the defending party and parish are to be summoned, appoints and ordains, that the minister himself being summoned *apud acta* at the Presbytery, or if absent, by the Presbytery's letter, to be present at the day appointed for hearing the cause ; he also be ordered to intimate out of the pulpit to heritors, elders, and others con-

cerned in the parish, that there is such a call and such a transportation designed ; and if any of them have a mind to defend their right to their minister, they are to be present at the Presbytery on such a day, and ready to make their defences ; for which cause, the General Assembly ordains the call, with the reasons thereof, to be given or transmitted to the minister, to be by him communicated to them : And the General Assembly does appoint this method of citations in cases of transportations to be observed only where the Presbyteries concerned shall see cause to take that course, in which case, they hereby declare the citation so given to be a valid citation, but that it shall be optional to the Presbytery to follow this course, or do it by their officers as formerly.

VIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Scandalous Persons turning Popish.

The General Assembly, considering that some persons when challenged for scandal do turn Popish, or pretend to do so to avoid censure, do, therefore, enact that the Church proceed to the censure of excommunication against such after all the due pains taken to reclaim them prove ineffectual ; and appoints this present act to be intimated in all the churches within this kingdom.

IX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Excommunication.

The General Assembly, considering that the sentence of excommunication is much despised, and that persons do continue to converse unnecessarily and familiarly with such as lie under that sentence, as if they were not excommunicated, do, therefore, enact and appoint that the sentence of excommunication being first intimated throughout all the churches within the Presbytery where the said sentence was pronounced, if the person continue obstinate, that then the Presbyteries give an account thereof to the Synod, who are to appoint the like intimation to be made in all the churches within their bounds ; and if, notwithstanding of this and other due means used to reclaim them, they shall continue obstinate, in that case, the Assembly appoints an account of their names, and sentence passed against them, to be brought by the said Synod to the General Assembly, that they may appoint intimation thereof to be made through all the churches of the kingdom : And the Assembly does appoint that at the foresaid respective intimations ministers do take occasion to hold forth the sad state and condition of excommunicated persons, and that they inform the people how to carry towards them.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Students passing Trials.

The Assembly does appoint that strict notice be taken of such as pass their trials in order to the ministry, and, for that end, do ratify and revive all former acts of Assembly made in relation thereunto, and, in particular, the article allowed by the General Assembly, anno 1596, and approved in the General Assembly at Glasgow, 1638, article 13, session 7, renewed *ultimo Augusti*, 1647, session 27, anent the age of such ; as also, the 10th act of the General Assembly, 1694, and the 22d act of the General Assembly, 1696 : And do further ordain, that the catechetical trials be not perfunctoriously gone about, and that Presbyteries do appoint some of their number to examine them, in their own presence, upon the several heads of divinity and government of the Church, and to know what reason they can give of their faith and sentiments in these matters, and if they can answer some principal objections, and that previously to all other parts of their trials ; and that this be not done hastily, but that a particular competent time be allowed for that purpose ; and that there be a trial also given to probationers of their gifts as to lecturing, and the General Assembly

does hereby require and enjoin that the several Synods at their privy censures make strict inquiry how the Presbyteries within their bounds have observed this and other acts of Assemblies made to this purpose.

XI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against Profaneness, with a Recommendation to the Commission thereanent.

The General Assembly, for the more effectual restraining of profaneness and immorality, and obtaining the exact execution of the laws against them, do hereby recommend to the Commission to be nominated by them, that they appoint some of their number with the clerk, to draw up an abstract of all the Acts of Assemblies to that purpose, both before and since the late Revolution, which being revised and approved by the Commission at their quarterly meeting in June, may by them be ordered to be printed, together with the abstract of the acts of Parliament against profaneness, in a small volume; and each Presbytery is hereby enjoined, twice a year at least, at diets appointed *in hunc effectum*, to read these, and to inquire at each minister what is done by him for the execution thereof; and every Synod is hereby ordained to take a strict account of the diligence and faithfulness of Presbyteries therein: And the General Assembly hereby likewise recommends to all Presbyteries to think seriously what may be further needful for restraining of wickedness, and advancing of piety and the kingdom of Christ in the nation, and send in their overtures concerning the same to the next General Assembly, who may take these into their serious consideration, and make this their chief and first work.

XII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Preaching or Disseminating Erroneous Doctrine.

The General Assembly, for vindicating the truths of God professed in this Church, and for suppressing of errors, do hereby discharge all persons to preach or disseminate any erroneous doctrine opposite to any head or article of the Confession of Faith of this Church; and, particularly, discharges the venting any Arminian or Socinian errors; and do ordain the respective judicatories of this Church to advert to any who shall teach or vent such errors, and proceed to censure them therefor, as shall be found just and requisite for suppressing the same: And more especially, the General Assembly does hereby recommend to the Synod of Fife to take heed to Mr James Grahame at Dunfermline, that he contravene not this act.

XIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act for bestowing Bursaries upon Students having Irish.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that now, through the mercy and goodness of God, most of the Lowland Presbyteries be-South Tay are competently planted, and that the promoting of knowledge, religion, and civility, in the Highlands is the common concern of this National Church, do therefore enact and appoint, that the one half of all the bursaries of the Presbyteries be-South Tay, including that part of the Synod of Perth that lies be-North Tay, be paid in to collectors to be appointed by the respective Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh, and St Andrews, which Presbyteries are to be accountable to their respective Synods concerned for what money they receive, the one half thereof to be applied for the education of such youths as have the Irish language, in philosophy and divinity, at the Colleges of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St Andrews, and the other half to be disposed of to Lowland bursars, or such other pious uses as the respective Synods shall think fit; and for this end, the Synods of Glasgow, Galloway, and Dumfries, are to pay their bursaries to a collector to be appointed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, and under their inspection accountable to their Synods; in like manner, the Synods of Merse and Lothian to the Presbytery of Edinburgh; the Synods of Fife, Perth, and Stirling, to the Presby-

tery of St Andrews ; and this to begin at October next, and to continue for four years, or longer, as the General Assembly shall see cause. That to the Synod of Argyle (who have a gift of vacancies for training youth) a certain small number of the bursaries payable to the collector to be appointed by the Presbytery of Glasgow be allotted, and all the rest for the other Highlands, and none are to have the benefit of any of the said bursaries, but such as bring a testimonial or recommendation from the Synods respectively to which they belong, bearing their having been examined by that Synod, and the Synod's good hopes of them as sober youths, piously inclined, and well affected to the government of the Church and State, and that they have the Irish language, and being good proficients in the Latin, and such as they judge may in due time prove able ministers of the Gospel or schoolmasters ; and that they have obliged themselves to employ their talents in these services in the Highlands, either within the bounds of the Synods recommending them, or some others by their allowance, and that these testimonials be recorded with their names, and reported to each General Assembly : And further, the General Assembly does hereby renew the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1701, entitled, " Recommendation to the Synods anent Maintaining of Bursars having the Irish Language ;" and appoints the said act to be observed until the General Assembly see cause to recal the same.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Erecting Schools in the Highlands.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that the planting and propagating of religion in the Highlands is a work of charity to perishing souls there, and of great importance to this Church and nation, to which every one in their station, especially ministers of the Gospel, ought, with much cheerfulness and forward zeal, to afford their best endeavours and assistance ; and being informed of the good inclinations of many, and their willingness to contribute for so good a work, and that the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr have made a laudable progress therein, this Assembly, for their parts, (until further advances be made in that noble and Christian design,) declare themselves willing to concur, as the matter and its success shall open unto them, and do, in pursuance of what is recommended to them by her Majesty's gracious letter, agree that there be a voluntary contribution made, by way of subscription, in each Presbytery within this kingdom, and that in like manner they gather up by subscriptions, or otherwise, from noblemen, gentlemen, and other charitably disposed persons, within their respective parishes, and in those that are vacant, by the Presbytery's direction and order, what they can get for erecting schools and educating youths in the Highlands and Islands, where the same is not provided for already ; and that what is collected in the Synods of Glasgow and Ayr, Dumfries and Galloway, be sent in to the Presbytery of Glasgow ;—that the Synods of Lothian and Tweeddale, Merse and Teviotdale, send in their collections to the Presbytery of Edinburgh ;—that the Synods of Fife, Perth, and Stirling, send in their collections to the Presbytery of St Andrews ;—the Synods of Angus and Mearns, and Aberdeen, to the Presbytery of Aberdeen ;—and the said Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, and Aberdeen, are to take care to secure what of the contributions comes to their hands, and to be accountable to their respective Synods ; and the management and disposal of what is so collected is hereby recommended to the Commission of the General Assembly ; for which end, Synods or Presbyteries who receive what is collected are appointed to send an account thereof quarterly to the foresaid Commission. But the other Presbyteries concerned in the Highlands and Islands are to have the management of the collections made within their own bounds, as they shall find most effectual for attaining the said design, and to be accountable to their own Synods ; which way of management is to continue till the next Assembly ; and Synods are desired to send in their opinions concerning the promoting and further carrying on of the said design to the next Assembly : And the Assembly further recommends it to their said Commission, as they shall find needful and convenient, to apply to the Parliament, Lords of her Majesty's Privy Council, and those in the Government, for their concurrence and assistance in this matter, and for inter-

poning their authority for getting the said schools erected, and obliging parents to put their children thereto, and for making the said design effectual : And, lastly, it is recommended to the Presbyteries and Synods concerned in the Highlands, to send in to the Commission an account of what parishes have or want schools, and the reasons of their wanting thereof, and what places do most need, and are most convenient for erecting schools in; as also to send in an account of such students as are hopeful, whom they would have supplied, and this without prejudice of schools in every parish, appointed by act of Parliament, and of the royal gifts in favour of the Highlands: And the General Assembly recommends to the Commission to cause reprint and disperse the reasons and motives for carrying on the said design.

XV.

Sess. 11, March 28, 1704, post meridiem.—Act approving the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1703.

The General Assembly, having this day had reproduced in their presence the registers of the actings and proceedings of the Commission appointed by the last Assembly; and having heard a report of the committee of their own number, who were not members of the said Commission, appointed to revise, examine, and consider, the said register, with their observations thereupon, and the answers made thereto by the moderator and other members of the said Commission, the members of the said Commission were removed, and Mr John Bannatyne was chosen moderator *pro tempore*, the Moderator of this Assembly having been a member of the said Commission; and the General Assembly having maturely considered the said report and answers, do find that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commission, contained in two registers thereof, subscribed by Mr George Meldrum, Moderator, and Mr John Dundas, Clerk, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, zeal, and diligence, and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in every thing, according to their commission and instructions; and, therefore, this Assembly, by an unanimous vote, did, and hereby do, ratify and approve the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commission, contained in the said two registers of the same, beginning the 24th day of March 1703, and ending the 2d day of March current, inclusive; and the members of the Commission being called in, the same was intimated to them, and the Moderator gave them the thanks of this Assembly for their good service done to this Church; and then the Moderator and Clerk to this Assembly took their places.

XVI.

Sess. 12, March 29, 1704, ante meridiem.—Act and Recommendation anent Regulation of the Commission of the General Assembly.

Seeing, by the instructions brought in from Presbyteries to this and preceding Assemblies, it appears to be the desire of several Presbyteries that there be some just and equal representation of the several Synods and Presbyteries upon the Commission; therefore, the Assembly, not having time now to adjust that matter, appoints the several Presbyteries to consider seriously upon it, and to send in their advice thereanent to the next ensuing General Assembly; particularly as to what number of persons out of each Synod or Presbytery are fit to be upon the Commission; how the persons shall be nominated and chosen at the Assembly, and how they may be obliged to attend duly upon the diets of the Commission when it meets; and to consider of the best methods for supplying their charges with preaching, and defraying their expenses, or concerning any other thing needful to the said regulation; and, in the meantime, that the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly may the more regularly proceed, and effectually execute their commission and instructions, the Assembly recommends it to the several Presbyteries to be careful to send in at least one of their number to attend the diets of the said Commission, and to supply the charges of such with preaching, and to furnish their necessary charges and expenses when attending, as said is: And that the Assembly may be in the better case to re-

gulate this and other things of importance, the General Assembly does recommend it to Presbyteries to choose the wisest and most grave and experienced of their number to represent them in the next Assembly.

XVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Libraries in the Highlands.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there is a project set on foot by some piously inclined persons in this and the neighbouring nation of England, for erecting libraries in the Highlands of this kingdom, and that good advances have been made therein, do declare their approbation of that design, and appoints a letter of thanks to be written to the Society in England for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and to others who have given their concurrence and assistance in this matter; and the General Assembly empowers the Commission to apply to the Lords of her Majesty's Privy Council or Treasury for their assistance, in order to the bringing down of the said books from England, and transmitting the same to the places under written, at which they are to be fixed in this kingdom. And the said Commission is hereby empowered to give their best advice and assistance for making this project effectual. And, lastly, they are to use their endeavours for getting a new impression of the Bible in Irish; and the General Assembly renews the recommendation of the Assembly, *anno* 1699, to the Synod of Argyle, for translating the Confession of Faith, and Larger Catechism, in the Irish language, with a vocabulary of the most necessary and useful terms in divinity; and likewise renews the 22d Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1694, concerning the use of the Irish Psalms and Shorter Catechism. And the General Assembly does agree that one of the said libraries be fixed at Dumbarton, two in the Presbytery of Dunblane, three in the province of Ross, one in the Presbytery of Sutherland, two in the Presbytery of Caithness, one in Orkney, one in Zetland, four in the province of Moray, four in the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and twelve in the Synod of Argyle, including the Western Isles, in such places as the respective Synods and Presbyteries of these bounds shall agree upon.

XVIII.

Sess. 13, March 30, 1704, ante meridiem.—Act against Schism and Disorders, and anent Mr John M'Millan and Mr John Hepburn.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that, notwithstanding this Church doth adhere to her former doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, yet some, under a pretext of zeal, do separate and withdraw from communion with her; do, therefore, enjoin all Presbyteries and Synods to censure such persons who do, within their bounds, carry on divisive courses, and that they vigorously use all suitable means for reclaiming misled people, and for the preventing the growth of schism; and that the Commission of the General Assembly shall give their assistance in this good work to the several judicatories, as need shall require: And the General Assembly, having also considered a petition and reference of the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, concerning Mr John M'Millan, who exercises the ministry in Balmaghie, and other places, after his being deposed, and the report of a committee appointed by them to consider that affair, bearing that they, having heard the whole process of the Presbytery against him, and deliberated thereon, gave it as their opinion, that he (being cited to this Assembly, by the said Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, *apud acta*, for contumacy, in contravening their sentence of deposition) be called, and if he appear not, that the Assembly refer this affair to their Commission, who shall cause cite Mr John M'Millan to compare before them, and do therein as they shall see cause. And Mr John Hepburn being delated by the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright for preaching in the kirk of Balmaghie, in their bounds, without being desired by them; yea, even when another was appointed by

them to preach there, and for employing the deposed Mr John McMillan to preach for him at Orr; and several other Presbyteries bringing in complaints against the said Mr John Hepburn of his disobedience to the act of the General Assembly, anno 1699, reponing him to the exercise of his ministry, in his not corresponding with nor being a constituent member of the Presbyteries of Dumfries or Kirkcudbright, as the said act requires; and by preaching in several Presbyteries, both in vacant and planted parishes, without the respective Presbytery's allowance; and baptizing children coming from several parishes, without testimonials from the ministers of these parishes, or their sessions: Therefore, the General Assembly refers also the affair of the said Mr John Hepburn to their Commission, and empowers and enjoins them to cite him before them, and take trial of the disorders he is charged with, and proceed against him with the censures of the Church, as they shall see cause; and, if need be, that they send a committee into the bounds of Dumfries and Galloway for both these affairs, and visiting these bounds, which Committee shall concur with the respective judicatories there, in cognosing of any schism or immoralities that may have fallen out, and of error and insufficiency in any that may be delated on that account; which overture and act being read and considered, the Assembly did, by their vote, approve thereof; and Mr John McMillan being accordingly three several times publicly called at the door, and not compearing, therefore the General Assembly referred and appointed, according to the said act in all points.

XIX.

Eadem Sessione.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Kirks in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and other Affairs remitted to them.

The General Assembly, considering that there are yet some vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and in the Highlands, as likewise several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot overtake, do, therefore, find it needful that there be a Commission granted to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for planting these vacant churches, and doing what shall be referred to them, concerning the Highlands and Islands, and other matters; and, for that end, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr Hugh Anderson at Cromarty, &c., &c., to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect before and after mentioned, with full power to the said persons, &c., &c. [The powers granted to the Commission are the same as in the preceding year.]

XX.

Eadem Sessione.—Instructions to the Commission.

1. That this Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances, particularly the abuses or disorders committed contrary to the established Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof, inflicted on scandalous persons, and for settling vacant congregations, regulating the poor, by providing maintenance and labour for them, and to meet when the Parliament sits.

2. [Same as in 1703.]

3. That this Commission use their utmost diligence for getting payment of the money gifted by the Queen's Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church; and, in disposing thereof, they are particularly to take care that the public debts of the Church be first paid; the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, anno 1699, to probationers who go North, or to the Highlands to preach, be rendered

effectual; and that they cause defray the extraordinary charges and expenses that ministers of the North have been at, in carrying on the planting of churches, and other public affairs of the Church there.

4. [Same as in 1703.]

5. [Same as in 1703.]

6. That this Commission give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect: As also, this Commission is empowered to proceed according to the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, made in favour of the Presbyteries of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland; their Synod being to meet only once in the year, and so cannot give them all the assistance that is necessary.

7. [Same as in 1703.]

8. [Same as in 1703.]

9. [Same as in 1703.]

10. That the Commission apply to the Parliament for getting a Commission for plantation of kirks and valuation of teinds, and another Commission for visitation of schools and colleges, and to use their utmost endeavours to make the design thereof effectual, particularly for preventing or redressing any corruption that may be found in doctrine or manners, and whatever may have a tendency thereto.

11. That the Commission have a special respect to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1703, entitled, "Act approving some Overtures concerning the Planting Vacant Churches in the North, and Highlands and Islands, and supplying thereof with Ministers and Probationers, and promoting Religion and the Knowledge of God in these Places." And the Commission are hereby empowered to proceed according to these overtures, in so far as they shall find needful.

XXI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act against Popery, and for sending in the Names of all Papists to the Clerks of the Privy Council.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the growth of Popery, and that it is incumbent on them to do all they can for suppressing thereof, do appoint Presbyteries to send in lists to the clerks of her Majesty's Privy Council, conform to the Acts of Parliament and proclamations of Council thereanent, of all Papists within their bounds; and that these lists be particular as to the names and designations of the persons who entertain them, and contain the places where they are entertained, and where they preach, and hear and say mass, and that they be particular as to the evidences, by giving the names and designations of the witnesses; and, in respect that ministers, when they come to deal with Papists, in order to bring them off from their errors, are by them and their friends abused and maltreated, and violence offered to their persons, the General Assembly do hereby appoint their Commission to apply to the Government to provide for the security of ministers who undertake this work, that they may be protected from violence and injuries.

XXII.

Eadem Sessione.—Recommendation against Protestants Marrying with Papists.

The General Assembly recommends to ministers to be at pains to dehort their people from marrying with Papists, and hold forth the dangerous effects thereof; and the General Assembly do hereby instruct their Commission to apply to the Parliament for an act discharging such unequal marriages, and recommends to the several Presbyteries to think upon some overtures that may tend to prevent such marriages.

XXIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act appointing Presbyteries to send in their Opinions concerning some Overtures transmitted in the year 1698.

The General Assembly do hereby appoint the several Presbyteries to send in to the next Assembly their opinions in writing, according to the 16th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1700, anent the printed overtures, concerning the method and form of the procedure of the judicatories of the Church against scandalous persons, formerly transmitted by the Commission of the General Assembly, 1698, and subjoined to the Acts of the Assembly that year.

XXIV.

Sess. 14, Eodem die, post meridiem.—Act in favour of the Kirk of Campvere.

The General Assembly, having heard a representation made to them by Sir Andrew Kennedy of Clowburn, Conservator of the Scots Privileges in the Netherlands, and ruling elder, commissioned from the Consistory of the Scots Kirk of Campvere, in Zealand, bearing that there were several propositions concerning the said Kirk, given in to and approved by the General Assembly, *anno* 1642, which are yet standing recorded in the Consistory books there, and in respect the registers of the General Assembly were destroyed by fire, therefore, craving to the effect after mentioned; the General Assembly having considered this request, and finding the said propositions just and reasonable, do hereby, of new, enact and authorise the propositions after mentioned, and appoints them to be contained and inserted in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—“*St Andrews, August 6, 1642, Sess. 13.*—Propositions concerning the Kirk of Campvere, given in to the Assembly from the Committee of Overtures. Since it has pleased the Assembly to join the Scots Kirk at Campvere with this Kirk, it were not amiss that the moderator should call for the minister of it, Mr William Spang, to direct him, in the name of the Assembly, to observe henceforth that order in the outward worship of God, and exercise of discipline, as is here received by law and practice. *2do*, That since the Assembly condescendeth that commissioners from that Kirk of Campvere shall come but now and then, as commodiously they may, that they are not hereby to plead a continual exemption, but must resolve to come to the Assembly every third year at least, with a ruling elder. *3tio*, That whatsoever difficulty shall occur in the exercise of discipline, which the session there shall find too difficult for them, that they acquaint the Presbytery of Edinburgh, or commissioners from the General Assembly, with the same, to receive counsel and advice from them. *4to*, That an act may be made for the payment of the expenses of the minister's coming hither at the Assembly's command, lest the losses sustained will make him and the ruling elder afterwards more unwilling to come so long a journey. These propositions were read and approved by the Assembly, and Mr William Spang, minister at the said kirk, and commissioner to this Assembly, promised to endeavour, by the Lord's assistance, to obey the directions there mentioned. Extracted forth of the books of the General Assembly, by me, Sir Archibald Johnston, clerk thereto. (*Sic subscribitur*) A. JOHNSTON, *Cls. Eccl.*” Follows the attestation of the Consistory of Campvere. “That this is the true and full extract of the above written acts, as contained in this our said register, is, after reading and comparing of the same by the Consistory of this staple Church, attested in their name, at their appointment, and in their presence, at Campvere, 5th March 1704, by John Chalmers, minister and session-clerk.” And, *2do*, The said Sir Andrew Kennedy, conform to a particular instruction given to him by the said Consistory, farther craved, that the said General Assembly would be pleased to empower and authorise all Commissions of this, or the subsequent Assemblies of this Church, to act, cognosce, advise, and determine, in all affairs belonging to the said Kirk and Consistory of Campvere, that shall be proposed to, or pursued before them, as their immediate superior judicatory. The General Assembly having considered the pre-

mises, do hereby empower and authorise the foresaid Commissions in manner as above craved, and appoint their clerk to record the same in their books; and, farther, the said Sir Andrew Kennedy craved, conform to his instructions thereanent, that the expense of their commissioners to the Assemblies may be paid them by the public. The Assembly, having considered this desire, do recommend it to the said Consistory of Campvere to pay the charges of their own commissioners out of their own stock, until this Church be in a better capacity to assist them.

XXV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent preparing a Form of Process, and the Overtures concerning Church Discipline.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that all the former endeavours about the bringing the printed Overtures of Discipline to a period, have not had the desired effect; do, therefore, nominate the Rev. Mr Thomas Wilkie, their Moderator, Messrs William Crichton, John Law, George Meldrum, George Hamilton, David Blair, William Carstairs, and Charles Gordon, *Ministers*; the Lord President of the Session, the Lord Advocate, Lord Halcraig, and Lord Tillycoultry, *Ruling Elders*; as a committee, to meet and continue together until they have concerted and agreed upon a form of process for regulating the procedure of Church judicatories for the future, and recommends to them to have the same in readiness against the next Assembly; and, for that end, to prepare it against the quarterly meeting of the Commission in June next; that it being revised by them, may be transmitted to the several Presbyteries for their opinions thereanent, to be reported to the next Assembly; and the said Commission are appointed to name the diets and place of the said committee's meeting: And, farther, the Assembly considering that albeit the printed Overtures for Discipline be not so succinct as need were, yet that the same, as now amended, may be very useful, do, therefore, recommend to the Commission to cause again revise the said whole overtures, with the amendments, and cause reprint and transmit the same to the several Presbyteries, that their opinion thereanent may be reported to the next Assembly, who are to order what is to be done therewith as they shall think meet.

XXVI.

Sess. 15 et ultima, March 31, 1704, ante meridiem.—Act anent a Fast.

The General Assembly, considering the present unseasonableness of the weather in seed-time, with many other weighty grounds and causes of fasting and humiliation before God, do judge it fit that a day be set apart for that solemn duty; but considering that much of the seed-time might be over before a fast could be obtained in one day, through the whole nation, and that the case of the country is different in the several bounds of Synods and Presbyteries; therefore, they most seriously and earnestly recommend it to the several Synods and Presbyteries within this National Church, to appoint and set apart a day for prayer and fasting within their respective bounds, and to condescend upon the causes thereof, suitable to the present circumstances of affairs, both at home and abroad, and the special circumstances of their several bounds, and that this be done as soon as can be: And the General Assembly recommends to ministers, to be most serious in holding forth to their people the grievous sins of this land, and the tokens of God's displeasure because of them, expressed many ways, and particularly by the unseasonableness of the weather in seed-time, and exhorting them to fervent prayer, and serious repentance and reformation; and, that the said humiliation and fast may be more speedily and seasonably gone about, the General Assembly appoints the several ministers, members of this Assembly, to acquaint their Presbyteries of this appointment, that ministers and people may have time to prepare themselves suitably for such a solemn work, and orders these

presents to be printed, that copies thereof may be in readiness for the commissioners from the several Presbyteries to take along with them.

XXVII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent the Registers of the Church.

The General Assembly, considering the prejudice the Church sustains through the loss of the registers thereof, and being informed that some of them, and other papers that may be useful for the Church, are in the hands of several persons both in this and our neighbour nation in England, do renew the recommendation contained in the 11th act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1703, and empowers their Commission to do according thereto.

XXVIII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act recommending Presbyteries to consider Proposals anent Schools, &c.

(See the 5th Act of Assembly, 1705.)

XXIX.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh the last Thursday of March, 1705 years.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 48th Psalm, from verse 7th to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Clk.*

OVERTURES CONCERNING THE DISCIPLINE AND METHOD OF PROCEEDING IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL JUDICATORIES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND: TRANSMITTED TO THE SEVERAL PRESBYTERIES TO BE FARTHER CONSIDERED, AND THEY TO SEND IN THEIR OPINIONS THEREANENT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, OR COMMISSION THEREOF.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE EDITION OF 1705.

The first three chapters of these Overtures being drawn up by a private hand, and printed in the year 1696, the General Assembly held the year following appointed what was then printed thereof to be sent to the several Presbyteries, ordaining them to send their animadversions and observations thereupon to the Commission of that Assembly; and some Presbyteries having accordingly sent in their observations, several General Assemblies nominated committees for considering the said overtures, and animadversions made thereupon, and to compare them with the Word of God, Books of Discipline, and Acts of the General Assemblies of this Church, and to consider what was wanting in, or to be added to the said overtures; which committees having had many meetings thereupon, and made some progress in their work, the same is now printed, and ordered to be transmitted to the several Presbyteries, according to the act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1704. But the reader would remember that these overtures were never read in the General Assembly, nor any of the Commissions thereof, only revised by committees, so that the same is not to be looked upon as the deed of the Church of Scotland, nor any judicatory therein; and yet it may be very useful for advice and direction, though not as a binding rule, and no doubt it

will have weight with many, as having come through the hands of so many learned, judicious, grave, and pious ministers, who have been at great pains in that matter ; but as to the two last chapters, concerning Synods and General Assemblies, &c., they were never before in print nor transmitted, and so the opinions of Presbyteries were not given thereupon ; and besides were not so narrowly examined by the Committees as the other chapters were, so that it can only be looked upon as coming from a private hand.

Seeing there are several things wanting in the overtures now printed, to make the same a complete Book of Discipline, Presbyteries are entreated to continue in adding and amending, and to send their thoughts thereanent in writing to the Clerk of the General Assembly, in order to the perfecting of this work.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS.

SECT. 1.—*Of the right Manner of Constituting of Church Judicatories.*

1. The members constituent of Church judicatories are ministers and elders, called ruling elders, and in parochial sessions deacons are admitted, with respect to their special care and oversight of the poor of the parish.

2 Each meeting of a judicatory is to be begun with solemn prayer, calling upon God in Jesus Christ, in whose name they are to act ; and this is to be done by the last Moderator, and in his absence by the preceding ; or if none such be present, it is to be done by the eldest minister present for the time, who shall thereafter ask the votes, who shall moderate.

3. These ministers and elders met in order to the constituting themselves a judicatory are to elect a Moderator and a Clerk, and to have attending them a beadle or officer, one or more.

4. The time and place of meeting in ordinary of Church judicatories are to be such as were appointed by the former meeting, except *pro re nata* the Moderator do call the same, in doing whereof, he should take all the advice of his brethren, (which the circumstances can allow,) and for the reasonableness and necessity of his so doing he is to be answerable.

5. After prayer, the Clerk is to call the rolls, and mark the sederunt.

SECT. 2.—*Of the Moderator of a Church Judicatory.*

1. Every ecclesiastical judicatory is, for order, to elect from among themselves one to be their Moderator or preses, except in kirk-sessions, where there is but one minister, who moderates *ex officio*.

2. Seeing he is called frequently to exercise the power of order, as solemn public ecclesiastical prayer, authoritative exhortation, rebuke, direction, &c. The Moderator is always to be a minister.

3. In respect of the prejudice that hath arisen, and may arise to the Church, by the constancy or long continuance of this work in one man's hands ; therefore, there ought to be frequent changes and elections of fit persons to be Moderators.

4. The Moderator when chosen is to look on himself as the mouth of the meeting, and, therefore, is to act, do, and speak accordingly ; otherwise he is censurable by them.

5. The Moderator is to take care that decency and order be exactly observed, as that the members keep in their seats, that but one speak at once, that the younger give way to the elder to speak first, that none speak but to the Moderator, nor without his leave, that none interrupt another in speaking, that there be no private conferences among the members, but that all be attentive, serious, and grave, minding that the things of Christ and his Church are in hand, and that they act in his name ; and no modesty of the Moderator, nor partial respect, nor fear of displeasing, is to hinder him from noticing and rebuking any failure herein.

6. He is to acquaint the judicatory of all the affairs that lie before them, and may,

for dispatch, lay before them the method to expedite them most conveniently ; in order to which, the clerk is to give him a list, or note of business from the minutes, and in all or any other thing he speaks to the judicatory, it is always to be with submission to them, and if they think fit.

7. It is his part, before any thing go to the vote, to ask the judgment of a competent number of members, in order to bring the matter to a clear state ; and before the vote be stated, to ask if any other member hath any new thing to offer in the affair, to the end that all debate, after the vote is begun, (which is nowise to be admitted of,) may be prevented.

8. If the affair or question in hand be of that weight and difficulty that the members shun to speak or to propose any overture in the affair, then the Moderator himself may propose an overture, and ask the judgment of the brethren concerning it, thereby to hasten the dispatch of affairs.

9. When the members are giving their judgment concerning any overture proposed, though he should hear the objection made against it, yet he should desire the objectors to make a better ; but though they have no new overture, the weight of the objection is to be considered.

10. He should likewise restrain the members from deviating to matters alien from the present affair, and should keep them close to the business, obliging them to use few words, to gain time ; in all which it will be needful the Moderator himself should be a good example to others.

11. If anything happen to be spoken impertinently by any member, the Moderator is prudently to divert it, and if that cannot be, then calmly to resent the same, according to its demerit, to prevent greater heat.

12. After a matter hath been reasoned and debated on all hands, it will frequently be fit that the Moderator, in few words, resume the question, and the arguments which have been adduced on either hand, with these answers which were given ; and in so doing, be faithful, without giving them any bias to that which is his own sentiment, (he having done that in the debate,) thereby to ripen and prepare the members for a more clear vote.

13. When a single member asks the vote of a judicatory, and others do oppose, it is not to be granted, unless one or two more concur in the desire.

SECT. 3.—Of Clerks to Church Judicatories, and their Registers.

1. Every Church judicatory ought to have a clerk of their own election, and either of their own number, or some other fit person, who is to give his oath *de fide*.

2. The Clerk is to be a person of a Christian walk and conversation, and entire credit and reputation for fidelity, of prudence, and able to keep the secrets of the judicatory, of competent ability and dexterity, a good hand of writing, his records being to be preserved for after ages.

3. The Clerk is always to have at every meeting lying on the table a fair Bible, the Confession of Faith, the printed Acts of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland ; and in Presbyteries, he ought to have the Synod's Acts ; and in Kirk-Sessions, such acts of Presbytery and Synod as may concern the Session, together with his minute-book.

4. The register and minute-book being the records of that judicatory, he is to be answerable for them, that therein be nothing recorded but what he did by the order and direction of the Moderator, as the mouth of the judicatory.

5. In the minute-book, (which should be a bound book, and not loose sheets of paper,) the Clerk, at every meeting, and in presence thereof, is to record the names of the members of that sederunt, and mark the absents, except in Synods and General Assemblies, where it is enough to mark the absents ; to read the former minutes, and minute the resolutions and determinations of the present meeting as he shall be ordered ; and in affairs of any moment or difficulty, he is to read what is minuted before the meeting proceed to any other business.

6. In the fair register, the Clerk is to extend in ample form, and record all the acts, votes, and resolutions of the judicatory, after they are revised by order of the

judicatory, and that without any interlinings, blanks, or blottings of words or pages; and that this register be paged, and have a large indexed margin.

7. That registers of all Church judicatories may be better preserved, it were fit that every Session deliver their fair register in to the Presbytery every ten years, and every Presbytery, theirs and the Sessions' into the Synod every fifteen years; and that the Synod every twenty years order all these, and their own fair register, to be laid up in the public library of that university which is next adjacent to them, where they may be safely kept from accidents, for the future benefit of the Church: And that the Church may not want the present benefit of them, let doubles be taken, collated, and attested, whereof one to be sent to the university as aforesaid, and the other to be kept in the Clerk of the judicatory's hands. But it is to be considered upon whose expenses this is to be done.

SECT. 4.—Of Proceedings in all Church Judicatories, and the Members' Behaviour therein.

1. After the judicatory is constituted, the Clerk is to call the roll, and those who were formerly absent are to be censured at the discretion of the judicatory, if their excuse, when heard, be not found relevant; also the absents for the time are to be marked, or such as come *sero*, or who, being once present, do not attend till the diet be ended, in order to a censure such as the judicatory thinks fit.

2. The Moderator (if the meeting be occasional *pro re nata*) is to narrate the occasion, and cause of the same.

3. If it be the ordinary time of meeting, it seems most expedient to begin with reading over the minutes and acts of the last meeting, both to know if the same were rightly recorded, and to refresh the memory of the members with what was done.

4. If there were any references from the last meeting to this, these ordinarily come to be the first under consideration, and expedited, unless such necessary emergents come to be discussed which cannot admit of delay.

5. As for any new matter that may come before a Church judicatory, great caution should be used that it be fitly brought thither.

6. When any business is moved in a judicatory, whether by petition or information, the judicatories are, in the first place, to consider, whether the matter in its circumstantiate case be proper at present for them to enter upon, and whether it be regularly and orderly brought in, and whether it be proper for them to discuss it themselves, or prepare it for superior judicatories, and should endeavour to narrow their work as much as with the edification of the Church they can, especially as to the head of scandal.

7. Nothing ought to be admitted by any judicatory as the ground of a process for censure, but what hath been declared censurable by the Word of God, or some act or universal custom of this National Church, according to some special rules given thereanent, Chap. II. Sect. 6th and 7th.

8. In proceeding in all causes wherein there is any person or party concerned, the judicatory is to see that, before they proceed, the person be duly sisted before them, by a legal timeous citation, the execution of which summons is to be returned by the beadle, and the person called at the door.

9. And sometimes it may be fit that the party be privately spoken to, before any public citation be given, or process begun, for their better gaining; if the party appear not, there ought to be a second, and then a third, citation, given by Sessions and Presbyteries, either personally, or left at their dwelling-house, before the judicatory declare the person contumacious; unless the party be cited to appear before a superior judicatory by reference or appeal: In which case, there is not that need of so many citations before the superior judicatory; the party having actually appeared before the inferior judicatory, and by them cited *apud acta* before the superior, or having been contumacious before the cause was brought before the superior judicatory.

10. All citations *apud acta* are peremptory, and infer contumacy, if not obeyed.

11. If the person do not appear on the third citation, or upon a citation *apud acta*, and no relevant excuse of absence adduced, though in that case he be censur-

able for contumacy, yet it were fit the judicatory proceed to the trial of the scandals delated against him before they censure him for contumacy.

12. If the party appear, then the Moderator is to inform the person of the occasion of his being called.

13. There seems to be no need of accusers or informers in ecclesiastical processes; so that the party, if cited, is to answer the judicatory in what is laid to his charge, yet so, that if the person cited be found innocent and acquitted, those who informed the judicatory ought to be noticed, for either their calumny or imprudence, as the judicatory shall find cause.

14. If there be need of witnesses, a list of their names ought to be given to the defenders, some time before their compareance, and they ought to be timeously cited to give evidence, and if they refuse, after three citations given, and executions returned, may be proceeded with as contumacious, or application made to the civil magistrate, that he may oblige them to appear.

15. Before the witnesses be judicially examined, the accused person is to be called, and if he appear, may object against any of them, and if the objection be relevant, and made evident to the judicatory, the witnesses are to be cast; but a person's being the delator or informer doth not hinder him to be a witness, except in the case of pregnant presumptions of malice at the person accused.*

16. Though there be no relevant objection, yet the witnesses are solemnly to be purged of malice and partial counsel.

17. The witnesses are to be sworn and examined in the presence of the accused party if he please; and he may desire the Moderator to propose such questions to the witnesses as may tend for his exculpation, which, if the Moderator think pertinent, are to be proposed; but no accused person is to interrupt or speak during the time of deposition.

18. If the party accused do, before probation, offer grounds of exculpation, to be proven by witnesses, the Moderator and Clerk, if required, are to give warrant to cite the witnesses upon the party's charges; the relevancy of the offered exculpation being first considered and sustained by the judicatory, which, in the first place, is to be discussed; and if the exculpation be fully proven, as to the substance of the scandal, all further proof of the libel or accusation must there sist; as if the libel be special as to the time and place of a fact, and the accused clearly prove *alibi*; but if the substance of the scandal be once deponed upon, there can be no place for exculpation, unless it be as to some extenuating or alleviating circumstances not inconsistent with the depositions already taken.

19. If witnesses cannot subscribe their names to their depositions, the Moderator is to subscribe the same.

20. After the depositions are ended, the parties being removed, the members of the judicatory are to reason the affair calmly, speaking always to the Moderator, one after another, without interrupting one another; using no reflecting language to or of one another, nor too long harangues or digressions.

21. And as it frequently falls out for a judicatory to appoint committees of their own number for several affairs, so they would be diligent in calling them to an account, and either approve or censure them for their actings.

SECT. 5.—Of the closing of all Church Judicatories.

1. After the judicatory hath ended the affairs they met for, they are (if they have time) to read over their minutes.

2. The time of their next meeting is to be appointed and published.

3. The Moderator is to give orders to the clerk and beadle to prepare the affairs committed to them against the next meeting.

4. The roll of the members is to be called, and again absentees marked.

5. The Moderator closeth the meeting with solemn prayer and thanksgiving.

* *Nota.*—This, after advice, is found to be the opinion of judicious lawyers.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND METHODS OF KIRK-SESSIONS.

SECT. 1.—*Of the Constitution of this Judicatory.*

1. This judicatory being the lowest, and which is in every parish, consists of one minister or two, and a competent number of ruling elders, and the deacons of that parish and church are to be present, and have a decisive vote only in matters belonging to their own office, having attending them a clerk and a beadle.

2. All the elders of that church or parish are members of the session, and ought to attend all the meetings thereof, it not being a judicatory made up of delegates.

3. If there be but one minister there, he is Moderator *ex officio*, and constant out of necessity.

4. Though an elder being once so ordained makes him to be so during life, unless he be censured with deposition, or demit his office, and the demission accepted by a judicatory, yet where there are plenty of persons fit to be elders, and plenty of elders, the actual exercise of the office, as to constant attendance on the session, &c., may be limited for a time, and others take their turn. When an elder changes his residence, he may officiate as an elder in that parish where he comes to, if duly called thereto by the kirk-session, who are to intimate his name to the people, and have their tacit consent thereto, but not otherwise. Annual elections ought to be rectified, and that new elections of elders, expressed in cases of great necessity, should only be within the compass of four years, and that especially in burghs, where there are plenty of persons to choose upon.

SECT. 2.—*Of the Election and Constituting of Elders and Deacons.*

1. In case there be no eldership in the parish, the election is to be managed by the Presbytery, by a list given in to them, made up by the heads of families, out of which the Presbytery (if the church be vacant) is to try and elect, and, if planted, the minister, with the Presbytery's assistance.

2. Even where there is a minister and elders in a congregation constituting a session, there may be need of more elders to supply the places of some who may be removed by death, or otherwise.

3. It doth most particularly belong to the session to look among the masters and heads of families, and others, (they not being menial servants,) for some persons fit to be elders, being such as are of greatest prudence, gravity, and interest, in the parish.

4. These ordinarily may be expected to be best had from amongst the deacons of the parish, the qualifications of that office not only fitting much for this, but the experienced deacons having, by being present at the session, a further fitting of them for the office of an elder.

5. It will fall out that sometimes it will be fit and necessary that the minister and present elders do, in a prudent and private way, try the inclination of the judicious of the people, especially the heads of families, and of those quarters of the congregation to which the elders wanting belonged, thereby to prevent the elders naming and bringing to public those persons who may be unacceptable, where others can be had, and the edification of the congregation would therein be studied.

6. When the kirk-sessions have agreed on the nomination, wherein they would endeavour to be unanimous, the persons nominated are to be spoken to and dealt with to accept of the office, before their names be brought into public, wherein great tenderness and earnestness should be used, it being frequent with many modest and most fit persons to be most hardly and difficultly prevailed with.

7. Though it may be supposed that none will be named to this purpose but such who will be of competent knowledge, yet examination and trial would be taken of his knowledge in the grounds and principles of religion, in cases of conscience, and about

the government, discipline of the Church, and duties of elders, and that before the session, or two or three elders.

8. When there is hope of success therein, if the session judge it fit, the minister, on the Lord's day after forenoon's sermon, is to intimate to the congregation the necessity of more elders, and the session's nomination, and may desire any person that hath any objections against any of the persons named to make the same either to the session, or any member thereof, betwixt and such a day.

9. When the day cometh wherein the objections are to be brought in, the session must meet, and have the elect elders' edict returned, [for which there is to be an interval of nine free days, as in other edicts,] and the beadle is to intimate at the door, if there be any objectors they may appear; if none, then the day is appointed to admit these elders, and the minister is to be condescended upon who is to admit them.

10. When the day is come, it were very fit that the minister choose to preach on such a subject as might relate to that work, showing the duties of elders and people to them.

11. After sermon is ended in the forenoon, the minister is to show the people that he is going about to admit some more elders, and to tell them of all the orderly steps which they have taken preparatory, and that now nothing impedeth his going on.

12. Then the minister calling up the persons chosen to be elders by name, and they standing together in some conspicuous place, as conveniency will allow, are to be interrogated concerning their orthodoxy, and to be taken solemnly engaged to adhere to and maintain the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government, of the Church, and to lay themselves out, both by their example, and in the office of elders, to suppress vice, cherish piety, and exercise discipline faithfully and diligently.

13. Then [the elders chosen still standing up] the minister is next by solemn prayer to set them apart *in verbis de presenti*.

14. After prayer, the minister is to speak to them now as elders, encouraging them to faithfulness, and threatening, if negligent. *2dly*, He is to direct a word of exhortation to the people, showing them their duty to the elders, and exhorting them to obedience in the Lord, and to strengthen their elders' hands.

15. The same method should be followed in the election and ordination of deacons that is in elders, *mutatis mutandis*.

SECT. 3.—*Anent Marriage.*

Due caution should be used to observe the acts of the General Assembly anent proclamation of banns,* and inquiry anent forbidden degrees, the persons desiring marriage being single and free persons, and anent the consent of all concerned.

SECT. 4.—*Of the Admission of Infants to Baptism.*

1. Children born within the verge of the visible church, of parents one or both professing the Christian religion, have a right to baptism.

2. It being the duty of Christian parents to devote their children to God by baptism, and to covenant for their education in the faith of Christ, no other sponsor is to be taken unless the parents be dead or absent, or grossly ignorant, or under scandal not removed, such being unfit to stand as sponsors in transacting a solemn covenant with God, in which cases the parent is to be required to provide some fit person, and if it can be, one related as a parent to the child should be sponsor.

3. In cases of children exposed, whose baptism, after inquiry, cannot be known, the session is to order the presenting of the child to baptism, and the session itself is to see to the Christian education of the child.

4. It were fit that the parent speak to the minister of the parish the day before the child be offered to baptism.

SECT. 5.—*Of Admission to the Lord's Table, and debarring from it.*

1. Seeing none should be admitted to the Lord's Table who are ignorant or scandalous, therefore, they are to be prepared for it by catechising, and instruction in the

* See Act 5th, General Assembly, anno 1699, &c.

principles of religion in their younger years; before the first admission of any to partake thereof, the ministers should inquire into and take trial of their knowledge of the principles of the Christian religion, and, particularly, of the nature, uses, and ends, of this ordinance of the Supper.

2. Due care also ought to be used that none be admitted to partake of the Lord's Supper who are of a scandalous life; and for this end, the minister is to inquire at and consult with the elders, especially those of the bounds, whether they know that person to be guilty of any scandal, and that they own and submit to and ordinarily attend the ordinances of Christ, public and private worship of God, and use the other means of knowledge.

3. At the first admission of any to the Lord's Supper, ministers should put the person to be admitted in mind of their parents' engagements for them in baptism, and put them explicitly and personally to renew their baptismal covenant to be the Lord's, and to live unto him, and serve him all the days of their lives.

4. When any who liveth in one congregation desireth to partake of the Lord's Supper in a neighbouring congregation, they may and ought to be allowed the same by reason of the communion of saints, if they bring sufficient testimonials of their knowledge and conversation from the minister of their own parish, or from two elders, in the absence of the minister.

5. It were fit when any one removeth from one parish to another, that their testimonials bear account, whether they have partaken of the Lord's Supper; and it were fit for this, that there were a record kept of those who are admitted to the Lord's Supper.

SECT. 6.—*Of proceeding with Drunkards, Swearers, Profaners of the Sabbath, and such like Scandalous Persons.*

1. The members of the session are wisely to consider the information they get, and consult with the minister even before the same be communicated to others, that thereby the spreading of the scandal may be prevented, that the same may be removed by a private admonition, according to our Saviour's rule, Matthew xviii. 15, &c., which, if amendment follow, it is the far best way of gaining and recovering a lapsed brother.

2. It may fall out that even one single act of either drunkenness, swearing, cursing, or profaning of the Sabbath, may be clothed with such aggravating circumstances, as may found a process, and even bring the parties guilty under the censure of the lesser excommunication, and to appear before the congregation before a relaxation; the weight of all which is to be duly pondered.

3. But in ordinary in all such kind of offences where the frequency makes the crime turn scandalous, the guilty for the first fault should be spoken to in private by the minister or an elder, and admonished; and on promise to amend, the session should sist there.

4. And on the second lapse the person should be called before the session, and if proven, may be there judicially rebuked; where the session, on promise to amend, may again sist.

5. But if they amend not after that, the session should orderly proceed till they inflict the censure of the lesser excommunication, and there leave them till amendment.

6. If the guilty person lie under the censure of the lesser excommunication a considerable time, and yet continues frequently relapsing into those vices of drunkenness, swearing, &c., it may be constructed such a degree of contumacy, and so aggravate the crime, as to found a process of the highest censure of the greater excommunication, which is to be so inflicted as may tend to the reclaiming of the guilty person, or to the edification of the Church.

SECT. 7.—*Of Processes for Uncleaness, Fornication, and Adultery.*

1. In delations about uncleaness, it is usual, that when the thing is put to the

strictest trial, all that can be proven are but presumptions of guilt or scandalous behaviour, and not the act of uncleanness, which should oblige the kirk-session to be very cautious how to admit the public entering a process without good warrant.

2. Many of those actions which give occasion to the raising a scandal of uncleanness, are such as are not themselves alone publicly censurable, but to be passed by with a private rebuke or admonition.

3. Yet some of those actions which come under the name of scandalous behaviour may be so lascivious and obscene, and clothed with such circumstances, as may be as offensive as the act of uncleanness itself, and as censurable.

4. When an unmarried woman brings forth a child, or if married, and her husband notoriously absent for any considerable space besides the ordinary time, it being that which ordinarily is known, gives good ground to a kirk-session for a process against her; after she is cited before the session, and appeareth, she is to be interrogated who is the father of that child; and though in other cases the divulging of a secret may be very imprudent, and indeed the raising of a scandal, yet in this case, where there is a child whereby there is an undeniable scandal, and the keeping secret of the father a ground of greater offence, and of suspecting many innocent persons if she discover not the father, she is to be looked upon as contumacious.

5. Prudence may sometimes require that the person she nameth to be the father of the child be informed thereof, and spoke to privately; if he deny the same, he is seriously to be dealt with to confess the same; if he still deny, then the session is to cause cite him to appear before them.

6. In this process, when the delated father compeareth he is to be interrogated, and if he deny he is to be confronted with the woman, and the presumptions as particularly held forth as possible; and if, after all this, he deny, though the woman's testimony can be no sufficient evidence, yet one witness and sometimes only presumptions, such as frequenting her company, or being *solus cum sola in loco suspecto*, in suspect postures, and such like, which he cannot disprove to the satisfaction of the session, may so lay the guilt upon him as to bring it to his oath of purgation; and that the form of an oath be prescribed.

7. In taking this oath for purgation all tenderness and caution is to be used, nor is the session to press any man thereto, nor is it to be taken in any case but this, when the presumptions are so great, that they create such jealousy in that congregation and session that nothing will remove the suspicion but the man's oath of purgation, and when his oath will indeed remove the scandal and suspicion; in all other cases this oath is in vain, and so should not be admitted, and never but by advice of the Presbytery.

8. This oath for purgation being to be taken judicially, and a part of a process, is to be before a kirk-session; and if it be found needful, it may be intimated to the congregation, that such a person hath taken such an oath, and so is declared clear of the alleged scandal.*

9. Yet so, if the case be extraordinary, and the edification of the congregation require, the kirk-session may, with advice of the Presbytery, commission the minister to take it in the face of the congregation, the members of the session being present; or rather, the oath being taken before the session, the party may be obliged to be present in the congregation, and may be put publicly to own his purging himself by oath.

10. After the delated father hath purged himself by oath, the woman is to be dealt with to give the true father; and if, after all serious dealing, and due diligence, she give no other, she is to be censured according to the quality of the offence confessed by her, without naming the person delated by her; the judicatory reserving place for further censure, upon further discovery.

11. If the woman who hath brought forth the child doth declare she knoweth not the father, alleging she was forced, as in the fields, by a person unknown, or any the like; in these cases great prudence is to be used, the former behaviour of the woman exactly searched into, and she seriously dealt with to be ingenuous; and if she

* The Oath of Purgation, in the universal practice of this Church, having been before the Congregation, a change here, in restricting it to kirk-sessions, should be duly advised.

hath been of entire fame she may be put to it to declare the truth on oath, but not without the advice of the Presbytery ; and if the woman confess she was not forced, but doth not know the man, nor whether married or unmarried, the same censure is to be inflicted upon her as in the case of adultery.

12. If a person do voluntarily confess uncleanness, and if there be no child, and the case be brought to the kirk-session, the session is to inquire what presumptions there are of the truth of the thing confessed, or what may have moved the person to make that confession, whether it floweth from disquietness of mind, or from sinister design, as when a man suing to a woman for marriage is denied, and for revenge, or to obtain his desire, spreads the report that he hath been guilty with her, they are to be dealt with accordingly.

13. If it be found that there is no ground for the confession, and that it is false, the person confessing is to be censured as defaming himself, and likewise as a slanderer of the other party, and withal application is to be made by the session to the civil magistrate, that he may be punished according to law.

14. If there be need of witnesses, the directions, Chap. I. Sect. 4, are to be minded.

15. When persons guilty of uncleanness live one in one parish, and another in another, the process against them and censures are to be before the session of the parish where the woman liveth.

16. If a scandal of uncleanness be committed transiently, as if persons having their fixed residence in one parish do commit uncleanness in another parish, or perhaps in the fields, or at fairs or markets, in these cases they are to be processed and censured where their ordinary abode is, except the place of their abode be at a considerable distance from the place where the scandal was committed, and the scandal be most flagrant where it was committed.

17. When there is a scandal of uncleanness, whereof several persons are guilty, living in different parishes, the session where the scandal is committed is to acquaint the other sessions where any of the persons reside, who are *ex debito* to cause summon these persons to appear before that session where the scandal is to be tried.

18. When a person is convicted of a scandal by a session of another congregation than his own, and the censure of the lesser excommunication inflicted, the session is to send an account thereof to that session to which he belongs, but there is no need of any other sentence of his own session to fix the censure on him, but only a public intimation thereof to be made in his own parish.

19. When a person is censured and absolved from his scandal in another congregation than where he lives, he is to bring a testimonial of his absolution, which is to be intimated to the congregation he lives in, if the scandal be also flagrant there, otherwise it will be sufficient to intimate the same to the session.

20. With respect to scandals, whose grossness makes it necessary to bring the persons guilty oftener than once before the congregation, it is overtured, that after they are convicted before the session, that it be judicially declared to them that they have rendered themselves incapable of communion with the people of God, in the Supper of the Lord, and that they are not to be allowed to be sponsors themselves in the baptism of their children till the scandal be removed ; and that they be appointed to appear in public to be rebuked for their sin, whether they appear penitent or not, conform to the institution, 1 Tim. v. 20.

21. After a public rebuke the minister and elders be at further pains in instructing the minds of scandalous persons, if ignorant, in endeavouring to convince their conscience, and to bring them to a due sense of their sin, and to an engagement and serious resolution against all known sin, and to the performance of all known duty.

22. That the session, upon satisfaction with their knowledge and sense of their sin, do admit them to the public profession of their repentance, in order to absolution.

23. If, after taking pains on them for some competent time, for their instruction and conviction, they still remain grossly ignorant, insensible, and unreformed, the sentence of lesser excommunication is to be publicly pronounced against them, from which they are not to be relaxed, nor admitted to make public profession of their repentance in order thereto, till the session be satisfied with their knowledge, seriousness, and reformation.

SECT. 8.—*Of Processes which natively begin at the Kirk-Session, but are not to be brought to a final determination by them.*

1. There are some processes which do natively begin at the kirk-session, which, for the atrocity of the scandal, or difficulty in the affair, or general concern, the kirk-session having frequent meetings of the Presbytery to have recourse to, do not determine of themselves.

2. Such are the scandals of incest, murder, adultery, trilapse in fornication, schisms, and separations from the public ordinances, processes in order to the highest excommunication, and continued contumacy, error, and heresy, vented and made public by any of the congregation.

3. The kirk-session, receiving information of such gross scandals, are to weigh the same, according to the rules and directions prescribed them in processes which are their peculiar province.

4. And when the session finds good ground for a process, they are to deal with the guilty to confess that which now cannot be hid nor amended, till satisfaction be made to the Church, which, when done, the session is to refer the same for advice, and to send their reference extracted to the Presbytery.

5. But where there is no confession the session is not to proceed to lead probation, by witnesses or presumptions, till an account of the affair be brought by a reference to the Presbytery, and the Presbytery do thereupon commission and appoint the session to proceed and lead probation; and after probation is led, the Presbytery is again to be advised with, who may appoint the session to inflict what censure they see cause.

6. When persons censured for these grosser scandals do apply to the kirk-session for relaxation, they may both be privately conferred with, and likewise their acknowledgments heard before the session; but they ought not to be brought before the congregation in order to their absolution, nor absolved, but by advice and order of the Presbytery.

SECT. 9.—*Of the Privy Censures in the Sessions.*

1. In every kirk-session there ought to be, twice in the year, privy censures (as they are called) of the members of the session.

2. At the meeting preceding the same all the members should be warned to be punctually present that day.

3. Seeing the ministers undergo their privy censures in the Presbytery, and that generally there is but one minister in the session who must be moderator, therefore the ministers are not to undergo this privy censure before the session, but only the elders, deacons, clerk, and beadles.

4. The moderator of the session is to cause the clerk read the roll of the members, and beginning at the beginning of the roll, they are one by one after another to be removed, and then the rest of the members are, by the moderator, to be inquired concerning the walk and conversation of the person removed, concerning his diligence and prudence in his station; and whatever any have observed and been informed, worthy the noticing, is freely, and with love and tenderness, to be communicated. Privy censures of the members of a session, as also of a Presbytery, if rightly managed, may be of great use; but we think our Lord's rule, in Matth. xviii., is strictly to be observed in this matter, so that no member or members of a session or Presbytery should inform these judicatories of any thing against another member, until they have first given him private admonition or reproof, a competent time before, and that has proven ineffectual.

5. The session is to judge of all informations concerning the member removed, and, as they judge him deserving, either only the private admonition or reproof of the minister alone, or any one of the elders alone, or of the moderator, in name of the session, *coram*, as the weight of the matter, the edification of the party,

and comfort of the session or congregation requireth, is to be done with all love, tenderness, and freedom.

6. If nothing be observed needful to be amended, but an account from all hands of the faithfulness, prudence, and diligence, of the member removed, then he is to be exhorted to go on, and encouraged, and God to be blessed on his account. And the moderator, when he is called in, to express the session's satisfaction and comfort therein.

7. After all the elders have thus been removed, one after another, and each one after he hath been called in, and got the mind of the session concerning him, and set in his place, the deacons, one after another, are to undergo their censures.

8. Next after the deacons, the clerk of the session is to be removed, and the members inquired concerning his carriage, and the session-books, and other registers of births, baptisms, and burials, should be seen to be exactly kept and put in readiness for the Presbytery, when called for by them.

9. The beadle or officer should likewise, in the same manner, be inquired after, and either admonished or encouraged, as need requireth.

10. Here also the kirk-treasurer's accounts may be taken in, and the whole session put in mind (if need be) of all the duties of their charge, and of the rules of order, when met in judicatories.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND METHODS IN PRESBYTERIES.

SECT. 1.—*Of the Constitution of this Judicatory.*

1. This judicatory is made up and consists of the pastors and elders of a number of particular parochial congregations, associated together for their mutual help and comfort.

2. The number of congregations whose overseers make up a Presbytery are not determined, ten or twelve, rather more than fewer, as the adjacency of the congregations, their compactness and easiness in travelling, will most ordinarily and conveniently allow.

3. And seeing the minister's office and power doth include that of elders, though it is necessary when they can be had that ministers act in conjunction with them, because of the Divine precept and warrant, yet if, by no fault of the ministers, elders be wanting, they may warrantably exercise Presbyterial jurisdiction there without them.

4. In the meetings of judicatories at the time and place appointed by the former meeting, (unless some sufficiently known stop or hinderance intervene,) any who meet are a quorum, they not being under three ministers; yet it is very expedient that, in this case, matters of importance be referred to a subsequent more frequent meeting; but in meetings *pro re nata*, it is necessary that more than the one half of the ministers of that meeting be present to make a quorum, and all the members to be advertised.

SECT. 2.—*Of Licensing Probationers or Preachers.*

1. It is the proper and peculiar work of the Presbytery to look out for, admit to trial, judge and determine thereof, and license probationers and preachers, and the rules laid down thereanent by the acts of the General Assembly under-written are to be observed, particularly the 22d Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1696, Anent Students; the 10th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1694, Anent Probationers; the 13th Act of the General Assembly, 1696, Anent Testimonials; and 10th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1704, Anent Students passing Trials, and the several acts therein mentioned.

2. It would be very contributive to the licentiate's advantage, that every student of theology were some time attending the public profession of divinity in some university, before they entered on their trials.

3. And all such who have been attending any such professions ought to produce testimonials of their behaviour and proficiency at that profession, from those Professors of Theology under whose inspection they were, else not to be admitted; and Professors of Divinity should take care to give testimonials to none for their entering on trials in order to the ministry, but such as, with full freedom, they can declare to be in their judgment fit for the same.

4. In case a student of theology could not have the occasion of attending a public profession of divinity at the university, it were fit he did undergo private trials of his proficiency in all the parts of divinity, by examination, and also have some homilies in presence of two or three members of the Presbytery before he enter on his public trials before the Presbytery.

5. The Presbytery, before they enter any on their trials, are to observe the act of Assembly, requiring twenty-five years of age to a minister, the rather because, after they obtain a licence to preach, they use sometimes to be very soon called to the ministry, unless in case of more than ordinary ripeness of parts and prudence.

6. That the trials of a student, in order to his being licensed, do consist in ordinary in these seven parts: 1. The homily; 2. A lecture on a whole chapter; 3. The common head in Latin, with his maintaining the orthodox doctrine in his thesis, in a dispute; 4. The extemporary trials of his knowledge in interpreting the original languages, of sacred chronology, of ecclesiastical history, especially of our own Church, answering extemporary questions of the meaning of hard places of the Scripture, on heads of divinity, polemic or practical, or cases of conscience, on Church government and discipline; 5. The Presbyterial exercise, both making and adding; 6. The lecture, to be the trial immediately preceding the popular sermon; and, 7. The popular sermon, both which are to be in the pulpit, before the people.

7. Immediately after the close of each of these exercises, the moderator is to inquire the judgment of the Presbytery concerning the student on trial, his acquitting himself in that part of his trials, which is to be managed prudently: but if the Presbytery be not satisfied in any piece of his trials, they are to stop there, and either refer him back to his further studies, or give him the same piece of trial again on a different subject, the main of the design being only to have their judgment, whether what is done be so satisfactory as to be admitted for a proof of his fitness to be licensed.

8. When the Presbytery are satisfied with all the pieces of his trials, before they grant him the licence, he is, by the moderator, to be gravely admonished of the weight of the work, and exhorted to a suitable deportment; and, likewise, he is solemnly to promise due obedience to that Presbytery, and other judicatories of the Church; he is to give satisfaction of the orthodoxy of his principles; not only as to the doctrine, but as to the discipline, worship, and government of this Church, and is to subscribe the Confession of Faith, according to the acts of the General Assembly.

9. When he hath been approved and gotten the intimation of his licence, and it be recorded in the Presbytery book, it were fit that he were appointed to preach two or three Sabbaths, one diet at a time, in the audience of and in conjunction with some minister of the Presbytery, before he preach in vacant parishes, (if any there be,) or get an extract of the licence; and he to be indulged, in case of bashfulness, as to his appearance in eminent places.

10. No probationer is to receive any call from a vacant congregation to be minister thereof but from the hands of the Presbytery under whose inspection he is at the time, nor to accept thereof but by their advice, and regard is chiefly to be had to the Presbytery where the vacant parish is; and if more calls than one at once come to a probationer, and these presented by his own Presbytery, he is to follow their advice in closing with or rejecting any of them.*

11. That each bursar of divinity bring yearly testimonials from the professor under

* The 10th paragraph referred to the General Assembly.

whom he is studying, of his punctual attendance and good proficiency, and that he be tried yearly by the Presbytery whose bursar he is.

SECT. 3.—Of Vacant Congregations, and Planting thereof.

1. Vacant congregations are under the peculiar care of the Presbytery of the bounds, both for their present supply and for their planting with a minister.

2. The orderly and ordinary way of supplying a vacant congregation with preaching is and ought to be by the order and desire of the Presbytery, and no other; and the minister that preaches in vacant kirks ought to keep session for the exercise of discipline, to have one diet of catechising, and to visit the sick.

3. That it be recommended to the eldership, or any other within the parish, to be cautious whom they invite to preach, even when occasional unforeseen opportunities offer, and for this to take the advice of the neighbouring ministers, and that in this they study the harmonious consent of the elders, in order to the preserving the peace of the Church.

4. The Presbytery, as they would send the fittest of the probationers to the vacant parish to preach, so, as need requireth, and the Presbytery conveniently can, they are to send ministers of their own number to preach and to baptize the children. If the vacant congregation want an eldership as well as a minister, the Presbytery is to endeavour the appointing of an eldership among them, who may facilitate the congregation's getting a minister.

5. The Presbytery would require the eldership of that parish to meet frequently to consider the circumstances of the parish, and to prepare them for giving a call; and they are to be exhorted to seek God's counsel and direction therein, and to lay a matter of so much concern to their souls seriously to heart, and to attend the Presbytery, to give an account thereof from time to time.

6. The Presbytery should endeavour, by all means, to prevent the vacant parishes calling a minister from another congregation where he is happily fixed and useful; transportations being often a great grievance, and seldom to be practised.*

7. If the eldership of a vacant congregation do, by their commissioner, acquaint the Presbytery that they not only have had their thoughts on a person to supply their vacancy, but have communicated the same to the heritors and other heads of families, and do judge it may be probable that the person will be generally (or to the most part) acceptable, and if the Presbytery be satisfied with the person they design to be minister, then the Presbytery is to proceed.

8. The Presbytery is then to appoint one of their number to preach on a Lord's Day in that vacant congregation, and after forenoon sermon to intimate to them that the Presbytery, considering their circumstances, require the elders and heads of the families, especially the heritors, to meet at the church on such a day, in order to the nominating and electing a fit person to supply their vacancy; and they are to be exhorted to continue in prayer and dependence on God for further direction therein, and to lay a matter of so much concern to their souls seriously to heart.

9. And, indeed, sometimes where difficulties arise in a vacant parish, hindering the plantation thereof, it were very requisite to have some day set apart for solemn fasting and prayer, by order of the Presbytery, which is to appoint one or two ministers to preach then to them.

10. In nominating the time for the parish to meet to elect a minister, such time should be given as not only all the heritors who live within the parish, but those who have interest therein, may have timely advertisement, that the call may be as unanimous as may be.

11. When the day is come, the minister whom the Presbytery hath appointed to moderate at the election (having ended sermon, which he is to have to that congregation, and dismissed the same, except the heritors, elders, and heads of families) is to open the meeting with prayer, and then signify unto them the occasion of their

* Vide the 6th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1694.

meeting, and his hope that they have been seeking God for light in so weighty a matter.

12. When one (and sometimes, but rarely, more than one) is named before there be any vote, the moderator is to inquire if any there present have any objections to make, and the objections are to be calmly heard and answered, and the affair cleared, to ripen it to a vote.

13. Though a plurality of heritors and elders will always be thought to be the voice of the meeting, and in law and reason is so counted, yet it is most desirable to have the universal consent of the heads of families, and this ought to be endeavoured.

14. And the moderator and electors are wisely to consider, that, though the objections which any of the heads of families may make against the person whom the electors have named, in order to election, may in themselves be frivolous, and of small moment, yet the weight they have with the prejudicated persons, and the quality of these persons, and their influence in the congregation, are duly to be pondered, and if found considerable, great tenderness is to be used, especially at a time when some other person may be got, against whom neither objection nor aversion can be alleged.

15. If there be no objections against the person named, or, notwithstanding of all that is objected, the plurality of the heritors refuse to delay the affair, and that the objections made seem rather to proceed from the greater favour the objectors have for another, than from any real aversion to or objection against the person himself, the moderator may put the matter to a vote.

16. But after all the reasonings, and especially where there hath been any altercation, it is very fit that the moderator not only give a word of exhortation, but by solemn prayer immediately before the vote prepare them for it, it being not only fit at all such times, but experience teaching that it greatly tendeth to calm men's spirits who have any awe of God on them, and to clear them of the dregs of private affection and interest.

17. The vote thereafter being taken and carefully marked, the moderator is to pronounce the mind of the meeting, and if it be carried that a call be given to any person named; the call being drawn up is to be read and signed in the presence of the moderator, and attested by him; follows the Form of a Call:—

18. “We, the heritors and elders of _____ being destitute of a fixed pastor, and being most assured by good information and our own experience of the ministerial abilities, piety, literature, and prudence, as also of the suitableness to our capacities of the gifts of you _____ preacher of the Gospel, or minister of _____ have agreed, with the advice and consent of the parishioners of the parish foresaid, and concurrence of the reverend Presbytery of _____ to invite, call, and entreat, likeas we, by these presents, do heartily invite, call, and entreat, you to undertake the office of a pastor among us and the charge of our souls. And, further, hoping that upon mature deliberation ye will find this our call, which is carried on with so great sincerity, unanimity, and order, a clear call from the Lord, we do, upon your accepting thereof, sincerely promise you all dutiful respect, faithfulness, encouragement, and obedience, in the Lord, in our several stations and relations. In witness whereof,” &c.

19. After the call is signed, the moderator is to propose to the meeting that they appoint one or two of their meeting, and that by a commission under their hands, or the hands of the moderator and clerk, not only to present the same to the Presbytery for their approbation and concurrence, but also to prosecute it.

20. If there hath been any considerable aversion manifested, or objections made against the call, the Presbytery is then prudently to weigh the whole affair, wherein the most universal edification of the congregation is to be studied.

21. If the Presbytery find any ground to demur their concurrence, they are to deal prudently with those who were for the call, and rather delay than altogether at first to stop and refuse concurrence, lest, by endeavouring the universal satisfaction of the people of that parish, they disgust the plurality thereof; and a meek and gaining way of prudent reasoning and convincing their consciences, rather than the authoritative condemning their designs, is to be studied, and particularly the proportion of

the person's gifts, in relation to the place unto which he is called, is to be considered.

22. If the Presbytery find the call legally and orderly proceeded in they are to record the same, and their clerk is to signify it at the foot or back of the call, and (if need be) to appoint one of their number to concur with the commissioner of the parish in prosecuting the said call.

23. If the person called be a minister in another charge, then the Presbytery is duly to consider the reasonableness of the transportation desired, and if that be not to them evident and clear they are not to concur in that call.

24. If the person called be a probationer, and present in the Presbytery, he ought to be removed during the Presbytery's consultation about the relevancy of the call, and called in again when it is approven; and if approven, the call is by the moderator of the Presbytery to be delivered to him *coram*, with a suitable exhortation to take the same to his mature consideration.

25. If the person called be a probationer under the inspection of another Presbytery, the commissioner of the parish, with one from the Presbytery, (if the Presbytery think fit to send one,) are to apply to that Presbytery where the probationer resides, and present them the call, and ask their concurrence in offering it to the person called, which that Presbytery are without delay to do.

26. On acceptance of the call, the probationer is to repair to that Presbytery to which he is called, and there, by their direction, to preach frequently to the parish to which he is called, at least thrice, before he be ordained, and, in the meantime, enter upon his trials in order to ordination; in going about whereof, the rules are to be followed prescribed, Chap. III. Sect. 4.

27. If the person called be a minister settled in another congregation, then the commissioners of the vacant parish, and, if need be, the Presbytery, is to appoint one to concur with the vacant parish, who are to proceed with applications to the Presbytery to which he belongs, as is required, Sect. 6, "About Transportation of Ministers." And though the minister called be unfixed to any parish, or hath got an act of transportability, yet he is only to receive the call through the hands of the Presbytery of the bounds where the parish calling is; and in this case, there is no need of a process of transportation, nor summoning parties, but only serving an edict, and proceeding to admission in the usual manner.

28. If the parish be remiss and backward, and will not call a minister, at least the greater part be, then, as the law hath wisely fixed the *jus devolutum* in the Presbytery as to the benefice, so may the Presbytery, by their power from Christ, give a mission to a particular person, and ordain him to labour in the work of the ministry among that people, to reclaim and feed them, wherein great tenderness is to be used, and all other means essayed to prevent its coming thereto.

SECT. 4.—*Of the Ordination of a Minister.*

1. On a probationer's so far acceptance of the call of a parish as that he is content to submit himself to the Presbytery of the bounds, to undergo his trials in order to ordination, he is, by that Presbytery by whom he is ordained, to be tried as when he was licensed—see Chap. III. Sect. 2, except the homilies; and it is referred to the prudence of Presbyteries whether it be most convenient that the lecture and popular sermon be appointed him at the same time.

2. In the meantime, during the passing of his trials before the Presbytery, he should be ordered to preach frequently to that congregation whose pastor he is to be, not only to give them the greater opportunity of the knowledge of his gifts, and satisfaction with him, but to give him, by converse with them, the better acquaintance with the temper and manner of the people he is to undertake the charge of.

3. If the probationer hath been a stranger to that Presbytery, he being now to be ordained, his whole carriage and conversation in times past is now more narrowly to be searched into, which may be known not only by his testimonials from the university in which he took his degrees, from the Professor of Theology of his carriage under him in the study of theology, from the Presbytery where he was licensed to

preach, from that Presbytery where he last resided, and under whose inspection he was, but likewise by other ways, as they in prudence shall see cause.

4. If nothing appear, either in the person or congregation, to the Presbytery, but what is promising that his labours will be useful among them, and his trials ended, the Presbytery are to send one of their number to preach to that congregation, and after the forenoon sermon to intimate unto them that the probationer who is called to be their minister, his edict was now to be served, which edict being read, the minister is to desire the people to notice the same; and after reading, a copy of the edict is to be affixed to the most patent door of the church, by the church beadle thereunto appointed, that none may pretend ignorance. Of this edict the tenor follows:—"This Presbytery having received a call from this parish to Mr A. B., preacher of the Gospel, to be their minister, and finding the same orderly proceeded, and the said Mr A. B. having undergone all the parts of his trial in order to his ordination, and the Presbytery, upon the whole, judging him qualified to be a minister of the Gospel, and fit to be pastor of this congregation, have resolved to proceed, unless something occur which may justly impede the same; and, therefore, do hereby give notice to all persons, especially the members of this congregation, that if they, or any of them, have any thing to object why the said Mr A. B. should not be admitted pastor here, they may repair to the Presbytery, which is to meet at the day of ; with certification, that if no person object any thing that day the Presbytery will proceed without further delay."

5. The Presbytery meeting (as it was appointed to meet) to receive the execution of the edict, which ought to be ten free days after the serving of the same, that thereby none may pretend ignorance for want of time, the minister appointed to preach in the vacant congregation is to give an account of his diligence, and the edict to be returned indorsed; and then the Presbytery finding that to be the day appointed to bring in any objections against the person to be ordained, the officer or beadle is three several times, at the most patent door, to give notice, that if there be any there who have any thing to object against his being their minister, they may then come and do it to the Presbytery; with certification as in the edict.

6. If there come any objections, the Presbytery are prudently to weigh them, considering what sort of persons they come from, and on what design, and wherefore they were delayed till the affair came to that length, as well as the nature of the objections; and if the Presbytery find themselves obliged to delay procedure, till a process about these things be orderly had, and if then the person be found innocent and acquitted, those who immed the judicatory ought to be noticed for their calumny or imprudence, as the judicatory shall find cause.

7. If there be no objections, or those brought be found of no weight, the Presbytery is to name a convenient week-day for the brethren to meet, to ordain him whose edict is thus served at the church of the congregation to whom he is to belong; but here there needs not ten days delay, since that hath been granted already after the serving of the edict.

8. The ordination is to be intimated to the people from the pulpit, inviting all to be present, and telling them that they are to set apart that day as a fast unto that parish, to be by them observed with more than ordinary supplication, for the assistance and blessing of God upon the ordinance of Christ, and the labours of his servant, then to be set apart for their good, a work of so great concernment, and a sermon to be suitable to the purpose.*

9. The congregation and all being thus met, the sermon ended, and prayer after sermon, wherein the special work of the day is again to be remembered, the minister who moderates in the action doth from the pulpit, in a discourse, show the occasion of the day's meeting; that the Church being vacant, a call given to such a person there present, and his edict served and returned, without any relevant objection, and the call orderly proceeded in all its steps, as is above prescribed, the same was come to that issue that he was now to be ordained to be their minister.

* *Nota.*—This eighth paragraph referred to the consideration of the General Assembly, anent the day of the ordination of a minister, whether that or another day should be the day of the fast.

10. Then the minister calls on the person to be ordained, who stands up in the face and audience of the congregation, and doth answer, *expressis verbis*, these following questions, or others to the same purpose. *1mo*, If he himself doth believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and the truths therein contained, to be the Word of God. *2do*, If he doth own and will adhere to the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church, and doctrine therein contained, founded on and consonant to the Holy Scriptures. *3tio*, If he will be faithful and zealous in maintaining all the truths of the Gospel, the unity of the Church, and peace thereof, against all error and schism whatsoever, notwithstanding of what trouble and persecution may happen. *4to*, If he doth likewise own and will adhere to the worship, discipline, and government, of this Church, as founded on and consonant to the Holy Scriptures. *5to*, If he hath been led in his designing the work of the ministry, by a single and sincere love to God, and design to glorify him in the Gospel of his Son, and not by filthy lucre, and the motives of worldly gain, as the great inducement to him to the ministerial work. *6to*, If he engage to be diligent and assiduous in praying, reading, meditating, preaching, administering the Sacraments, catechizing, and exercising of discipline, and in performing all other ministerial duties towards the people committed to his charge. *7mo*, If he resolves to own his ordination to the holy function of the ministry, and to continue in duty, notwithstanding of any trouble that may arise in the Church hereafter, the people's adherence to this call is to be taken for granted, seeing by their presence they countenance the ordination.

11. The minister moderating in the action and brethren being satisfied with the answers of the person to be ordained, he is, in a few words, to speak to the people of that congregation, reminding them of their having called him to be their minister, that the affair had orderly proceeded, and that there had been no objection made against the same; and that now their coming and staying to be witnesses to the action, and that their universal silence was to be looked upon as their constant adherence to their call to have him to be their minister, and to their engagements therein contained; at which time it were fit also that the ministers preaching should take occasion to put the people in mind of their duty.

12. Then, after a little pause, whereby the universal silence of the people may be discerned, the minister who moderates in the action doth bespeak the person to be ordained, showing him, that seeing he designs to serve God in preaching the Gospel, and that this congregation has given him a call, and the Presbytery was to ordain him minister of that congregation, he was to satisfy the Presbytery and the congregation in the following questions.

13. *1st*, If he accepts of the call given him by that congregation, and resolves and engages, through grace, to perform all the works of a faithful minister among them. *2dly*, If he will willingly and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, submit himself unto the admonition of his brethren, and the discipline of the Church. *3dly*, If he will take care that he himself and his family walk unblameably, be examples to the flock, and adorn the Gospel by their conversation.

14. The brethren being satisfied with the answers and engagements, the minister actor is to come from the pulpit to the place where the person to be ordained and brethren are, he kneeling, and the brethren standing, the actor, as mouth of the brethren, in their Master's name and authority, doth in and by prayer set him apart (not only he who moderates in the action, but all the brethren that conveniently can, laying their hands upon his head) to the office of the ministry, invoking God for his blessing, to this effect:—"Thankfully acknowledging the great mercy of God, in sending Jesus Christ for the redemption of his people, and for his ascension to the right hand of God the Father, and thence pouring out his Spirit, and giving gifts to men, apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, and teachers, for the gathering and building up of his Church; and for fitting and inclining this man to this great work; to entreat Him to fit him with his Holy Spirit, to give him (who in his name is thus set apart to his holy service) to fulfil the work of the ministry in all things, that he may both save himself and the people committed to his charge."

15. The prayer to this purpose being ended, the minister who moderates in the action is to take the person ordained by the right hand, saying unto him, "We give

unto you the right hand of fellowship, to take part of the ministry with us ;” and likewise all the ministers of the Presbytery, the heritors and elders of the parish present, should take him by the right hand, as a testimony of their acceptance of him as a minister of that congregation.

16. Then the minister who moderates in the action returning to the pulpit, doth *first* exhort the person who is now ordained to consider the greatness of the office, the diligence, labour, and painfulness required, encouraging him to diligence and faithfulness, and showing him the hazard and prejudices that will attend negligence and unfaithfulness, both to himself and people, in this and the life to come.

17. Then, *2dly*, He is to exhort the people to carry themselves dutifully, kindly, and respectfully to their minister, as unto the messenger of God, and according to their solemn promise contained in their call to their minister, and to accept of his message, in receiving of Christ Jesus as he is offered in the Gospel, and giving obedience to his will therein revealed, and which the actor in his brethren’s name under whose inspection the parish is, is to enjoin them to.

18. *Lastly*, The minister actor is by solemn prayer to commend the minister whom they have ordained, and his flock, to God’s grace, and, singing a psalm, he is to dismiss the congregation with pronouncing the blessing.

19. The clerk of the Presbytery is to record the day and place of the ordination, with the name of the minister who did moderate in the action, and text he preached from, and the sederunt of the members present, and may give extracts of the minister’s ordination when required.

20. That all such things as relate and are essential and peculiar to ordination, be omitted in admitting of ministers formerly ordained. *2do*, That all the questions in paragraph 10th may be resumed, and the minister to be admitted desired to declare his consent and adherence to his former answers and engagement at his ordination. *3tio*, The questions in the 13th paragraph, anent his relation to the particular congregation to which he is to be admitted, may be proposed as in the overture. *4to*, That expression in paragraph 15th, of giving him the right hand of fellowship, and taking him to a part of the ministry, may be omitted, seeing he is received therein before at his ordination.

21. The manse, and office-houses thereto belonging, are, by the Presbytery’s appointment, to be visited and valued by faithful and skilful workmen, at the sight of some of the Presbytery, that the condition and value thereof may be known and recorded, lest afterwards it be pretended that the said minister at his entry found them sufficient, and so should be obliged to leave them much better than at his entry ; and, upon the other hand, if a free manse, should be obliged to leave it in good repair.

22. Seeing calls bear a promise of all due encouragement to ministers, it may be fit, that at the ordination or admission, or rather before, the Presbytery desire the decret of locality of the parish to be produced, or if it cannot be done, and that there be no decret or act securing the stipend, that the heritors give in a subscribed account of their just *quotas* of the stipend of that parish, which are to be recorded by the Presbytery, that there may be as little debate as possible afterwards about that affair.

SECT. 5.—Of Transportations in general, and the Grounds and Reasons thereof.

1. Seeing every minister is an officer of the Church universal, it cannot be denied but he may be transported from one place to another, upon good and weighty grounds.

2. No minister ought at his own hand to transport himself *in ecclesiâ bene constitutâ, et statu ejusdem pacato*, seeing he is not *sui juris*, and at his own disposal.

3. It belongs, therefore, properly to that Presbytery whereof he is a member to manage his transportation, and grant it if they see cause.

4. The end of all transportations is the glory of God, and the greater good of the Church, both which should be expressly eyed by those who crave them, and the judicatories which grant them.

5. In the case, therefore, of transportations, the first step is to see that the call be legally proceeded in, and approved by the Presbytery in whose bounds the vacant parish is, and that there be a commission from the parish to some fit person to deliver and prosecute the call before the Presbytery where the minister desired resideth; and if the minister called do belong to another Presbytery, and if it be desired, the Presbytery may also send one of their number to signify their consent.

6. No call drawn up to any settled minister, desiring his transportation to another congregation, is to be received by him or entertained till it come to him by his own Presbytery.

7. If the commissioners of the vacant parish come to prosecute the transportation in the interval of the ordinary diets of the Presbytery, and their necessity urgent, and distance great, they may apply to the moderator of the Presbytery, that he may call a Presbytery *pro re nata*.

8. Upon which application the moderator may call a Presbytery, but till it meet, he is not to receive the call offered, or the reasons thereof, or transmit, either to the minister called, or to the parish he belongs unto, or to cite any of them to appear till the Presbytery meet and consider the call, and determine the relevancy of the same.

9. The Presbytery being met, the commissioners who are to appear to prosecute the transportation, are (by a supplication delivered to the clerk of the Presbytery) to acquaint the Presbytery with their desire, and that they may be heard.

10. The Presbytery receiving a supplication, intimating that there is a call to one of the brethren of that Presbytery, are, without making any needless delays, to call the persons applying before them, and inquire for their commission to represent that parish who desires the minister.

11. If the commissioners have not a written commission, under the hands of the heritors and elders of the vacant parish, or the clerk of their meeting, the Presbytery may refuse to hear them any further, or to receive any call from them; and, in that case, there can be no access to these pretended commissioners, their either appealing or complaining to the next Synod.

12. If they have a written commission, and which the Presbytery sustains, they are to offer the call, and reasons of the same, in writing to the Presbytery, craving that the call may be delivered to the minister desired, and that the reasons may not only be weighed by the Presbytery, but delivered to the minister, and sent to the parish where he doth now reside, that they, within a competent time, may answer the same.

13. The Presbytery, on sustaining their commission, is immediately to receive the call they offer, and read and consider the same; and at the same diet to give their judgment thereanent, as to the relevancy of the same, so far as at present appears to them, in order to the bringing the same to farther consideration; so that it doth not preclude either the Presbytery, or any member thereof, or the minister desired, or his parish, of any just exceptions against the relevancy of the call, which they may after in process adduce.

14. If the Presbytery shall find weight in the reasons, they are then *instantly*, at least at the same diet, without needless delay, to deliver the call by their moderator to the minister desired to be transported, who is to receive the same out of the moderator's hands, and likewise the reasons of the call; and to be summoned *apud acta*, to compare before the Presbytery at their next meeting.—See Act 7th, General Assembly, *anno* 1704.

15. Providing always there be ten days given to the minister and parish where he is, to prepare themselves to answer the reasons of the call.

16. If the minister called be absent from the Presbytery, then the ruling elder from that parish, if present, is to get the call and reasons delivered to him, and to be *apud acta* obliged to deliver the same to the minister, if at home, within twenty-four hours.

17. If both be absent, the Presbytery is to send the call and reasons to the minister, to be delivered to him by the Presbytery's officer, or one appointed for that ef-

fect, who is, before witnesses, to deliver the same to the minister, and to give him a citation to appear at the diet prescribed by the Presbytery. If the minister be not at home, that he cannot be personally summoned, then the call, reasons, and copy of the citation, are to be left at the minister's dwelling-house.

18. The Presbytery is likewise to cause cite the heritors and elders of the parish from which the transportation is desired, by issuing out summons, under the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery's hands, directed to the Presbytery officer, who is thereupon obliged to make due intimation thereof, by reading the same audibly at the most patent door of the church of that parish, immediately after the forenoon sermon, when the people are coming out of the church, and thereafter by affixing a copy of the summons on the said door before witnesses.

19. If the officer meet with any molestation or opposition, in his endeavouring to execute the summons, from any of the parish, the summons, notwithstanding, are to be reckoned executed, providing the minister himself had previous knowledge of the call and appointment. But, by the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1704, it is appointed, that the minister himself being summoned *apud acta*, at the Presbytery, or, if absent, by the Presbytery's letter, to be present at the day appointed for hearing the cause, he also intimate out of the pulpit, to heritors, elders, and others concerned in the parish, that there is such a call, and such a transportation designed, and if any of them have a mind to defend their right to their minister, they are to be present at the Presbytery on such a day, and ready to make their defences; for which end the call and reasons are to be given or transmitted to the minister, to be by him communicated to them. But this method of citations is only to be observed where the Presbytery concerned shall see cause to take that course; and it is in the option of the Presbytery to follow this course, or do it by their officers as formerly.

20. The minister, on his receiving a call and reasons for his transportation, is forthwith to convene the kirk-session, and communicate the same to them, whereby both heritors and kirk-session may have time to consider and answer the reasons of the call.

21. The Presbytery, in appointing the diet for a minister and parish to make their answers to a call, are to consider the minister's circumstances, as if he be not at home, and hath urgent affairs, which may fall out to be by appointment of the Church.

22. The parish who are cited may appear by some of their heritors and elders, and, to avoid confusion, not above seven at most, but these need no commission in writing, because they are defendants, and, being cited, they ought to be heard.

23. The Presbytery meeting at the diet appointed to cognosce upon the process of transportation, are to enter upon it—1. By reading of the minutes of the last meeting, ordaining parties to be cited; 2. By calling for the summons issued to the kirk-officer to summon the parties; and, if they find the summons indorsed and duly executed, then, 3. They are to order the officer to call in the parties.

24. If any of the parties be absent, and excuses made, the Presbytery are to judge the reasonableness of the same, and either proceed or delay the affair as they find cause.

25. But if all parties be present, the moderator acquainting them of the reason of their being called, desireth them to be silent during reading of the following papers which belong to the process, and so the Presbytery doth proceed—1. By causing read the call given to the minister desired; 2. By reading the reasons given in with the call for the transportation craved; 3. By reading both the minister's and parishioners' answers to the reasons, if they have any, in writing; if not, by hearing these defendants' answers by word, as they themselves think fit.

26. After reading these papers, the moderator of the Presbytery is to inquire at the pursuers if they have any thing farther to add to the reasons of their call, or any thing to reply to the minister's and parishioners' answers; and if they have it, to allow them to do it by word, but not by writing; and after they are heard without interruption, the defendants are allowed to reply to them, being to speak last, without any replying or farther discourse, to prevent needless altercations.

27. If the pursuers desire a delay to the Presbytery's proceeding, or if any of the reasons or answers on which much of the weight of the affair does depend, require the probation of some matter of fact, then, in these necessary cases, the Presbytery may delay determining the process till next meeting, to receive sufficient information in the matter of fact alleged: But if no such reason for a delay be, the Presbytery is to proceed to deliberate upon the whole affair, all parties being removed.

28. If the affair be intricate, and reasons on both sides weighty, after the Presbytery hath among themselves reasoned *hinc inde*, it may be fit, before the question be put to a decisive vote, to call in both parties, and again inquire if they have any new matter to offer, which hath not fallen under consideration in the case; and likewise, that so momentous a case may be the more conscientiously gone about, it will be fit that a minister of the Presbytery pray to God (all parties being present) that the judicatory may be guided of God in their determination, and thereafter (parties being removed) the question is to be put, "Transport or not," and all the members are to give their vote distinctly, which are to be marked by the clerk, and a member or two taking notice of the right marking of the same.

29. If much of the weight of the affair, and that part which doth most straiten the Presbytery, in giving their judgment, lie on the minister who is to be transported, his own sentiment, he may be called before the Presbytery alone, or before two or three of their number, and dealt with to gain him to a contented submission to their intended sentence, to prevent his being crushed by it.

30. And the Presbytery, when they are going to transport any minister for the greater good of the Church, are to be tender and condescending to the minister as to the time when he is to remove, or to clothe their sentence with alleviating circumstances.

31. After sentence is passed, and all parties called in, the moderator is to show them the care the Presbytery has taken to do justly in their proceedings, and to entreat them all to a cheerful submission to the sentence which is to be read to them by the clerk, who is to record the same, and the whole process, and to give extracts thereof to those who demand it.

32. If any party appeal, in the case of transportation, before the final sentence, upon alleged injury received, the Presbytery not being conscious of the same, may proceed to determine the affair notwithstanding.

33. All Presbyteries should endeavour not only a speedy determining a process of transportation, but should always determine it themselves without referring the affair to the Synod, it being a duty that the Presbytery is called to, to give their judgment in the affairs that come before them, and nothing but insuperable hesitation of their judgments, as to point of light, should occasion it.*

SECT. 6.—Of Parochial Visitations by the Presbytery.

1. It is the duty of the Presbytery to visit every congregation within the same, by solemn visitations, which are either ordinary and in course, or extraordinary, *pro re nata*.

2. The ordinary, whereby every congregational church is visited, ought to be once a year if it can be attained, or at least this ordinary visitation should be going round all the parishes in order, till they be visited, before others be revisited in ordinary.

3. The Presbytery is to appoint the day when the visitation is to be, and cause intimation be made by the minister of the parish from the pulpit, immediately after the forenoon sermon on the Sabbath, ten days preceding the day for the visitation, requiring the heritors, elders, and whole congregation, to be present that day to hear sermon; and after that sermon, the heritors, elders, and heads of families, do attend the Presbytery, to acquaint them with the state of that kirk and congregation in every

* Diverse Presbyteries being against the 32d and 23d paragraphs, the consideration thereof is referred to the General Assembly.

point ; and particularly, if any of them have any certain knowledge of any thing amiss in their minister, elders, deacons, precentor, session-clerk, schoolmaster, or beadle, that they bring the same to the Presbytery.

4. The session registers are to be produced to the Presbytery before the visitation, and given to some brethren to be revised, and they to report at the visitation.

5. The minister of the parish in all ordinary visitations is to preach that day before the Presbytery, on his ordinary text or subject he hath been preaching upon to the people.

6. The sermon being ended, the Presbytery constituted, the minister's doctrine he had in his sermon is first to be considered, as in the Presbyterial exercise.

7. The Church Bible, Confession of Faith, Acts of the General Assembly, acts and proclamations against profaneness, and other acts and papers relative to the Church, the session registers, and poor's box, are all to be called for, produced, and laid before the Presbytery.

8. The Presbytery at the entry on the visitation, having removed the minister and all belonging to the congregation, are to cause read over their actings at the last visitation of that congregation, and see if what was then recommended or ordered hath been made effectual ; and, if need be, to call in any party for information, or for censure in case of neglect.

9. If nothing arise therefrom to divert the Presbytery from the orderly method, all parties being removed, the Presbytery are to call in the eldership and heads of families, and to inquire at them concerning their minister, and with all gravity and authority to charge them to declare the truth, in the following and such like questions:—

10. The questions inquired by a Presbytery concerning a minister may be these, and such like : *1mo*, Hath your minister a Gospel walk and conversation before the people, and does he keep family worship, and is he one who rules well his own house ? *2do*, Keeps he much at home at his ministerial work, or doth he occasion to himself distractions and unnecessary diversions therefrom ? *3tio*, Preacheth he sound doctrine, so far as you understand ? *4to*, Does he preach plainly, or is he hard to be understood for his scholastic terms, matter, or manner of preaching ? *5to*, Doth he faithfully reprove sin, especially such as most prevail in that parish ? *6to*, What time of day doth he ordinarily begin sermon on the Sabbath, and when doth he dismiss the people ? *7mo*, Spends he in his sermon too much time in repetition of what he had before ? *8vo*, Doth he visit the people and families, at least once a year, in a ministerial way, teaching and admonishing from house to house, and doth he visit the sick when it is needful, and pray over them ? *9no*, Does he lecture and preach in the forenoon, and preach again in the afternoon on the Lord's Day, and that both summer and winter ? *10mo*, Does he read a large portion of Scripture in public, and expound the same, as is enjoined by the Acts of the General Assembly ? *11mo*, Does he preach catechetic doctrine ordinarily in the afternoon ? *12mo*, Does he administer the Sacrament of Baptism in an orderly way, when the congregation is convened, or does he it privately ? *13mo*, Doth he frequently catechize his parishioners, and administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to them, and is he careful in keeping from that holy ordinance all who are known to be scandalous, grossly ignorant, or erroneous ? *14mo*, Hath he week-day sermons, and at them collections for the poor ? *15mo*, Hath he a competent number of elders, and hath he deacons in the parish distinct from elders ? *16mo*, If there be a magistrate in the parish for punishing vice, according to Act of Parliament ? *17mo*, Doth he read termly the acts against profaneness from the pulpit ? *18mo*, Does he keep sessional meetings frequently, and is he impartial in the exercise of discipline against offenders, and is the session's diligence thereanent recorded in a book ? *19no*, If there be frequent meetings of the members of session for fasting and prayer, according to the 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1699 ?

11. After these questions are asked, the minister is to be called in, and encouraged or admonished as the Presbytery doth see cause.

12. If any thing censurable, and which may occasion a process against the minister, be informed by any, then the Presbytery is to proceed according to the directions given, Sect. 7 of this same Chapter.

13. Then the elders and deacons being removed altogether, the minister and con-

gregation be inquired concerning them, by the following and such questions :—*1mo*, If the session be rightly constituted, and all the elders and deacons duly admitted, according to the Acts of Assemblies? *2do*, Do they all attend Gospel ordinances and diets of the session duly? *3tio*, Are they grave, pious, and exemplary in their lives and conversations? *4to*, Do they worship God in their families? *5to*, Are they diligent, careful, and impartial, in the exercise of their offices? *6to*, Do the elders visit the families within the quarter and bounds assigned to each? *7mo*, Have the elders subscribed the Confession of Faith? *8vo*, Have the elders their distinct bounds assigned them for their particular inspection? *9no*, Are they careful to have the worship of God set up in the families of their bounds? *10mo*, Are they careful in calling for testimonials from persons who come to reside in the parish? *11mo*, Does the session always appoint a ruling elder to attend Presbyteries and Synods?

14. After these questions, the eldership being called in, the Presbytery do commend, exhort, admonish, or reprove, as they think needful.

15. Then the precentor, schoolmaster, and clerk of the session, who in country congregations are generally one and the same, and after them the beadle, being removed, the Presbytery is to inquire at the minister, session, and heads of families, concerning their conversation, their exemplary walk, fidelity and diligence in their offices, and the Presbytery are thereupon to proceed as the matter requireth.

16. After all these inquiries, the Presbytery removing the heads of families, the ministers and elders are to be inquired concerning the congregation, with these and such like questions :—*1mo*, Doth the body of the people attend ordinances duly and timeously, and stay till the blessing be pronounced? *2do*, Are they diligent in improving the means of knowledge, and are they growing therein? *3tio*, Are they submissive to public and private exhortations, and to the discipline and censure of the Church, by admonitions and reproofs, as need requires? *4to*, Do they, by their words and actions, manifest a suitable respect to their minister and respective elders, and are they encouraging to them in their work? *5to*, Are they careful to educate their children and servants, as well as increase themselves in the knowledge of God? *6to*, What success hath the Gospel and labours of ministers and elders among them in convincing and converting, and building them up in their most holy faith? *7mo*, If there be any scandals, or other vices among them, and if on the growing hand? *8vo*, What seeds of heresy, schism, or division is among them? *9no*, How the Lord's Day is observed?

17. The Presbytery having got from the minister and elders an account of the spiritual state of the congregation, and calling in the congregation, the moderator is to direct to the body of people a word of admonition, rebuke, exhortation, or encouragement, as their need requireth.

18. Then the minister, heritors, session, and heads of families, being present, the Presbytery is to inquire after the state of the church, as to its fabric, the seats therein, and division of the same, the churchyard dykes, the utensils of the church, communion cups, cloths; the minister's manse, if it be in repair, the glebe and stipend; the salary of the schoolmaster, precentor, session-clerk and beadles, and how the communion elements are provided; and inquiry is to be made how much the stipend is, of what nature, how paid, and if there be a decret of locality therefor.

19. If any of these be not in that order they should, the Presbytery are to deal with the heritors and others, on whom the law layeth the providing and repairing these, that they may provide the same, and are prudently to render them willing to the work, without running needlessly to the last remedy the law alloweth, unless necessity require.

20. The Presbytery are likewise to inquire before all, anent the state of the poor, and whether there be any mortification and legacies for the poor, schools, or other pious uses, and how these are secured and their interests paid, applied, and discharged, and whether the collections at the church door and the poor's money be rightly employed, and be competent to their sustenance, and if need be, the parish exhorted to enlarge their charity, or provide some other way for the poor.

21. Occasional visitations of a parish are made by the Presbytery *pro re nata*, and according to the weight of the emergency which doth occasion the visitation; the whole

Presbytery, or such a delegated number as the Presbytery think fit, do attend the visitation.

22. All the actings and proceedings of the Presbytery at a visitation are punctually to be recorded, and if by delegates, a report made at next meeting of the Presbytery, and recorded both in the Presbytery and Session books.

SECT. 7.—Of Censuring of Ministers.

1. All processes against any minister who hath the charge of a congregation are to begin before the Presbytery to which he belongeth, and not before the kirk-session of his own parish.

2. The credit and success of the gospel, (in the way of an ordinary mean,) much depending on the entire credit and reputation of ministers' sound doctrine and holy conversation, no stain thereof ought lightly to be received, nor when it comes before a judicatory ought to be negligently inquired into, or when found evident, ought to be slightly censured.

3. And because a scandal committed by a minister hath on these accounts many aggravations, and once raised, though it may be found to be without any ground, yet it is not easily wiped off; therefore, a Presbytery should exactly ponder by whose information and complaint it comes first before them, and a Presbytery is not so far to receive the information as to proceed to a citation of a minister, or any way begin the process until there be, 1. Some person who under his hand gave in the complaint, and undertake to make out the libel. 2. Or, at least, do before the Presbytery undertake to make it out, under the pain of being censured as slanderers. Or, 3. That the *fama clamosa* of the scandal be so great, as that the Presbytery, for their own vindication, see themselves necessitated to begin the process without any particular accuser; but the Presbytery, in this case, should be careful first to inquire into the rise, occasion, broachers, and grounds of this *fama clamosa*.

4. All Christians ought to be so prudent and wary in accusing ministers of any censurable fault, as that they ought neither to publish nor spread the same, nor accuse the minister before the Presbytery, without first acquainting some of the most prudent of the ministers and elders of that Presbytery, yea, and the minister himself, if they can have access thereto, and their advice got in the affair.

5. Upon such a complaint brought before a Presbytery, the Presbytery having cited the minister, if he be absent, and if the scandal alleged be some one act, is to endeavour to draw the minister to a confession, whereby he doth most glorify God.

6. If the minister do confess the fact, and if it be of a scandalous nature, censurable in others, as uncleanness, the Presbytery, whatever be the measure of his penitence, even in his confession, and that to the conviction of all, is *instantly* to depose him *ab officio*, and to appoint him in due time to appear before the congregation where the scandal was given, for the removal of the offence by the public profession of his repentance.

7. If a minister accused of any scandal, and cited to appear before his own Presbytery, do absent himself by leaving the place and be contumacious, without making an excuse or pretext, he is to be held as confessed, and not only deposed and censured *instantly* with the lesser excommunication; but if, after some time, he do not return and subject himself to the censures of the Church, he is to be proceeded against till he be censured with the greater excommunication.

8. If the minister accused do appear and deny the fact, in the Presbytery's proceeding to find the truth of the matter, all the circumstances are to be exactly canvassed, and the reputation of the witnesses and their hability be regarded, and duly considered.

9. If the matter laid to the minister's charge be unsoundness and heterodoxy in his doctrine, then great caution should be used, and the knowledge and understanding of witnesses much looked unto; and withal, if the errors be not gross and striking at the vitals of religion, and if they be not pertinaciously stuck unto, and industriously and maliciously spread with a visible design to corrupt, and that the errors

are not spreading among the people; then lenitives, admonitions, instructions, and frequent conferences, are to be tried to reclaim without cutting off, and the advice of other Presbyteries sought; and unless the thing be doing much hurt, Synods and Assemblies are to be advised with in the affair.

10. If the libel and complaint brought against a minister be a multitude of things laid together, as several acts of negligence, and other unsuitable actions, the Presbytery, in proceeding therein, are to have a Presbyterial visitation of that parish to which the minister belongs, and at the said visitation are first to see if any of these things now laid to the minister's charge were committed prior to the last Presbyterial visitation of that parish; and whether they were then laid to his charge; and if they were not, it should be tried how they come to be laid to his charge now.

11. If the Presbytery find these things laid to his charge to be committed since the last visitation, or find a satisfying reason wherefore they were not then tabled, they are to inquire what diligence hath been used in acquainting the minister with the offence taken at the first of these things committed by him, and how far the minister hath been guilty of giving offence, after he knew offence to be taken.

12. It should likewise in this case be inquired, whether any of the complainers did first in a prudent, private way, inform any of the neighbouring ministers of some of these things committed by their minister, who is now challenged, before these offences came to be so many as to merit a public and solemn trial? And accordingly the Presbytery is to judge.

13. If the Presbytery find upon trial the complaint to resolve on the minister's having committed such acts of infirmity or passion, as, considering all the circumstances, may be either remedied and the people satisfied, and no such offence taken, or at least remain, so as to hinder the minister's profiting the people, and that the offence was taken by the minister's own people only or mainly, then the Presbytery is to take all prudent ways to satisfy and reclaim both minister and people, and do away the offence.

14. When he hath given the Presbytery and people satisfying demonstrations of his penitency, he is to be relaxed from the said censure of the lesser excommunication without proceeding any step to the taking off the sentence of deposition at that time.

15. But before a minister deposed for scandalous carriage can be restored to the exercise of the ministry, there should not only be evident a deep sorrow for sin, but an eminently and exemplary humble walk and edifying conversation, so apparent and convincing, as hath worn out and healed the wound the scandal gave; and hath likewise created in the minds of the godly an earnest desire to have him rendered useful again.

16. Immediately on the back of a minister being deposed by the Presbytery, the sentence is to be intimated in his congregation, the church declared vacant, the planting thereof with another minister hastened, and never delayed on the expectation of his being reponed, it being almost impossible that ever he can prove useful in that parish again. See Act General Assembly, February 13, 1645, Sess. ult. thereanent; as also, Act August 2, 1641, Sess. 8, against sudden receiving deposed ministers.

SECT. 8.—*Of Appeals from a Kirk-Session to the Presbytery.*

1. When an appeal is brought from a kirk-session to a Presbytery, the Presbytery is to consider, whether the cause is of that nature as it behoved at length to have come to the Presbytery by the course of discipline, before the final determination thereof, as if it be in a process of alleged adultery, or such like. Then the Presbytery, to save themselves time, may fall upon the consideration of the affair without insisting much upon the *bene* or *male appellatum*, though it seem to be preposterously appealed.

2. But if the cause be such as the kirk-session are the competent and proper judges of even to its ultimate decision, and if there hath been no cause given by the kirk-session by their breaking the rules of an orderly process, either by the course of the process, or by the incompetency of the censure, the Presbytery is not to sustain the appeal.

3. If the Presbytery do not sustain the appeal, and find there hath been some fault, passion, or culpable mistake in the appellant, the Presbytery is to inflict some censure, such as a reproof before the Presbytery, or appoint an acknowledging of their precipitancy before their own session, or such like, on those appellars they find to have been litigious and malicious, thereby to prevent unnecessary appeals; and that besides remitting them back to the session, either to stand to the censure of the session, if it be already inflicted, or to sist themselves during the process if it be depending.

4. If the appeal be sustained, and yet upon proceeding on the cause, the Presbytery find the appellant censurable, it is always to be minded, that whatever censure be inflicted, to remove the offence the Presbytery hath taken, yet the appellant, if found guilty, isto undergo a censure, either before the kirk-session or congregation he belongs to, such as the Presbytery think he deserveth, else Presbyteries will be always troubled with appeals.

5. If, on the other hand, on trial of the process, the Presbytery find the kirk-session hath unwarrantably proceeded, either in contributing to the raising of a scandal, or inflicting a censure, without a sufficient cause, and thereby the appellant lesed, the Presbytery is not only to assoilzie the appellant, but to take such ways as may be proper and effectual to vindicate the appellant's innocency, and wipe off the scandal taken at him.

6. Herein the Presbytery is to exercise great prudence, doing justice to the innocent, yet so as not to weaken the kirk-session's authority in that congregation, if in justice it can be avoided.

7. But such an emergent may very well occasion the Presbytery's giving the minister and elders of that session suitable injunctions and rules to walk by, or private admonitions, or to call for a repeated visitation of their session register.

8. If the appellant do not give in his appeal, with the reasons thereof, to the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery, within the space of ten days after his appeal, and be present to prosecute it the next Presbytery day thereafter, his appeal should *ipso facto* cease, and the appellant be held as contumacious, and so proceeded against by the kirk-session.

SECT. 9.—Of References made by the Kirk-Session to the Presbytery.

1. The kirk-session having the opportunity of frequent Presbyteries, do oftentimes make references to the Presbytery, which references are sometimes for advice only, sometimes they are of the cause or process itself, and the full judgment thereancient is entirely referred to the Presbytery.

2. These references for advice are sometimes made, that thereby the kirk-session may get more light in the affair, and sometimes that the opinion which they have may be fortified by the advice of the Presbytery, as persons of greater judgment and weight, whereby the kirk-session's determination may be the more regarded.

3. These references for advice reserve always the cause in the hands of the kirk-session, and they only sist their proceeding to a sentence till the advice be had.

4. Sometimes a kirk-session referreth a cause or process entirely to the Presbytery to be finally determined by them, and that the kirk-session doth, either because they find difficulty in point of light, as to what they should do, or because, though they be clear as to what should be done, yet some prudential consideration makes them think it not convenient that they should be the doers themselves.

5. The Presbytery receiving any such references are to give the best advice and assistance they can to the session, thereby to fortify and support their authority, for the bearing down of all disorders; and if the Presbytery find that their passing sentence or censure will have the greatest weight and most true influence, then they are to do it, though the censure be to be intimated in that congregation the kirk-session belongeth to, and the satisfaction taken there if it be a matter of scandal.

6. But sometimes it will fall out, that the Presbytery, even when the reference is to determine entirely, will find it fit to refer back the determination of the affair to the kirk-session, that the sentence may be their act, which should only be done, when it will be more obliging, or for the credit of the session, that the kirk-session pass the

sentence; and then likewise the Presbytery should give their opinion as to what the sentence should be.

7. All references being supposed to be matters of moment to the kirk-session, should not only be minuted in the kirk-session register, but should be transmitted in writing to the Presbytery, and by the Presbytery clerk the production thereof when presented should be recorded, as likewise the Presbytery's return.

SECT. 10.—*Of Censuring such Scandals which are so gross, that the Kirk-Session does not absolve from, as of Adultery, &c.*

1. The Presbytery being informed of a reference from a kirk-session by the minister or ruling elder from that session concerning such a scandal, is to inquire what steps have been taken by the kirk-session already in the affair, if all that are requisite for them preparatory to the Presbytery's cognisance, and if so, then the Presbytery is to allow the party to be summoned before them.

2. Sometimes it will fall out that the process is so clear, as in case of a judicial confession of adultery, that the kirk-session will summon the delinquent [when he is before them] *apud acta* to appear before the Presbytery, without previous acquainting the Presbytery; but where there is any difficulty, the kirk-session should inform the Presbytery, and take their advice before a party be summoned before them.

3. When the party or parties appear before the Presbytery, if they confess and profess repentance, then the Presbytery having gravely rebuked the party or parties, is to prescribe the time of the parties' public appearance in that congregation where the process began, the scandal being there to be taken away, or remit them to the session to receive orders thereanent.

4. That the delinquents be appointed to remove the scandal in the congregation where the offence is most flagrant, rather than in the place where it was committed, if it be not public there, and that intimation of the removing thereof be made in other places, if the judicatory shall find it needful.

5. Besides the rebuke which the Presbytery gives to the confessing penitent at their first appearance before them, it is frequent and very useful that the Presbytery appoint the penitent party to wait on some one or two of the ministers of the Presbytery, who may in conference lay sin home to their consciences, and likewise, in private draw more of the sense which the person hath of their sin, than they can expect in words in public, and this is to be renewed as they find need.

6. If the party cited before the Presbytery deny the fact, then the Presbytery is to follow these rules in their proceeding, given Chap. I. Sect. 4, Chap. II. Sect. 6, &c.

7. Yet the Presbytery may either lead the probation before themselves, or remit it to the kirk-session, as in prudence they will find most convenient.

8. The Presbytery is to give advice to the kirk-session in anything they commit to them in such an affair, especially as to the absolution of the party.

9. That it would be fit in case of adultery that the scandalous person do appear before the Presbytery before absolution.

SECT. 11.—*Of a Process in order to the highest Censure of Excommunication.*

1. Since there is a distinction betwixt the greater and lesser excommunication, it seems that whatever has been the cause of the first process, yet ordinarily all processes that are in order to the highest censure are to be for obdurate contumacy; and where there is no obdurate contumacy, the lesser excommunication needs only have place; yet in some very extraordinary cases, the Church hath summarily excommunicated persons guilty of notour atrocious scandalous sins, to show the Church's abhorrence of such wickedness.

2. Even where there hath been a scandal committed, and contumacy by not appearing, it should be considered, if the fact hath been proven or not; if not proven, then the scandal hath not weight, and only the simple contumacy is to be proceeded against, wherewith it were hard to go a greater length than the lesser excommunication.

3. If the scandal hath been proven, and the censure of the lesser excommunication intimated, as in the preceding overtures, Chap. I. Sect. 6, it seems most reasonable that there be no farther proceeding, unless the scandal be of such an heinous nature, as that offence is not removed from tender Christians, and that it is spreading and infectious, as in heresies; in which cases, a contumacy is to be proceeded against, in order to the greater excommunication.

4. The kirk-session having brought the process to an intimation of the censure of the lesser excommunication; and finding it will not be sufficient, they are to refer the affair to the Presbytery, bringing their whole proceedings before the Presbytery, that the Presbytery may thereby have a clear and full view of the whole affair.

5. The Presbytery finding the kirk-session hath orderly proceeded, and that the affair is so weighty as to enter on the process, they are to cause their officer to cite the scandalous person.

6. If the party appear, then the Presbytery is to proceed in the inquiry at the accused about the scandal alleged; if he deny it, then they are to proceed to lead probation as in other cases.

7. But if the party appear not, but condemn the citation, the Presbytery causeth renew the same until he hath continued three citations, and after the three citations, that he be cited out of the pulpit, and for the further conviction of all concerned; the judicatory may proceed and inquire into the presumptions or probation of the guilt, and this to be done although the delinquent be absent.

8. Then the Presbytery doth order the minister of the congregation, next Sabbath after forenoon's sermon, to acquaint the congregation what proceeding the kirk-session first, and then the Presbytery, had made in the affair, and how contumacious the party was, and that the Presbytery intendeth to proceed to the highest censure, and the minister is gravely to admonish the party, if present, to repent and submit himself to the discipline of the Church, threatening him, if he continue impenitent, that the Church will proceed; yea, though he be absent, the minister is to acquaint the people that the Church requires him to repent and submit, as is above said, under the fore-said certification.

9. The minister of the parish is to intimate to the congregation after the forenoon's sermon, the dangerous condition the impenitent person is in, how loath the Church is to cut him off from the society and privileges of the faithful, and therefore to admonish that person to repent, amend, and submit to the discipline of the Church, in which there should be three public admonitions, and a Presbytery should intervene betwixt each admonition, and if, after all, that person continue impenitent or contumacious, the same is to be represented to the Presbytery, who are thereupon to appoint three public prayers, in which the minister is to show the congregation, that they are exhorted to join with him in prayer for the scandalous, impenitent, or contumacious person, which he is solemnly and seriously to put up to God, humbly begging that he would deal with the soul of the impenitent, and convince him of the evil of his ways.

10. These public prayers of the Church are to be put up three several Sabbath days, both to show the Church's tenderness towards their lapsed brother, their earnestness to have him reclaimed, and likewise to create a greater regard and terror of that dreadful censure, both in the party and in all the people.

11. If, after all, the scandalous person make no application, but continue impenitent, the Presbytery is then to appoint the minister of that congregation to intimate the same, and to show the Presbytery's resolution to proceed upon such a Sabbath as they shall name, for pronouncing that dreadful sentence.

12. That day being come, it were fit the minister did preach a sermon suited to that solemn occasion, or at least after sermon, the minister should show the congregation what he is going about, introducing the narration of the process, with a discourse concerning the nature, use, and end of Church censures, particularly that of the greater excommunication, if he hath not done it fully in his sermon.

13. Then narrating all the steps of the process in order, showing the Church's faithfulness and tenderness towards the scandalous person, and declaring his obstinate impenitency, and that now, after all other means were used, there remained only that

of cutting the scandalous person off from the society of the faithful, and intimating the Church's warrant and order to him so to do.

14. And before the minister pronounce the sentence, he is to pray, and desire all the congregation to join with him therein, that God would grant repentance to the obstinate person, would graciously bless his own ordinance, and make the censure effectual, both to edify others, and to be a mean to reclaim the obstinate sinner.

15. Then after prayer, the minister is with great gravity and authority to pronounce the censure, showing his warrant from our Lord's command, and the Apostle Paul's direction, and recapitulating the Presbytery's warrant in obedience thereunto, and resuming the scandalous and obstinate person's behaviour whom he is to name. He then, in our Lord and Master Christ's name and authority, doth (*in verbis de presenti*) excommunicate and exterminate him out of the society of the faithful, debarring him from their privileges, and in the words of the Apostle, delivering him over to Satan.*

16. If, after prayer, and before the censure be pronounced, the scandalous person do make any public signification of his penitency, and of his desire to have the censure stopped, the minister, upon any apparent seriousness in the scandalous person (which he showeth to the congregation) may thereupon delay pronouncing the censure, till he report to the Presbytery at their next meeting, who are then to deal with the scandalous person as they shall find cause.

SECT. 12.—Of *Presbyterial Exercises*.

1. It is a part of the work of a Presbytery to begin every meeting with a sermon by one or two of the brethren, appointed by the former meeting of the Presbytery for that effect, and his text assigned him by the Presbytery, which is called a Presbyterial Exercise.

2. The half of the time allowed for this exercise is ordinarily to be taken up in the explicatory and analytic part of the sermon, and in answering textual and critical questions and difficulties; the other half of the time allowed is to be taken up in raising of observations and doctrines from the text; one of which at least is to be methodically handled, the first whereof is called Exercise, and the other Addition.

3. When Presbyteries have probationers on their trials, and they come to have that part of their trials called the Presbyterial Exercise, they will, and may allot to one of them to have the exercise and the other the addition; or when there is but one probationer, one of the brethren of the Presbytery to have the other.

4. After the exercise is over, and the Presbytery met in their own meeting place, and the meeting constituted, the censure of the exercise they have heard useth always to be the first work of the Presbytery.

5. After the censures have passed round, the Moderator may resume the whole to the admonishing and encouraging of the brother, as the cause requireth.

6. Besides the above exercise they used in Presbyteries frequently to have Common Heads, as they are called by the brethren of the Presbytery, in Latin, with disputes; but if it be *coram populo*, it should be in the vulgar language.†

7. The Presbyteries are for these exercises to choose some portion of Scripture, and proceed orderly from verse to verse.

SECT. 13.—Of *Privy Censures in the Presbyteries*.

1. In every Presbytery, at least twice a-year, and ordinarily before each Synod, there ought to be privy censures.

2. It were fit that before any thing be brought to the Presbytery concerning any member in the privy censure, there were previous use of more private admonition, except in the case of open and gross scandals; and when any offers to inform the

* Some Presbyteries desire that this 15th paragraph may be further considered.

† The expediency of Common Heads left to the General Assembly.

Presbytery of any thing censurable in another, he is to be inquired whether he has privately and in a brotherly way spoken to the member anent whom he offers to inform, in order to his amendment; and at these privy censures none are to be present but members, who are all to undergo the same.

3. In the censure of the Moderator who hath served (as is ordinary) since the last Synod, his public behaviour as a Moderator is under the Presbytery's consideration and censure, where, after he is removed, his carriage is inquired after, and the judgment of every member inquired, not only for his sake, but for instruction to those who succeed him in the office, and after he is again called in he is to be encouraged, thanked, or admonished, as they find cause.

4. After the Moderator each of the brethren, one after another, are to be removed, and but one at once; and the Moderator is to inquire the judgment of each member, and to take their report of their brother's carriage and behaviour, either in relation to his charge or otherwise, according to the trial at the visitation of the parishes by the Presbytery, and then he is to be called in, encouraged, commended, or reprehended, as they see fit, and he set in his place again.

5. After the ministers and ruling elders the Presbytery clerk is to pass these censures, and the Presbytery book again is to be inspected, and some nominated to revise the minutes, (whereof the Moderator is to be one,) if the same be not already done, that the fair clean register may be filled up, and ready to be presented to the Synod at their next meeting.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND METHOD IN PROVINCIAL SYNODS.

SECT. 1.—*Of the Constitution and Opening of this Judicatory.*

1. The Synod or Provincial Assembly is a Church judicatory immediately superior to the Presbytery, and consists of several Presbyteries met together for their mutual help and comfort, and for managing the affairs of public concerns within their bounds.

2. The number of Presbyteries is not determined, but the National Assembly hath made them up of such adjacent Presbyteries as might most conveniently meet together.

3. All the ministers within the bounds of these Presbyteries do personally meet with a ruling elder from every parish, who are ordinarily those elders that were chosen by the Kirk-Session of every congregation to attend the respective Presbyteries the half year preceding the Synod.

4. The Synods do meet in ordinary twice every year, at such set times as are usual.

5. The last moderator, in the morning before the Synod, doth preach a sermon to the members suited to the occasion, and after sermon doth intimate to all the members that they immediately repair to the Synod-house, which is ordinarily some room or convenient place of the church.

6. When they are met the last moderator doth open the meeting with solemn prayer, then he causeth the clerk to make up the rolls, beginning to call the members by their several Presbyteries.

7. In doing this, it is usual to change the order of the roll every Synod, so that the Presbytery that was first called in the roll in the former Synod is now called last, and that which was in the second place is now called first.

8. The clerk calling the ministers according to the roll of the last Synod is to inquire at every minister, when he hath answered to his name, who is the ruling elder elected by the Session of that parish to attend the Synod, and his name is to be enrolled, whether he be present or absent; as likewise, at the end of calling each Presbytery the clerk is to inquire what ministers are ordained and settled within that Presbytery since the last Synod, and enrol them; and though the minister of a parish be not present, yet the ruling elder for that Session is to be called for and enrolled.

9. But to gain time, the roll of each Presbytery may be presented to the clerk by the moderator of the Presbytery, with the ruling elders therein inserted.

10. Then the moderator acquainteth the Synod that their work is to choose a new moderator, and to facilitate the same, he proposeth to the Synod a list of two or three, out of whom they may choose one to be moderator, and any member of the Synod may add more to the list.

11. When the list is agreed unto, then those persons named therein are called upon, and their own votes are required whom they would have to be moderator, and each of them giving his vote is instantly removed during the time of the members' voting.

12. When the vote is past, the last moderator causeth call in the brethren which were removed, and intimateth to the minister elected that he is chosen moderator, who thereupon doth immediately take the chair.

13. The new moderator being in the chair, he first (if there be a clerk to be chosen) proposes the election of one thereby to constitute the judicatory, but if the Synod have a fixed clerk, and he present, they proceed to their business.

14. The rolls thus made up and called over, and absentees marked, the moderator calls for the correspondents from the neighbouring Synods, and their commissions being read, they are to be enrolled as members having vote; then the moderator proposeth the appointment of committees of the Synod for the preparing of business for them, and these are ordinarily named in the first Session of the Synod.

15. In the committees for overtures and bills there ought to be one at least out of each Presbytery within the bounds of the Synod, to help each committee with the knowledge of the state of those Presbyteries, seeing affairs may come before them belonging to each of them.

16. It is most requisite that the correspondents from other Synods be chosen members of the committee of overtures, seeing there they may be most useful.

SECT. 2.—*Of the Committees of Synods.*

1. A Synod being a judicatory consisting of a multitude of members, generally above 100, and some above 200, it is very necessary that they have committees of their own number to prepare matters to them, and to lop off unnecessary work, for the gaining of time, and to hinder heats by public debates.

2. These committees are only to prepare and report to the Synods, and, therefore, any affair tabled before them, though by them rejected, may be brought in in full Synods, yet so as the member who bringeth in the affair be sure to have very much reason or necessity for so doing.

3. All Synods may have the following committees for facilitating their work; 1. A Committee for Overtures; 2. A Committee for Bills, References, and Appeals; 3. Committees for revising Presbytery-books, who are to meet at such times and places as the Synods shall appoint.

4. The moderator of the Synod useth always to be both a member and moderator of the committee of overtures, and the Synod clerk attends that committee; all other committees choose their own moderator and clerk.

5. Though these committees be no judicatories for decision, yet they are in a judicial way constituting themselves with a moderator and clerk, passing their opinions and reports by the plurality of votes, but they do not take depositions of witnesses, nor examine them upon oath, unless thereto particularly empowered by the Synod.

6. What matters any of them do prepare for the Synod, their moderator or clerk do report it to the next Session of the Synod, and the same ought to be given in writing.

7. Each committee is to consist of ministers and ruling elders.

8. These committees may, upon occasion to facilitate their work, subcommit any part of their work that lieth before them to a few of their own number.

9. These committees may likewise advise with one another in weighty affairs, even before they make their report to the Synod, thereby the more to prevent debates in affairs when laid before them.

SECT. 3.—Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Overtures.

1. This Committee in General Assemblies is counted the greatest Committee, and in Synods it useth to consist of some of the brethren of greatest experience.

2. Before it are to be tabled all things which are desired by any Presbytery of the Synod, or member, to be made acts and orders in the Synod, for regulating any part of the discipline, for preventing of abuses in either discipline, worship, or government of the Church.

3. And the consideration of the state and condition of the whole Church, within the bounds of the Synod, is their work, how either to prevent any hazard thereto, or forward the good thereof, in promoting piety.

4. The overtures which come from any Presbytery are to be considered in the first place, before the overtures of the particular members.

5. This Committee is duly to consider what provision is made already by any acts, either of General Assemblies or of the Synod, concerning any thing proposed, and if a suitable remedy be already fallen upon, and care taken by the Church before, then the Committee is there to rest, and practise what was the determination of the Church in that case, and not needlessly to multiply acts and orders, which imply either an ignorance of what hath been enacted, or culpable negligence in not putting the acts in execution.

6. It is much to be desired and pressed that any overture which is made may be given in writing, to facilitate the Committee's proceedings therein.

7. Though there be some out of every Presbytery in this Committee, yet any other member of the Synod ought to be admitted to deliver in any other overture he hath to make.

SECT. 4.—Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Bills, References, and Appeals.

1. This Committee being met, and having constituted themselves, chosen their moderator and clerk, are to receive all such references and appeals, petitions or addresses, which any Presbytery or person hath, and desire to be brought in before the Synod, which they are distinctly to read and consider, in order to their preparing them to the Synod.

2. They are to be careful to lop off all unnecessary work and business from the Synod, and, therefore, if they can so dispatch such work themselves, as to satisfy or silence the appealers by their advice and counsel, they may do it.

3. The references which are regularly brought before a Synod must be, for ordinary, by the Presbyteries, and not from church-sessions immediately, and these references are either for advice and counsel, or of process for decision.

4. If the reference be for advice, the committee is to consider the weight of the case; and withal, if they can satisfy and give such light to the Presbytery who are referring the affair for advice, so as that they acquiesce therein, then there is no need of bringing it in to the Synod.

5. But if both the Presbytery referring, and the committee, find it fit to take the Synod's judgment in the affair, they are to bring it in before the Synod, but yet so prepared, as that they represent it with an overture, giving their opinion in the case, thereby to facilitate the Synod's work; and this is no prelimitation of the Synod's judgment.

6. If the reference be of a process for the Synod's deciding the same, the committee is to consider, first, how it comes before them; for in this and all other references and appeals from a Presbytery to a Synod, the extracts thereof out of the Presbytery books are first to be produced, else it is not to be regarded.

7. The committee are to consider if the parties concerned were by the Presbytery summoned to appear before the Synod, to answer the process, in order to decision, and if cited, they are to be called and heard.

8. In these references, as also in appeals from a Presbytery to a Synod for deci-

sion, wherein two or more parties are concerned, all the committee's proper work is to see that all the steps of the proceedings are regular, and, if they find it so, they are to lay it before the Synod, without giving any other judgment than that the affair cometh orderly before the Synod.

9. If the committee find an appeal unreasonable in itself, as to the matter, though as to the form it be orderly, they are prudently to deal with the appellars to withdraw the appeal, lest they come to be censured for the same, and to prevent their own being exposed, and the Synod needlessly taken up; wherein, if they prevail, they do good to all concerned.

10. Such prudent care may and ought this committee to take of what petitions, whether of complaints or for charity, come before them, as if they see need to present any of them to the Synod, they may therewith propose some overture that may facilitate the Synod's work, which is always to be done with great submission to the free judgment of the Synod itself.

SECT. 5.—Of the Proceedings of the Committees for the Examination of the Presbytery Books or Registers.

1. It is a part of the Synod's work to revise the registers of the Presbyteries within their bounds; and because it cannot be done in a full Synod, therefore it is fit that each Presbytery book be referred to a small committee of four or five ministers, and one or two elders, to revise and examine; and that these be out of other Presbyteries than that to which the book doth belong.

2. This committee is exactly and diligently to read over all the sederunts of the Presbytery, since the last time the book was revised and marked by the Synod clerk, and are to have their animadversions, if they be considerable, in writing, to give in to the Synod; and they are to notice whether the Presbytery book be signed by their moderator and clerk, according to the 11th Act, General Assembly, anno 1698.

3. If they find their remarks material, they are to acquaint the moderator of that Presbytery, that thereby they may get what satisfaction they can, before they give in their animadversions to the full Synod.

4. In their revising, they are not only to notice what they think amiss in any of their proceedings recorded, and that whether as to matter or form, but likewise to see if everything proper and fit to have been recorded be there exactly set down.

5. And they are likewise to notice, by what is recorded, if the Presbytery be guilty of any omissions, particularly in not following out processes, or other affairs, unto a suitable period.

6. This committee is to notice, if by the book it appear that the Presbytery hath been diligent and punctual in obeying all the acts and orders of the General Assembly and former Synods.

7. This committee is to give their report to the Synod of their having perused the said register, and their remarks are to be read, and the Presbytery heard thereanent, and then removed; and here the privy censures of that Presbytery useth to be made by the Synod, (as in section 7th following,) who do thereupon approve or censure the Synod as they see cause, and record the same, according to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1700.

SECT. 6.—Of the Synod's Proceedings in Processes.

1. All processes brought before the Synod use to come in to the same, by the moderator or clerk of the committee for bills, references, and appeals, reporting from the said committee the process which was first brought before them.

2. These processes may be brought in either, *1st*, by a bill and petition; or, *2dly*, by a reference from the Presbytery; or, *3dly*, by an appeal from a Presbytery by any party lesed.

3. Sometimes a person or parish, particularly in cases of transportation of a minister sought, will think they have ground to complain to a Synod of the Presbytery's procedure, when they have not appealed from them, and address the Synod to interpose their authority, for either the more speedy dispatch of the depending process, or to put it into another channel.

4. Here the Synod may upon this take a cognition of the Presbytery's procedure in the process, and, if they find that the Presbytery have unduly retarded the process, or in some preliminary gone out of the ordinary road, to the prejudice of the complainers, they are to endeavour to convince the Presbytery thereof, and to give directions how to proceed for the future.

5. And sometimes, if they find the Presbytery tenacious, and find ground to jealousy their future conduct, the Synod may adjoin to the Presbytery a certain number of correspondents from neighbouring Presbyteries to assist them in that process, and require them to call for these correspondents.

6. And if the affair be pressing, sometimes a Synod, though they will not take it presently or immediately out of the Presbytery's hand, yet will appoint a Synod *pro re nata*, or entrust that power to call a Synod *pro re nata* in the hands of the moderator, with the advice of some few, to secure the dispatch of the affair.

7. But more frequently affairs and processes come from Presbyteries to the Synod, by references, or sometimes for advice only, and sometimes the decision of a process is by the Presbytery itself referred to the determination of the Synod.

8. A Presbytery will sometimes think it fit to refer for advice some weighty difficult case, and the Synod are seriously to perpend all the circumstances of the affair; and will find it fit, even after the committee of bills have brought the case to the Synod, to refer the more full consideration of all the circumstances to some select experienced brethren.

9. And with them the Presbytery concerned may use a greater freedom in laying out the intricacies of the affair, which prudence might hinder to bring before the open and full Synod, unless the most prudent members of the Synod thought it necessary.

10. In many of those cases wherein prudence is to have the chief place in determining, it should be found many times fit to give the advice rather in a private than in a public way.

11. If the reference come from the Presbytery for decision, then the Synod followeth the same method in considering and determining the process as in the processes which come in before them by appeals.

12. The Synod's first step is to see what the committee hath said to it, however, though they are not to give in their judgment *in causa*, yet as to its lying orderly before the Synod, they may, else they should lay it before the Synod, but *cum nota*, the Synod then causeth the appeal to be read, whereby it is seen who are the parties, and how they are sisted before them.

13. So the parties are called, who compearing, both the Presbytery appealed from, and the adverse party to the appellers, (if there be any,) use to object against the appeal itself, and allege that it is *male appellatum*, and is not in the terms of the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno 1694*, &c.

14. This ordinarily brings in a preliminary debate, which frequently obligeth the Synod to a decision of the question, *bene* or *male appellatum*, wherein the Synod used to sustain the appeal, even though no direct act of injustice be done, the appellers being either delayed in getting the Presbytery's sentence beyond what was necessary, or getting another (and not in their opinion so equal a) sentence as they in justice desired, this being thought a sufficient reason for an appeal.

15. Sometimes the Synod will sustain the appeal *cum nota*, where they proceed to the cause, remembering the precipitancy or other informality.

16. The Synod having sustained the appeal, they proceed to hear the process *ab oro*, reading all the papers *hinc inde*, before they allow the parties to speak *viva voce*.

17. After all which, if there be written answers given to the appellers' reasons, they are given in with the appeal, the Synod useth frequently, without hearing it, to fall to the consideration of the cause.

18. But if answers be not given in, or that some new matter hath risen to clear the

affair, both the appellars, and then the Presbytery and others concerned, are heard *viva voce* in the cause.

19. The moderator ought here to keep them close to a hearing and reply, without giving them leave to duple, and consume the Synod's time.

20. When the Synod come to deliberate and determine, the parties are removed; and here the Presbytery appealed from are reckoned parties; and if the process be of a transportation of a minister, sought to a place where there is more than one minister, all those who are to be colleagues to the minister, if he be transported, are looked upon as parties, but not the rest of the Presbytery to which he is sought, though they concurred in the call.

21. The Synod, if the affair be of a great weight and intricacy, useth, after they have debated and deliberated thereanent, to call in the parties to see if they have any thing further that is new to say, before they come to a decision, and then causeth one of the members pray for light and guidance of God in their vote, which, when done, and parties removed, they come to a decision by vote.

22. If the affair be a transportation of a minister, and both the parishes where he is, and that to which he is sought, be within the bounds of the same Presbytery or Synod, in that case, the sentence of these judicatories should take effect and be obeyed; seeing these judicatories are equally concerned in both parishes, and may be thought fittest to judge both of the disproportion of the parishes, and the suitableness of the person called for either of these places; yet there is liberty of appeal to superior judicatories allowed to any who think themselves lesed, in order to have redress, by taking off the sentence, or censuring the judicatory complained of, if they be found to have malversed; but if any be found to appeal or complain unnecessarily they should be severely censured. See the 6th Act, General Assembly, *anno* 1694.

SECT. 7.—*Of the Privy Censures of Presbyteries.*

1. It is a part of the Synod's work to keep a watch over one another, and for that end to have privy censures of Presbyteries each Synod, and ordinarily at the close of the Synod, or when the report anent the Presbytery book comes in.

2. At these censures the Synod useth to remove all persons, except the members of the Synod, from being present, that the members may speak the more freely; and that because several things come there to be inquired into which are not fit to bring to public, at least till maturely considered.

3. At these censures each Presbytery are removed by themselves, and all its members present, both ministers and elders, beginning at the Presbytery which was first called in the roll during that Synod.

4. The moderator of the Synod doth likewise remove with his own Presbytery, and the last moderator of the Synod belonging to another Presbytery doth take the chair.

5. When the Presbytery is removed, the moderator of the Synod useth to inquire at the Synod, if any have heard of the behaviour of that Presbytery, or any member thereof, that it was in any thing offensive, either in their personal walk or doctrine, or in the exercise of any part of their ministerial office, or in the exercise of Church discipline in Kirk-Sessions or in the Presbytery. These, and such like things, the moderator doth not only inquire in general of the whole Synod, but he doth more particularly inquire by name at some of the brethren of the Presbyteries next adjacent to the removed Presbytery.

6. At this time it is usual and proper to the Synod to call for the committee's report, which was appointed for the revising the register of that Presbytery, inquiring at the moderator of that committee what they have observed censurable in their book or register? What is not recorded which should have been inserted? What is recorded which is irregular or unsuitable?

7. According as the Synod finds these reports, so their moderator doth behave to the Presbytery when called in; if nothing but a savoury report of it, and of their diligence, faithfulness, and harmony, amongst themselves, and successfulness in the work of the Gospel, then the moderator doth, in the Synod's name, encourage and com-

mend them, bless God on their account, and exhort them to go on in their Master's service.

8. If there hath been any thing informed which is any way amiss, the moderator doth inform the Presbytery called in thereof; and if it be any thing alleged to have been done in or by the Presbytery itself, then the moderator of that Presbytery useth to answer, informing the Synod of that affair, which, if it take off the accusation, the Synod rests satisfied.

9. But if the Synod do not rest satisfied, then, after a full hearing, the Synod gives their opinion and orders to that Presbytery, as the case requires.

10. If the accusation concern any particular member of the Presbytery or session, then the moderator of the Synod doth inform the Presbytery thereof; and the moderator of the Presbytery having given an answer, showing their diligence in it, or ignorance of it, do receive the Synod's advice and instructions how to behave themselves.

11. Here, likewise, in this case, first, the person accused hath liberty and occasion to answer for himself, though the case be not taken by the Synod to be determined, but only inquired into, that thereby they may know what care the Presbytery has taken therein.

12. At their privy censures, likewise, the minutes of the former Synod's censures of that Presbytery are to be read, thereby to see if any thing was committed to them, and their diligence called for.

13. The moderator of the Synod doth likewise inquire at the Presbytery called concerning the state of that Presbytery—what vacancies are therein—what diligence they are using to get them supplied—what difficulties the Presbyteries meet with in their endeavours to plant church vacancies;—how frequent the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered in the congregations in their bounds—and what bursars of theology they do entertain—how the acts and orders of the Assemblies, especially of the immediately preceding General Assembly, are put in execution—what number of Papists or other heretics are in their bounds, and what means are used to suppress and prevent the same—what discipline is exercised against profaneness and scandalous persons, especially those of any note and quality? and such like questions; and according as the censures are, so the Synod doth either commend, advise, admonish, or rebuke and censure.

14. After the first Presbytery hath passed their censure, and they set in their places, then the next, and so round, every Presbytery is removed, the rest judging and censuring.

SECT. 8.—*Of the Closing of the Synod.*

1. All affairs which lie before the Synod being considered, before they dissolve they take notice of the attendance of those sent by them to attend other Synods, and of correspondents from other Synods to them, and makes choice of persons to correspond again with other Synods; and then the whole minutes of all the sederunts of that Synod are read, and the moderator ordered to see that the clerk fairly record their acts and proceedings in the register, which the moderator is to sign, and the clerk likewise, and the same ordered to be presented to the next General Assembly, according to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1698.

2. Then the Synod doth nominate and appoint the time and place of meeting to the next Synod.

3. The roll of all the absentees are marked and recorded, in order to be censured by the next Synod.

4. The moderator doth close the Synod with solemn prayer and thanksgiving.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND METHODS IN GENERAL ASSEMBLIES.

SECT. 1.—*Of the Constitution and Opening of this Judicatory.*

1. The General Assembly is a judicatory superior immediately to all Synods, and, being National, is the supreme ecclesiastical judicatory in this National Church.

2. The time and place of meeting of the General Assembly is such as was appointed by the former, except when they meet *pro re nata*, or that the supreme magistrate do call the same to consult therewith.

3. This judicatory is constituted of ministers and elders delegated from each Presbytery within the Church, each Presbytery being allowed to commission two, three, four, or more, proportionally to the largeness of the Presbytery, so that they delegate not less than a sixth part, nor more than a fifth part of the ministry, according to the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1694.

4. Each of the universities of the kingdom used to commission one of the professors or members of their university, being either a minister or ruling elder, who is thereby likewise a member of the Assembly.

5. The day before the Assembly meet, the commissioners nominated are to give in their commissions to the clerk of the Assembly, that thereby the roll of the members may be drawn up against the time they meet, according to the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1698.

6. The day of meeting being come, the members being met, the moderator of the last Assembly doth preach to the Assembly a sermon suited to the occasion, after which he doth from the pulpit intimate to the members of the Assembly to repair to the Assembly-House.

7. When the members of the Assembly are met in the Assembly-House, the last moderator doth take the chair, and open the Assembly with prayer.

8. After prayer, the moderator ordereth the clerk to call the rolls, and begins with the Synod which in the former Assembly was called in the second place, leaving the Synod which was then first called now last, by which rotation the equality is better preserved.

9. At the calling of each Presbytery the commission is read, and in case there be any difficulty in any commission, or controversy concerning it, it is referred to a committee of controverted commissions to try and report.

10. Their commissions being read, their next work is to choose a moderator, which they fall to do immediately that same session, if some particular contingent reason move them not to delay.

11. The moderator is chosen out of a leet made up by the old moderator, naming three of the Assembly, with freedom to any member of the Assembly to add if the Assembly think fit.

12. When the leet is agreed to, those named in it are removed, and as they remove, do give their votes in election of some one or other of those upon the leet.

13. The votes being carefully marked, on whom by majority of votes the election doth fall, he is declared moderator; and he and the others being called in, the old moderator doth declare the minister chosen to be moderator, and calling him to the chair, he doth immediately take his place.

14. The new moderator being now in the chair, his first work is to mind the Assembly to choose a clerk, if there be not a fixed one; and then to choose their committees, which useth to be done that same first session, especially the committee for overtures, and another for bills, references, and appeals.

15. It hath been the laudable custom of the Assemblies at their first sederunt to set apart the next day for prayer in the Assembly-House, for a blessing on their meeting and actings, and to adjourn the Assembly for two or three days, that both prayer may be gone about, and committees may sit, in the meantime, to prepare the work for the Assembly.

16. In adjourning the Assembly from one session to another, it should always be done so as that time may be allowed for committees to meet to prepare business for the Assembly, that no session be without work prepared for them.

17. The moderator, before the rising of the Assembly, doth not only intimate the time of the meeting of the next Assembly, but likewise of the several public committees, and the beadle or officers do publish the same at the door of the Assembly-House.

SECT. 2.—*Of the Committees of the General Assembly.*

1. The General Assembly consisting of so great a body of members, and the affairs which come before them being of the greatest and most universal concern to the whole Church, makes committees very necessary.

2. And though committees have no negative over the Assembly, yet no business ought to come in directly to the Assembly till it be proposed to and prepared by some committee to whom it properly belongs.

3. The ordinary committees used in Assemblies are, 1. The Committee for Overtures; 2. The Committee for References, Bills, and Appeals; 3. The Committee for Elections and Commissions; 4. The Committees for Revising Synod Books and Registers, and of Commissions of General Assemblies; 5. A Committee for Censuring of Absentees, and nominating Ministers to preach before the King or Queen's Commissioner if present.

4. The moderator of the Assembly is always moderator of the Committee of Overtures, and the principal clerk of the Assembly doth attend it; and the other committees doth choose their moderator and clerk, but the sub-clerk of the General Assembly doth attend the Committee for Bills, &c.

5. As the Assembly finds its business, so it may, for dispatch of the same, commit the preparing of any particular affair to a new committee to be appointed by the Assembly, and that sometimes even after the business hath been tabled before the Assembly by some committee, when the Assembly finds difficulty therein.

6. And likewise, any committee of the Assembly may sub-commit any overture or affair which comes before them to a few of their own number, to prepare it for their own more easy consideration and preparation of it for the Assembly.

7. It is very reasonable and frequent in important and difficult cases for the Assembly, after they have first heard an affair brought before them from a committee, to remit it back to the same committee, and to desire any of their members, who are diffculted as to their judgment therein, to repair to that committee, that they may there debate the matter freely, with less danger and more decorum, than to altercate and debate in plain Assembly.

8. As the judgment and opinion of a committee which they may propose in any affair they prepare for the Assembly, is nowise to preclude the Assembly from its full freedom, so it doth not even tie up the votes and judgments of those members of the committee who voted for giving such opinion to the Assembly, to continue in the same sentiments, if the reasonings in plain Assembly do convince them to be of another mind, seeing they may receive further and new light, and walk conform thereunto.

9. All committees of Assemblies are to consist of members of several Synods, and in the more numerous committees some out of every Synod.

10. All committees of Assemblies are to consist both of ministers and ruling elders.

11. All reports from committees are to be given in to the Assembly in writing.

SECT. 3.—*Of the Proceedings in the Committee of Overtures.*

1. This being the most considerable committee of the Assembly, some of the most prudent members fittest for foresight and deliberation of what is fit to be brought to the Church as an act, rule, and constitution, are to be nominated in this committee.

2. The first work of this committee, in ordinary, ought to be the inquiry into the opinion and judgment of the several Presbyteries, as to what passed in the last preceding Assembly as to overtures, that thereby the several Presbyteries of the Church might have opportunity to consider ripely of the same, and send their opinion to the Assembly.

3. If this committee find they have not sufficient information from their own members, which useth to be one at least from every Presbytery in the Church, the committee is to call for more members out of every Presbytery, thereby to know exactly the sentiments of the Presbyteries as to those overtures passed in the last preceding Assembly.

4. If this committee find the plurality of the Presbyteries against any of the overtures passed by the former Assembly, the committee cannot prepare that overture to the Assembly, to be by them passed as a binding rule and constitution to the Church. See the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1697.

5. But if this committee, by the opinion of the Presbyteries sent by their commissioners, find light how to solve their objections, or to explain or alter the overtures made, so as it may appear to them that the overture may pass when amended, and the matter seem of weight and use, this committee may prepare the same to the Assembly as a new overture, to be by them passed and transmitted again to the several Presbyteries for their consideration.

6. If the committee in this inquiry find that many Presbyteries have neglected to take under their consideration these overtures made the last Assembly, that is not to hinder the committee to proceed in preparing these overtures into acts, to be considered and passed in the Assembly; and if the committee shall find those Presbyteries who took the same under their consideration to be for them, and that the major part of the Presbyteries be for it, they are to report the same, but the number of members of each Presbytery should be seriously considered.

7. If the committee in this inquiry find the smaller number of the Presbyteries who have considered the overtures to be against passing of the same, though the committee thereby are not bound to sist from preparing the same into acts, yet they should and ought deliberately to consider the weight of the reasons which induced these (though smaller) number of Presbyteries to be against the overtures, which may induce them likewise to lay aside thoughts of the same.

8. It belongs likewise to this committee to consider all overtures for new acts and rules to be brought in before them by any Presbytery, or other particular persons, and to prepare the same for the Assembly as overtures.

9. It belongs also to this committee to make inquiry how the acts of former Assemblies have been obeyed and put in practice, and to make overtures thereanent.

10. It belongs to this committee to hear and consider the general grievances of the Church, and to propose to the Assembly remedies for the same.

11. And in effect, the state of the Church is under the consideration of this Committee, and what is fit to be done by the Assembly, in order to the advantage of the Gospel, is to be by this committee proposed to the Assembly.

SECT. 4.—Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Bills, References, and Appeals.

1. This committee being very considerable, some of the most prudent members, fittest for discipline, and most accurate in the punctual exercises thereof, and known in all the forms of proceeding, are to be nominated on this committee.

2. This committee makes no work to themselves, but only receives all references or appeals, or petitions, and bills directed to the Assembly.

3. These references come properly from the several Synods, whether for advice or of a process for decision; in managing and preparing whereof, this committee are to act as hath been directed in the Committee of Bills in Synods, in relation to other references from Presbyteries, Chap. IV. Sect. 4.

4. And such likewise should be this committee's method in preparing appeals, which most properly come from Synods to the Assemblies, as is there directed.

5. But as appeals are allowed from a Presbytery to a General Assembly, in case it fall out to meet before the next Synod of that bounds, so references may be admitted to the General Assembly from the Presbytery, in the same case of the Assembly's intervening.

6. Yet neither appeal nor reference from a kirk-session to an Assembly, *per saltum*, is to be admitted.

7. This committee uses to cause enrol affairs and to consider the same, according to the order of tabling thereof, (except in some extraordinary cases;) which is a great ease to those concerned, and prevents debates anent preference in discussing affairs; and, besides, it frees parties of much needless attendance.

8. As the committee in Synods, so much more in Assemblies, ought to study to lop off all unnecessary business from the Assembly, which they may do when they find either some gross escape in bringing the affair to the Assembly, or of no need, use, or advantage to bring the business to public, by dealing with the parties concerned to let it fall, and to satisfy them privately in the committee; but if those concerned will not be persuaded to lay it aside, the committee should transmit the same with their opinion to the General Assembly.

9. This method will have frequent success in laying by many idle, impertinent bills, petitions, and addresses to Assemblies, which, if publicly read, would necessitate the Assembly to inflict censures on the addressers, and which is therefore better prevented.

10. In petitions and addresses it may facilitate the Assembly's work, and nowise impeach upon their freedom, for this committee to give their opinion what answer the same should have; and either hint the reason of their opinion in the written report the committee makes, or for their moderator to show the same to the Assembly speedily to give them light.

11. When this committee hath prepared any affair to the Assembly, it is the part of the moderator, or clerk of the committee, to acquaint the Moderator of the Assembly thereof, before it be brought in plain Assembly; and all processes or other papers to be considered by the General Assembly, should be delivered to the clerk in the intervals betwixt the diets of the Assembly's meeting, according to the 7th act of the General Assembly, 1694.

SECT. 5.—*Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Synod Books, and the Commissions of former Assemblies.*

1. It being a part of the General Assembly's work to visit Synod books, the Assembly useth in the beginning to call for these books from the commissioners of the Presbyteries in the bounds of the said Synods, and appoint a committee of some few brethren out of other Synods to revise the several books.

2. These Committees are carefully to observe the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th directions given to the committees of Synods for revising Presbytery books, Chap. IV. Sect. 5.

3. And the General Assembly being the greater and more solemn judicatory, these committees are to be more cautious as to what they bring publicly before the Assembly of their animadversions; imprudent publishing whereof, in any thing which may be otherwise remedied, being always prejudicial to the Church; and, therefore, the members of the Synod to whom the work belongs, moderator and clerk, or such of them as can be had, should be present at the revising of their book, or at least heard as to any remarks that may be made, before the same be brought into the General Assembly.

4. Seeing there can be no private censures of Synods in a General Assembly, the commissioners being from Presbyteries, not Synods; and that only a small number of the members of a Synod are present, these committees may bring in their report so soon as they are ready to the Assembly, and not leave them all to the close of the Assembly.

5. It is likewise a part of an Assembly's work for revising of the records of the commissioners appointed by the former Assembly; or of any other Assembly not yet approved, and that committee is to proceed as the other above committee, taking still the more narrow inspection, as they are of more universal concern and greater weight.

SECT. 6.—*Of the General Assembly's Methods of Proceedings.*

1. The General Assembly being constituted, and its committees having prepared the work for it, they fall to prosecute the same in full Assembly, whereof the Mo-

derator doth first give an account of what the Committee of Overtures have prepared for the Assembly.

2. Yet so, as likewise daily bills and processes, prepared by the Committee of Bills, and affairs from other committees, may be called for, and brought in according to the weight and necessity of these affairs, and conveniency of the Assembly.

3. When any thing is proposed by the Committee of Overtures, in order to its being made an act, rule, and constitution of the Church, the Assembly uses deliberately to weigh and reason the equity, conveniency, and expediency of the proposal.

4. If the Assembly be clear in these, it is to be considered whether any former Assembly hath determined any thing concerning that matter, and if there be any act already made, then it is not only needless but inconvenient to multiply acts.

5. Yet so, that if the acts be obsolete, the renewing thereof, with any new amendment or addition, may be proper for the consideration of the Assembly.

6. In renewing any act of the former Assemblies, the Assembly is duly to consider the circumstances of the Church at the time when it was made, which may be called for the act in that dress in which it passed; and if the present circumstances of the Church do not quadrate with the former, the act, if it be found necessary to be revived, is to be renewed in such a manner as may best suit the present exigency and juncture.

7. Due consideration of all the circumstances of the Church, and ordering all their acts, with a reference thereunto, is absolutely necessary for a faithful and prudent Assembly, and will require alterations in methods and rules of prudence, without any imputation of unfaithful receding from the commendable practice of predecessors.

8. What is proposed in the form of an act from the Committee of Overtures is to be considered by the Assembly, and that not only whether it be reasonable or not, but whether it was proposed and passed by the former Assembly as an overture, and by them committed to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church.

9. And if it was remitted or not, the Assembly is not only to inquire if the Committee of Overtures did distinctly try at the brethren of all the different Presbyteries of the Church what their Presbyteries' opinion was therein; but though the committee hath done that, yet the Assembly is at least to give leave and opportunity to the commissioners from any Presbytery to inform the Assembly of the judgment of their Presbytery in the affair.

10. In the Assembly's making the *calcula* whether the more general opinion of all the Presbyteries hath been for the overtures passing into an act, no other consideration is to be had of those Presbyteries who neglected to consider the overture at all, or to instruct their commissioners thereanent, than to look on them as *non liquets*; and so, likewise, in case any Presbytery do not send their commissioners to the Assembly, or that they be not present.

11. When the Assembly hath made the computation, that it find that the plurality of the Presbyteries, who have taken the overtures under consideration, do relish the same, yet if any considerable number of Presbyteries do not only not relish it, but if some of them be stiff and peremptory in their dislike or refusal, the Assembly is wisely to consider whether the grieving a fewer number of Presbyteries may not be more prejudicial to the Church than the pleasing a greater number, and rather delay the passing an act that may be grievous to some.

12. And this is to have the greater weight if the overture desired to be made an act may without considerable prejudice be delayed, and that the Assembly find that those Presbyteries who are reluctant be unclear in point of light; an Assembly being always called to be compassionate to tender consciences.

13. Though the Assembly find no such difficulty from the opinion Presbyteries generally give, yet it is to be considered if any encroachment hath arisen, or be by any proposed, which hath not occurred to the several Presbyteries, if it be found to be material, the act is to be delayed or laid aside, though they have the consent of the several Presbyteries to pass it.

14. That even albeit the instructions of the commissioners from the several Presbyteries be to pass the overtures, yet these instructions, which are negative, are to

have greater weight with commissioners than those that are positive; and commissioners in this are to walk according to their own light, their votes being personal.

15. Though no such difficulties do occur on the reading of the act, or be by any proposed, yet the Assembly should, for the greater solemnity, and to evidence the full deliberation, after reading one day, let the act proposed and debated lie on the table till another sederunt, according to the 16th act of the General Assembly, 1700, that nothing of precipitation may be alleged in the Assembly's exercise of their power.

16. If the act pass *nemine contradicente*, that unanimity is to be marked and recorded by the clerk.

17. No such act is to pass without a solemn and distinct vote, by calling the full roll of the Assembly.

18. If an overture be proposed to be transmitted to the several Presbyteries, the Assembly is to take it under their serious consideration, and to deliberate upon it with the same concern as if it were to pass for a standing and binding rule, and that the rather, because, when once an overture is passed in an Assembly, it will be reputed to be in some measure the judgment of the Church, and the Church will meet with the same reflections as if it were made an act.

19. In considering these overtures, the Assembly should make them as complete and clothed with all the provisions, limitations, explications, or restrictions, that they would desire the act itself to have, that after it hath been remitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries, and returned approved to the ensuing Assembly, it may not be found in any part defective, and therefore tempt that Assembly either to lay it wholly aside or add some new thing to it, which had not been remitted to the consideration of the Presbyteries, which is always to be carefully seen to.

20. These overtures passed in the Assembly are always to be printed, that thereby they may be published, and in the title to bear not only the title they are to bear when acts, drawn from the subject-matter, but that they are overtures remitted to be considered by Presbyteries.

21. It may fall out that overtures are made in an Assembly that come not from the Committee of Overtures, as when an overture hath been made in the Committee of Overtures, and by them rejected, and yet the proposers resolve to know the Assembly's mind thereanent, or when any member, on occasion of any affair which lieth before the Assembly, doth, when it occurreth, mention a new overture as relating to the subject in hand. In this last case the Assembly ought to remit it to the consideration of the Committee for Overtures without any farther debate about it.

22. But if the former fall out, the Moderator of the Assembly, upon the overtures being proposed which were rejected in the committee, is to give account of the reasons which moved the committee so to do, which, if they satisfy the Assembly, the proposer is to acquiesce, but if they do not satisfy, and that any member of the Assembly second the overture, it is to be maturely weighed.

23. Though no committee have a negative, yet the Assembly in this case will find it fit to remit the farther consideration and preparation of that overture for the Assembly, either to the Committee of Overtures, or to a particular committee whom for that end they may appoint.

24. The Assembly, in their proceeding concerning any process which is brought from the Committee of Bills, doth follow the same method which Synods take, Chap. V. Sect. 6; and so likewise they may do when the process comes by a reference, as is directed in that same section.

25. The Assembly will sometimes, on occasion of any complaint of the remiss execution of any act of former Assemblies, find it sufficient that the moderator, in the name of the Assembly, do exhort all to amend what is neglected, without making any new act thereanent, unless what is complained of be growing and of dangerous consequence.

26. If acts be neglected, and growing to a disuse, that danger is both to be prevented and remedied by fortifying the former, not only by a renewal, but by adding more severe censures.

27. A General Assembly may have business frequently laid before them by the King or Queen, either communicated to them by the King or Queen themselves, or

by a letter, or by their High Commissioner, representing their royal person and authority in the Assembly.

28. If by a letter, which is to be opened and read with all honour and respect in plain Assembly, and then the Assembly uses to remit the consideration or answering of the same to the Committee of Overtures, or to nominate a particular committee for that effect, which usually brings in a draught thereof to the Committee for Overtures, and they use to prepare it farther, and transmit it to the General Assembly.

29. When the committee brings in the draught of an answer to the King's or Queen's letter to the Assembly, it is there considered and amended, if need be, and, being passed by a vote, is signed in plain Assembly by the Moderator in their presence and name, and at their appointment, and this as soon as can be.

30. If, on the consideration of the said letter, the Committee of Overtures bring in any overtures in answer to the contents of that letter, they are considered by the Assembly *ut supra*.

31. And so, likewise, are any affairs which are laid before the Assembly by the supreme magistrate, or the High Commissioner.

32. And it falleth out frequently that letters from other persons or judicatories, and sometimes from foreign churches or divines, doth furnish work for the Assembly's consideration, which are all to be suitably pondered and discussed.

33. The Assembly hath likewise frequent occasions to address and make representations, and give several recommendations to the King or Queen, and some civil judicatories, and those in the government.

34. In these and all other their actings the Assembly are to be very exact and cautious, and keep within their own proper sphere, not meddling with things that do not belong to them in an ecclesiastical manner.

SECT. 7.—*Of the Commissions appointed by General Assemblies.*

1. It is very ordinary for Assemblies to find a necessity to remit several processes which come before them to a Commission, either for their weight craving greater time to deliberate, or because of some circumstance in the affair requiring some delay, or because the Assembly find it not convenient to stay together so long as to overtake them all. But it should be considered, if it may not be more expedient, that the Assembly determine in cases of appeals from Synods where they have been unanimous in their sentence, than to refer the final decision to a Commission, who may be of a smaller number than the Synod.

2. The Commissioners of the General Assembly can never have the power of the Assembly lodged in them, as to making acts, in any case, though they may have the ripening and preparing of rules and constitutions for an ensuing Assembly.

3. It is frequent that they have the ultimate and final determination of processes for transportation of ministers, for censures, or such like, communicated to them from the Assembly, and from whose sentence in these there is no appeal to the ensuing Assembly, though a complaint may be tabled before the next Assembly, against the Commission's proceedings, for which the Commission may be censured, if the Assembly find they deserve it.

4. All such Commissions ought to consist of ministers and elders, not only out of the different parts and Synods of the Church, but some out of every Presbytery, that there may be no ground of complaint, that some parts of the Church are not represented therein.

5. These Commissions use to be ordered to meet monthly, both for dispatch of affairs, and likewise *ne quid detrimenti Ecclesia capiat*, or any emergency, yet so as the more weighty and considerable business use to be delayed till their quarterly meetings; and it is generally thought fit that their power continue till the meeting of the ensuing Assembly. And no Commission ought or can be granted by an Assembly to continue any longer than till the meeting of the next Assembly.

6. The Commission of the General Assembly is always not only to be subject to the censure of the next ensuing Assembly, but likewise the proceedings and register

of their actings are to be cognosed by a committee of the ensuing Assembly, that upon their report, the Assembly may approve or annul their actings, though no particular complaint be made by any person lesed by them.

7. The Commission, in affairs committed to them for decision, are to proceed in the same method and way which Assemblies take in trying and judging any affair.

8. It is the frequent work of Commissions to take care to see that due regard be had, and obedience given, to the actings and resolutions of the former Assemblies, particularly the last.

9. They are frequently required to give advice, and sometimes assistance to Synods and Presbyteries, in urgent and difficult cases, and sometimes for that end, to send some of their number to several parts of the Church, as they are allowed to do by the Assembly who did commission them.

10. If the Assembly do not appoint their moderator and clerk to attend them in these stations, they may nominate their own moderator and clerk.

11. All such Commissions are to be diligent and careful to keep within the bounds of their Commissions, though sometimes, on extraordinary occasions, they have given advice; or done some act of necessity for the present good of the Church, and which could admit no delay, which an ensuing Assembly hath approved of.

12. But herein Commissions should take care and be sure that it be *in materia necessaria*, and that their resolution be clearly the known mind of the Church; and that therein they take all the advice they can get of their brethren, and judicatories of the Church, though not of their number.

SECT. 8.—*Of the Closing of the General Assembly.*

1. All the affairs which the Assembly could overtake being brought to a close, some few brethren are to be nominated to assist the moderator and clerk in revising the minutes and proceedings of that Assembly, before the same be recorded in their registers, and to determine what of their acts are fit to be printed, and to give orders thereanent; and then the moderator causeth read the minutes of the last sederunt, which being done, he may discourse to the Assembly concerning the good Providence of God, that brought them together, and in allowing them the countenance and protection of the supreme magistrate, and this he is to signify the Assembly's sense of, and then the moderator is to exhort the brethren to faithfulness, loyalty, and diligence in their station, and such like.

2. The moderator having understood the mind of the Assembly, as to the particular time and place of the next Assembly's meeting, he doth, in their name, represent the same to the King or Queen, or their Commissioner, if present, and, upon their agreeing thereto, it is to be recorded by the Assembly's order.

3. Then the moderator closeth the Assembly with solemn prayer, singing of Psalms, and pronouncing of the blessing.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MARCH 29, 1705.

I.

Sess. 1, March 29, 1705.—The Queen's Commission to William Marquis of Annandale, produced and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this National Church, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by the Right Honourable

William Marquis of Annandale, principal Secretary of State, her Majesty's commission, under the Great Seal of this kingdom, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordained the same to be recorded in their registers, the tenor whereof follows:—"ANNA," &c.

II.

Eodem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented the Queen's most gracious letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. We are very well satisfied with the accounts we have had of the dutiful and moderate proceedings of former Assemblies, and, therefore, we do most willingly countenance your meeting at this time. We doubt not but you will improve this opportunity for promoting of piety and religion, discouraging vice and immorality, and preserving good order in the Church, in all which you shall have our hearty concurrence.

We do earnestly recommend to your care the planting of the vacant Churches with pious and learned ministers, especially in the Highlands and Islands. And it will be worthy of your serious consideration, to make a right distribution of those libraries which have been so piously mortified for the Churches in those parts. We have ordered the charges of transporting them to be paid out of our Treasury, and nothing shall be wanting on our part for encouraging so pious a design. We have appointed our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and councillor, William Marquis of Annandale, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, whose abilities and fitness to discharge this trust will (we doubt not) render him acceptable to you. Him we have fully instructed in what may be further necessary; and, therefore, you may give him entire trust and credit. We doubt not but you will proceed with your usual moderation and unanimity; and assuring you of our firm resolutions to maintain the established government of the Church, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 9th day of March 1705, and of our reign the 4th year.

By her Majesty's Command,

SEAFIELD.

Directed—To the Right Reverend the Moderator, Ministers and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, March 31, 1705.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We have received with all thankful acknowledgments the expressions your Majesty is pleased to make in your gracious letter, of your satisfaction with the proceedings of our former Assemblies, and the assurance you give us of your royal favour and countenance in our present meeting, which do not only oblige us, but we trust,

through the blessing of God, shall enable us to improve this opportunity for the great and good ends proposed.

Your Majesty's zealous concern for the promoting of piety, and the preserving and securing of the true Protestant religion every where, and even to all after ages, with your royal care to discourage vice and immorality, will be the perpetual glory of your reign and memory; so that we cannot but in our station, and by the means proper for us, with all sincerity, and in obedience to our great Lord and Master, endeavour to follow so great an example, and, for that end, to preserve in this Church the good order to which your Majesty is pleased to promise us your hearty concurrence.

We shall observe your Majesty's recommendation for planting of vacant Churches, especially in the Highlands and Islands, with learned and pious ministers; not doubting but that your Majesty will continue the encouragement that hitherto you have given us in that work, by contributing to the building and reparation of Churches, and settling legal provisions where the same are found wanting; nor shall we be less careful of the right distribution of those libraries which have been so piously mortified for the use of this Church, and which your Majesty so graciously promises to assist.

The choice your Majesty hath been pleased to make of the Marquis of Annandale to represent your royal person in this Assembly, after the experience we have had both of his sufficiency and fidelity to your Majesty, and his good affection toward this Church, is not only to us most acceptable, but a very particular and obliging proof of your Majesty's regard to all our concerns, which do most especially oblige us to give him that trust and credit which your Majesty requires.

Your Majesty having been pleased to give us all assurances of your firm resolution to maintain the established government of this Church, we shall ever study to testify our grateful sense of the same, and shall observe that moderation and unanimity your Majesty expects.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the good of all your people, the maintaining of the true Protestant religion, and the protection and comfort of all the Churches of Christ, and that he may still prosper your arms against all your enemies, specially that grand enemy both of religion and righteousness, who supports an usurper against your Majesty, and would impose upon us a Popish successor, to the subversion of our holy religion, and the ruin of this your ancient kingdom, and that a Protestant may always sit on the throne, which (we bless God) your Majesty expresses so much concern for, shall be the earnest and constant prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
W. CARSTAIRS, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 6, April 4, 1705, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Method and Form of Procedure of Judicatories of the Church against Scandalous Persons.

With respect to scandals, the grossness whereof makes it necessary to bring the persons guilty oftener than once before the congregation, the General Assembly does hereby appoint and ordain, that after such persons are convicted before the Session, it be judicially declared to them, that they have rendered themselves incapable of communion with the people of God in sealing ordinances, and that they be appointed to appear in public to be rebuked for their sin, whether they appear penitent or not, conform to the institution, 1 Tim. v. 20. And it is hereby referred to the respective judicatories of the Church concerned, to determine how often such delinquents shall appear in public, as they shall find it to tend most for edification; and the Ge-

neral Assembly ordains, that after a public rebuke, the ministers and elders be at farther pains in instructing the minds of the scandalous persons, if ignorant, in endeavouring to convince their consciences, and to bring them to a due sense of their sin, and to an engagement and serious resolution against all known sin, and to the performance of all known duty; and that the Session, upon satisfaction with their knowledge and sense of their sin, do admit them to the public profession of their repentance, in order to absolution; but if, after taking pains on them for some competent time for their instruction and conviction, they still remain grossly ignorant, insensible, and unreformed, the ministers and elders are to advise with the Presbytery of the bounds, and if the Presbytery shall see cause, that then the sentence of lesser excommunication be publicly pronounced against them in face of the congregation, from which they are not to be relaxed, nor admitted to make public profession of their repentance in order thereto, till the Session be satisfied with their knowledge, seriousness, and reformation. And, lastly, the General Assembly ordains, that the names of such as are under the foresaid censure of lesser excommunication be publicly read out the Lord's day immediately preceding that upon which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be administered.

V.

Sess. 7, April 5, 1705, post meridiem.—Act concerning Schools and Bursaries, and for Instructing Youth in the Principles of Religion.

The General Assembly, considering how much it will tend to the increase of Christian knowledge and learning, and the advantage of true piety and religion, that schools and colleges be duly regulated, and bursaries rightly bestowed; do therefore appoint and ordain, that ministers take care to have schools erected in every parish, conform to the acts of Parliament, for teaching of youth to read English, that the poor be taught upon charity, and that none be suffered to neglect the teaching of their children to read; and suchlike, that in no parish the minister recommend youth to be taught Latin upon charity in any grammar school; but after examining the said child or children in presence of three or four members of the Session, as to their promptitude and dexterity in reading and competent skill in writing, as to their virtuous inclinations, and as to the hopefulness of their proficiency, and that none be received in grammar schools to be taught Latin upon charity, but upon such recommendations; and also, that each Presbytery appoint a committee of their number yearly to examine the poor scholars in the grammar schools, and such within their bounds as go to colleges with an eye to bursaries, and suffer none to proceed but such as are very forward and good proficient and of good behaviour, and that ministers recommend none to bursaries but such as are so qualified; and the General Assembly does hereby recommend to regents and masters of colleges, that no person, especially bursars, be laureated, but upon a clear evidence of sufficiency of their learning and good behaviour after strict examination. And suchlike, recommends it to masters in universities, and all other instructors of youth, that they be careful to instruct their scholars in the principles of the Christian reformed religion, according to the holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith, or such books only as are entirely agreeable thereto. As also, recommends it to professors of theology, that they take very particular notice of the piety and Christian carriage of their students, and that their testimonials to Presbyteries for entering men on trials for the ministry, bear their knowledge of the persons recommended, as to their moral and pious carriage, as to their progress in their studies and their promising parts, and of their good affection to the government of Church and State, and that the professor does truly judge the person fit for the service of the Church, and Presbyteries are enjoined to receive none upon testimonials from professors but who are so attested.

VI.

Sess. 7, April 5, 1705, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Regulation of the Commissions of the General Assemblies, and the Attendance of Members thereon.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the opinions of the several Presbyteries, in relation to the regulating of the Commissions of the General Assemblies, returned to them in obedience to the 16th Act of the last Assembly, did, in pursuance thereof, after full reasoning and mature deliberation, agree as follows, viz.;—The General Assembly, considering how much it concerns the good of the Church, that any commissions which may be found needful to be granted by this and subsequent General Assemblies be duly regulated; do, therefore, appoint and ordain, that in time coming the whole Presbyteries of this National Church be equally represented in Commissions, and that their representation be proportional to the number of ministers that are in each Presbytery, the old ministers who were ordained before the year 1662 being always supernumerary; and suchlike, that two or three of the members of the General Assembly in each Synod be appointed as a committee to name the members of the Commission, and that the whole representatives of Presbyteries in the several Synods at the Assembly do meet by themselves, and name their respective members of the said committee; and it is hereby declared, that it shall be free to any member of the Assembly to attend the said committee if they think fit. And the General Assembly does appoint the expenses of the said commissioners to be borne and defrayed by the several Presbyteries which they represent, according to the number of the days of their attendance, and that their Presbyteries take care to supply their charges with preaching during their absence, upon the account foresaid; and that such as shall be absent from the said Commissions, or diets of the same, without a reasonable excuse, represented to and admitted by the Commission, be censured by their respective Synods; and that the Clerk of the Commission send lists of these absentees to the several Synods for that end, according to the 6th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1703.

VII.

Sess. 10, April 9, 1705, ante meridiem.—Sentence of Deposition against Mr John Hepburn.

The General Assembly took into their serious consideration the libel raised at the instance of John Blair, agent for the Kirk, against Mr John Hepburn, minister of the Gospel, before the Commission of the late General Assembly, and by them referred to this Assembly—his confessions of the chief articles thereof, contained in his answers subscribed with his hand—his judicial acknowledgments before the said Commission—all which were read before this Assembly; as also, his judicial acknowledgments before this Assembly: And, in particular, finding that he asserted that communicating with persons scandalous made those that communicate with them guilty of unworthy communicating—that he neither has dispensed the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to others, nor partaken thereof himself, for more than sixteen years—that both at Galston, Fenwick, Loudon, and Calder, which are all planted parishes, he has preached, without warrant or invitation from the ministers thereof, and has baptized children in some of them without testimonials from the ministers or elders, and has also married persons in those and other places without orderly proclamation—that he did intrude into the parish of Balmaghie, after the late minister thereof, Mr John M'Millan, was deposed, and accused the Presbytery who deposed him of rashness and precipitancy in their sentence, and declared that he thought himself obliged to testify against it both by word and deed: And that he also owned, that in that same place he asserted that the Church of Scotland had gone off the foundation, and acknowledged also his intrusion in Kirkconnel, and several other vacant parishes;—and that he also owned, that as to the substance, he said that

the ministers clapped people's heads, and profaned the Sacrament, by giving it to drunkards, swearers, &c.;—and that, if they got not another religion, they and their religion would go to the bottomless pit;—he acknowledged that he called the oath of allegiance to the Queen's Majesty, as taken by ministers, a black oath, and that it was the highest act of Erastianism, and beyond other encroachments and compliances since the Revolution;—he confessed that he admitted a man belonging to another planted congregation to a public profession of repentance, and thereafter allowed him to hold up his child in baptism, and that without the sentence or concurrence of any session or other judicatory:—all which are contrary to his ordination engagements to an orderly walk. And the General Assembly, also finding that the said Mr John has been guilty of a continued tract of such erroneous, seditious, and divisive doctrines, and schismatical courses, and that he obstinately continues therein, refusing to be reclaimed, notwithstanding the long forbearance, the mild and gentle methods, and great pains that have been used by this Church in their former Assemblies and Commissions; inasmuch as he was in the year 1694 processed;—and was by the General Assembly, in the year 1696, found to deserve the highest censures of the Church; and yet, to manifest all tenderness to him, and willingness to reclaim him, that Assembly made very condescending offers to him, which he having slighted, was suspended, with certification, that if he contravened that sentence, he should be deposed;—then the General Assembly, in the year 1699, upon his application, and his professing a regard to the judicatories of this Church, his promising to confine his ministry within the parish of Orr, and to entertain a correspondence with the ministry of this Church, did take off that sentence, and enjoined him to an orderly walk, and to subjection to the judicatories of this Church;—and to correspond with the Presbyteries of Dumfries and Kirkcudbright; with certification, that not only new disorders, but even the grounds of former processes, should be led against him. All which promises Mr John Hepburn having broken, this process was raised and pursued against him before the Commission of the late Assembly, who (after near a twelvemonth's dependence, much forbearance, and many condescending offers made to him) found the libel both relevant and proven, but yet delayed sentence, and renewed their injunctions to an orderly walk, to try yet again the said Mr John his obedience and subjection to the judicatories of this Church; at length, finding all to have no effect or influence upon him, did refer the whole affair to this Assembly. The General Assembly, considering all these things, and finding that the said Mr John Hepburn continues obstinate and self-willed, and being about to proceed to a final determination in this affair, after serious and mature deliberation, parties were called in, to join in prayer to God for light and direction how to judge in this so important and weighty a matter; and prayer being ended and parties removed, the General Assembly did, by their vote, depose the said Mr John Hepburn; likeas they hereby do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of the Church, and by virtue of the power and authority committed by him to them, actually depose the said Mr John Hepburn from the office of the holy ministry, prohibiting and discharging him to exercise the same, or any part thereof, in all time coming, under the pain of the highest censures of the Church; and appoints this sentence to be publicly intimated from the pulpit of the New Church of Edinburgh, the next Lord's Day, after the forenoon sermon, by the minister that preaches there, and afterwards, with all convenient diligence, in the Kirk of Orr, and in all the remanent churches within the bounds of the Synods of Glasgow, Galloway, and Dumfries; and ordains the Presbytery of Dumfries to declare the Kirk of Orr vacant so soon as they can; and appoints extracts hereof to be sent to the several Presbyteries of these bounds for that end: And recommends it to all the brethren present in this Assembly to intimate this sentence of deposition in their respective Synods; and parties being called in, this was intimated to them.

VIII.

Sess. 11, April 9, 1705, post meridiem.—Act approving the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1704.

(The terms of this Act are similar to the corresponding Act of the preceding year.)

IX.

Sess. 12, April 10, 1705, ante meridiem.—Act against Profanation of the Lord's Day.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the great profanation of the Lord's Day, by multitudes of people walking idly upon the streets of the city of Edinburgh, Pier and Shore of Leith, in St Ann's Yards, and the Queen's Park, and in diverse places of the West Kirk parish, and on the Links of Leith, and other places, especially about Edinburgh, and that by persons of all ranks, many whereof are strangers, as the same hath been represented to them by the commissioners from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, in the name and by the appointment of that Presbytery; and considering, also, what hath been represented by several brethren anent the profanation of the Lord's Day in other places of the nation, by unnecessary travelling, and otherwise; and the General Assembly being deeply sensible of the great dishonour done to the holy God, and of the open contempt of God and man, manifested by such heaven-daring profaneness, to the exposing of the nation to the heaviest judgments; therefore, they do, in the fear of God, earnestly exhort all the reverend brethren of the ministry, and other officers of the Church, to contribute their utmost endeavours, in their stations, for suppressing such gross profanation of the Lord's Day, by a vigorous and impartial, yet prudent exercise of the discipline of the Church, and by holding hand to the execution of the laudable laws of the nation against the guilty, in such way and manner as is allowed and required by law; and because the concurrence and assistance of the civil government will be absolutely necessary for the better curbing and restraining this crying sin, the General Assembly do hereby appoint their Commission to be nominated by them to address the Right Honourable the Lords of her Majesty's Privy Council, that their Lordships may be pleased to give such orders, and take such courses for restraining those abuses, as they, in their wisdom, shall judge most effectual.

X.

Sess. 12, April 10, 1705, ante meridiem.—Recommendation concerning the Observation of the Directory for Worship.

The General Assembly hereby seriously recommends to all ministers and others within this National Church, the due observation of the Directory for the Public Worship of God, approved by the General Assembly held in the year 1645, Sess. 10.

XI.

Sess. 12, April 10, 1705, ante meridiem.—Act anent Bursaries.

It being desired by several brethren that the 13th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1704, entitled, "Act for bestowing Bursaries upon Students having Irish," might be explained in these heads: 1mo, Whether by that act the one-half of the bursaries be-south Tay be disposable by the respective Presbyteries, or by the Synods only? 2do, If that act reaches bursaries presently current, or only such as were vacant at the date of that act? The General Assembly, as to the first, do declare,

that the disposal of all these bursaries is only in the power of the Synods, and not of the Presbyteries. And as to the second, the General Assembly leaves it to the discretion of the several Synods to order this matter as they find convenient; and, for that end, recommends it to the said Synods to take an account from their respective Presbyteries, what bursars they have in their bounds, and at what time these burses will fall vacant, and that the Presbyteries be joined two and two, for making one Lowland burse of their two halves, appointed by the foresaid act for that end; and in case there be an odd Presbytery in a Synod, that that Synod dispose of that odd Presbytery's half to such pious uses as the Synod shall think fit.

XII.

Sess. 12, April 10, 1705, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Libraries for the Highlands, Islands, &c.

The which day, in presence of the General Assembly, upon report of the Committee appointed to manage the affair of the Highland Libraries, the General Assembly does divide the said whole libraries, both Presbyterial and parochial, as follows, viz.:—The Presbyterial libraries (whereof there are nineteen in all) thus: To the Presbytery of Zetland one, Orkney one, Caithness one, Sutherland one, Ross three, Inverness one, Aberlour one, Abernethy one, Strathbogie and Fordyce one, Dunkeld one, Argyle five, Dumbarton one; and seeing, after this distribution, there remains one Presbyterial library, the General Assembly bestows the same on the Synod of Argyle, but with a special respect to their remote and large islands, such as Lewis; and this in place of the distribution made by the 17th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1704. The parochial libraries being in number fifty-eight, the Assembly distributes them to the parishes in the bounds of the Presbyteries after mentioned, as follows, viz.:—Zetland two, Orkney three, Caithness two, Sutherland two, Ross four, Inverness three, Aberlour two, Abernethy one, Alford one, Kincardine two, in the bounds of the Synods of Angus and Mearns three, in the Presbytery of Dunkeld four, Auchterarder two, Dunblane two, Dumbarton two, and for the bounds of the Synod of Argyle twenty-three; and that these parochial libraries be fixed at such places as the respective Synods and Presbyteries shall find most convenient. And the General Assembly nominates the Rev. Mr William Carstairs, Moderator, Mr Thomas Wilkie in Canongate, Mr George Meldrum, Mr James Ramsay, Mr John Stirling, Mr David Williamson, Mr James Webster, Mr Patrick Cumming, Mr George Barclay, Mr Andrew Wardroper, Mr Andrew Thomson, Mr James Brown, and Mr William Wishart, *Ministers*; the Earl of Glasgow, Lord President of the Session, Lord Advocate, Lord Pollock, Lord Tillicoultry, Sir James Campbell of Aberuchil, Sir James Campbell of Auchinbreck, James Campbell of Ardkinlass, younger, and Mr James Anderson, Writer to the Signet, *Ruling Elders*; or any five of them, which is hereby declared to be a quorum, to be a committee for receiving the said libraries, when brought home, and giving orders anent the transmitting thereof to the respective places for which they are appointed; and the respective Presbyteries are desired to advise the foresaid committee of the best way of transmitting these libraries to them. And the General Assembly does hereby empower the foresaid committee to do every thing necessary toward the management of that whole affair, which may tend most for obtaining the ends for which these libraries are designed, and that until the next General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable; and, particularly, to cause print several copies of the rules for ordering the said libraries, agreed upon by the last Assembly, and transmit the same to the Presbyteries concerned: And seeing that besides the seventy-seven libraries above mentioned, there are some presses of books not methodized and sorted, that the said committee digest them in order, and distribute them to such places as have most need, and therein a special regard is to be had to the remote Isles; and that they cause bind such of the books as are not bound, inspect the said libraries, compare them with the catalogues, and, if they find cause, to exchange some from parochial to Presbyterial libraries; and it is hereby recommended to them, that upon arrival of these libraries, they send an account thereof to

Mr Vigerus Edwards and Andrew Bell at London, and that they write letters of thanks to the donors.

XIII.

Sess. 13, April 10, 1705, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for Planting Vacant Kirks in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and other Affairs remitted to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are yet some vacant churches on the North side of Tay, and in the Highlands and Islands, as likewise several weighty affairs which this Assembly cannot overtake; do, therefore, find it needful that there be a Commission granted to some ministers and ruling elders for planting these vacant churches, and doing what other affairs may be referred to them; and for that end, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Crichton, minister at Edinburgh, &c., to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect before and after mentioned, with full power to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof fifteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Wednesday of June, second Wednesday of November, and last Wednesday of March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator: And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum, to cognosce and finally determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given them by this Assembly, and likewise in all affairs referred to the Commission of the late Assembly, not as yet discussed. And, finally, with power to the said Commission to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, and that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which belongs to them to prevent, as they will be answerable; and they are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed to them, and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same, declaring that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause. And, lastly, this Commission is to continue and endure to the next General Assembly.

XIV.

Sess. 13, April 10, 1705, post meridiem.—Instructions to the Commission of the General Assembly.

1. [Same as in 1704.]
2. [Same as in 1703 and 1704.]
3. [Same as in 1704.]
4. The foresaid Commission is to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made or to be made to them by this Assembly, and in references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, the Highlands and Isles, which shall be brought before them, according to the overture made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and that transportations to any parishes in these places, whether privileged by former acts of Assembly or not, be carried on, and that in the most expeditious way, providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods, excepting causes specially referred to them by the Assembly.
5. [Same as in 1703 and 1704.]
6. [Same as in 1703.]

7. This Commission is empowered to inquire how ministers transported by the General Assembly, or Commissions thereof, have obeyed or shall obey; and in case of disobedience, that they suspend the disobedient persons for three months; and in case they do not obey after these three months are elapsed, that then they be, *simpliciter*, deposed.

8. That the Commission give all due encouragement and assistance to any proposals that may be made to them anent endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the effectual curbing of profanity; and give all due assistance for suppressing of error and schism; and to take notice how any who have been censured by this or preceding Assemblies, or Commissions thereof, have obeyed; and proceed to further censure as they shall see cause, if the censures of the Church be contemned.

9. [Same as in 1703 and 1704.]

10. [Same as in 1704.]

11. [Same as in 1704.]

XV.

Sess. 13, April 10, 1705, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Attendance of the Members of the Commission.

The General Assembly appoints the several Presbyteries to be careful to send in one at least of their number who are members of the Commission, to attend the meetings thereof by turns, and ordains the said Presbyteries to send in to the Commission the names of such as they have appointed to attend the several diets thereof, that those who are negligent in this matter may be censured according to former acts of Assembly thereanent.

XVI.

Sess. 14, April 11, 1705, post meridiem.—Recommendation concerning Students of Theology, and Intrants to the holy Ministry.

The General Assembly, considering the great unity and concord that, by the blessing of God, is amongst the office-bearers in God's house, the desirable and comfortable harmony between Church and State in this kingdom, wherein the glory of God, the success of the Gospel, and the firmness of our happy establishment, are so deeply interested; and considering, likewise, that nothing can be more effectual for securing these blessings, and advancing these ends, than that the preachers of the Gospel commend themselves to God and the consciences of all men by their piety, prudence, literature, and peaceable behaviour, principles, and disposition, and good affection to the government of Church and State: Therefore, the General Assembly did, by an unanimous vote, and hereby do, seriously recommend it to the several Presbyteries of this Church to keep a watchful eye upon all students of theology, and to be careful that none be licensed to preach, or admitted to churches, but such as shall give evidence of their orthodoxy, by signing the Confession of Faith approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, as the confession of their faith, of their good affection to the government of Church and State, of their peaceable principles and disposition, by engaging to observe good order, in conjunction with, and a due subjection to, the judicatories of this Church; and of their literature, by abiding a strict trial; and shall own the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to and founded on the Word of God; and promise never to endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof, according to former acts of Assembly thereanent.

XVII.

Sess. ult., April 12, 1705.—Act concerning a Solemn Fast and Humiliation.

The General Assembly, considering the great dangers which threaten the Protestant religion, both at home and abroad, the long continuance of a wasting and desolating war, and how much the safety and welfare of this Church and kingdom does depend upon the preservation of her Majesty's person and government, the conduct of her councils, and the deliberations and determinations of the ensuing session of Parliament; and considering that sin and wickedness do abound, to the provoking of the holy God against these nations, do judge it fit that a day be set apart for solemn prayer, fasting, and humiliation before the Lord, on these considerations; but seeing the same cannot be obtained through the whole nation in one day before the time appointed for the sitting down of the Parliament, and that, in regard of the season of the year, diverse parts of the country may be in different circumstances; therefore, the General Assembly does hereby seriously recommend to the several Synods and Presbyteries within this National Church at their first meeting, to consider upon the premises, and to appoint and set apart a day for solemn public prayer, fasting, and humiliation, in all the churches within their respective bounds, upon the accounts fore-said, and other reasons contained in the causes of former fasts appointed by the General Assembly and Commissions thereof, with a special regard to the present circumstances of affairs both at home and abroad; and that this may be the sooner done, and the more solemnly gone about, it is hereby recommended to the brethren present to acquaint their Synods and Presbyteries hereof as soon as they can; and the moderators of the respective Presbyteries are hereby ordained, if need be, to call the same *pro re nata*, as soon as these presents come to their hand, in order to their concerting the said fast. And the General Assembly recommends to the ministers to be most serious in holding forth to their people on that occasion the grievous sins of this land, and the tokens of God's displeasure because of them, expressed many ways; to exhort all ranks of people to serious repentance, reformation, and fervent prayer to God, that he would preserve her Majesty's person, direct her councils, and bless her forces by sea and land with success, in defence of the Reformed Protestant religion and the just liberties of Europe; that he would guide and direct the Parliament of this kingdom to such determinations as may be most for the advancement of religion, and the peace and welfare of these nations, and bless the season of the year. And the General Assembly appoints these presents to be printed, and copies thereof to be sent to the several ministers within the kingdom.

XVIII

Sess. ult., April 12, 1705.—Act concerning the Buying and Observation of the Acts of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration that there is a great neglect in calling for the Acts of the General Assemblies of this Church, so that the said acts not coming to Presbyteries and Sessions, they are not acquainted with what is thereby laid upon them; therefore, it is hereby recommended to the several Presbyteries and Kirk-Sessions who want the acts of former General Assemblies, to furnish themselves therewith, and appoints the agent for the Kirk in all time coming, after every Assembly, so soon as the acts thereof shall be printed, to transmit as many copies of the same to every Presbytery within the kingdom as will serve them and each parish within their bounds; and ordains that both Presbyteries and Sessions, at their first meeting after receiving the said acts, cause read the same, at least so many of them as are of public concern, and which relate to themselves, in order to their observing thereof; and all this to be upon the charges of the several Presbyteries and Sessions: And Synods are enjoined to inquire at Presbyteries how this act is observed, and cause mark their diligence thereanent in their books. And, farther, appoints the agent for the Kirk to send to the several Presbyteries some copies of the overtures

lately printed, concerning the Discipline and Method of Procedure in the Judicatories of this Church. And, *lastly*, appoints the Commissions of the General Assembly to use their endeavours that this act be made effectual and duly observed by those concerned.

XIX.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held at Edinburgh, the first Thursday of April 1706, being the fourth day of that month.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 124th Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 4, 1706.

I.

Sess. 1, April 4, 1706.—The Queen's Commission to David Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this National Church, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by the Right Honourable David Earl of Glasgow, her Majesty's commission under the Great Seal of this kingdom, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordained the same to be recorded in their registers, the tenor whereof follows:—"ANNA," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented the Queen's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—"ANNE, R." &c.

III.

Sess. 3, April 6, 1706.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, April 8, 1706, ante meridiem.—Act and Recommendation concerning the Scripture Songs.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered an Overture, transmitted to them from the Committee for Overtures, to whom it was remitted to consider the reference of the Commission of the late General Assembly in relation to the Scriptural Songs, they did, and hereby do, recommend it to the several Presbyteries of this Church to endeavour to promote the use of these Songs in private families within their bounds, according to the recommendation of the late Assembly; and for facilitating the Assembly's work in preparing the said Songs for public use, the Assembly

hereby do recommend it to Presbyteries to buy up copies of the said songs that are printed, and to be sold here at Edinburgh; and ordain the report of the committees appointed by the Commission of the late Assembly to revise these songs with the amendments made thereupon by the committee that met at Glasgow, to be printed and transmitted to the several Presbyteries, that they may consider the same, and compare them with the book itself; and the General Assembly recommends it to the said Presbyteries also diligently to compare these songs with the original texts, and to make what further amendments they shall see needful upon the said printed copies of these songs, both as to the translation and metre, keeping always to the original text.

V.

Sess. 5, April 9, 1706, ante meridiem.—Act anent the Form of Process.

The Form of Process in the judicatories of the Church of Scotland, in relation to scandals and censures, being all publicly read in presence of the General Assembly, were ordered to be printed and transmitted as overtures to the several Presbyteries within this National Church, and the said Presbyteries are ordained to consider the same, and send in their opinions thereanent, and such amendments as they shall judge fit to make upon the same, to the next General Assembly, according to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1697, thereanent.

VI.

Sess. 6, April 9, 1706, post meridiem.—Recommendation concerning the Method of giving in Overtures, References, &c., to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, to the end that ensuing Assemblies of this Church may with greater facility expedite the affairs that shall come before them, do hereby recommend to all the Presbyteries within this National Church, in their instructions to their commissioners, carefully to distinguish betwixt what they propose as overtures to be transmitted by the General Assembly to the several Presbyteries in order to their being passed into acts; and those things which are only matter of complaint, or grievances to be presently redressed, or things wherein they desire to be advised; that overtures and matters of advice may be given in to the Committee for Overtures, and the rest to the Committee for Bills, References, and Appeals, and yet in matters of weight, these two committees may advise with one another.

VII.

Sess. 11, April 12, 1706, post meridiem.—Act approving the Proceedings of the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1705.

The General Assembly, having had this day reproduced in their presence the register of the actings and proceedings of the Commission appointed by the last Assembly, and having heard the report of a committee (who were not members of the said Commission) appointed to revise, examine, and consider the said register, with their observations thereupon, and answers made thereto by the moderator and other members of the said Commission, the members of the foresaid Commission were removed, and the General Assembly having maturely considered the said report and answers made thereto, do find, that the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the foresaid Commission, contained in their register, subscribed by Mr William Carstairs, moderator, and Mr John Dundas, Advocate, clerk, do evidence much wisdom, prudence, zeal, and diligence, and that the said Commission have proceeded orderly and formally in everything according to their commission and instructions; and, therefore, this General Assembly did, and hereby do, ratify and approve of the whole actings, proceedings, and conclusions, of the said Commission, contained in their said register, beginning the 13th day of April in the year 1705, and ending the 3d day of April 1706, inclusive; and the members of the said Commission being called in, the same was

intimated to them, and the moderator gave them the thanks of the Assembly for their good service done to the Church.

VIII.

Sess. 12, April 13, 1706, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the method of approving the Commission Book.

The General Assembly appoint and ordain, that in all time coming, the same formula be observed in the approbation of the registers of the actings and proceedings of the Commissions of Assemblies, that is prescribed by the Acts of the Assembly, to be observed in the attestation of the Synod books.

IX.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Registers.

The General Assembly recommends it to all the judicatories of this Church to take special care that the registers be correctly written, and that they allow no blottings or interlinings therein, and if anything shall happen to be blotted out as superfluous, that it be marked on the margin how many words or lines are blotted out, and that it was done by the authority of the judicatory, and that it be subscribed by the moderator and clerk; and if anything be omitted, that it be written upon the margin, and subscribed by the clerk of the judicatory.

X.

Eadem Sessione.—Act anent Lecturing.

The General Assembly, considering that the acts of former Assemblies, concerning lecturing and expounding of the Holy Scriptures, are much neglected in many places, do, therefore, enjoin and appoint the several Presbyteries, at their privy censures and parochial visitations, diligently to inquire how ministers observe the said acts.

XI.

Eadem Sessione.—Recommendation concerning Admission to the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly hereby recommends it to the several ministers within this National Church, to take as strict a trial as can be of such as they admit to the Lord's Supper, especially before their first admission thereto, and that they diligently instruct them particularly as to the Covenant of Grace, and the nature and end of that ordinance, as a seal thereof and charge upon their consciences, the obligations they lie under from their baptismal covenant, and seriously exhort them to renew the same.

XII.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Recommendation concerning Stipends and Mortifications.

The General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to give information to the Commission, anent mortifications and stipends that have been dilapidated or suppressed, and appoints the Commission to be assistant to ministers in recovery thereof.

XIII.

Sess. 12, April 13, 1706, ante meridiem.—Recommendation and Act concerning Schoolmasters and Schools, and Bursaries.

The General Assembly recommends it to such as have power of settling schoolmasters in parishes, to prefer thereto men who have passed their course at colleges or universities, and taken their degrees, before others who have not, *cæteris paribus*. And the General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to take special care that all the schoolmasters within their bounds be such as have subscribed the Confession of Faith, and that Presbyteries do visit all the public grammar schools within their bounds by some of their number appointed for that effect, at least twice every year; and also appoints Synods, at their privy censures, to inquire at Presbyteries how they have obeyed this recommendation. The General Assembly recommends it to the respective Presbyteries in the Lowlands who are appointed to contribute for bursaries, to be bestowed on Students having the Irish language, that they pay the same punctually, conform to the Acts of Assembly thereanent.

XIV.

Eadem Sessione.—Recommendation concerning Penny Bridals.

The General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to apply to the judges ordinary, for putting the laws relating to penny bridals in execution, and appoints their Commission, upon representations from Presbyteries of the judges their refusal, to apply to the Government for obliging them to execute their office in this matter.

XV.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Recommendation against Profaneness.

The General Assembly seriously exhorts all magistrates, ministers, and others, in their respective capacities, to hold hand to the execution of the laws against profaneness, according to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1697, and 7th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1699, made thereanent; and particularly, it is hereby recommended to ministers and kirk-sessions to apply to the civil magistrate in that matter, as the law allows and requires, and upon the inferior magistrate's neglect or refusal to put the laws against profaneness in execution, that the Kirk-Session, with the concurrence of their Presbytery, complain to the Government for redress according to law; and, lastly, it is recommended to Presbyteries to inquire diligently, at their privy censures and parochial visitations, how ministers and kirk-sessions have obeyed this recommendation.

XVI.

Eadem Sessione.—Act and Recommendation concerning Visitation of Parishes, and also Ministerial Visitation of Families.

The General Assembly, considering that frequent Presbyterial Visitation of Parishes would be of great advantage to the Church, and might tend much to promote piety and holiness and suppress sin; do therefore seriously recommend to and enjoin Presbyteries to be more frequent and conscientious in visiting parishes, conform to the Acts of former General Assemblies thereanent, and appoints the Commission to draw up and prepare a Directory for Ministerial Visitation of Families, and present the same to the next General Assembly.

XVII.

Sess. 14, April 15, 1706, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders, for considering and discussing several Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration, that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do therefore nominate, commission, and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Crichton, minister at Edinburgh, &c. &c., to be commissioners of this General Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said commissioners, whereof fifteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon, and afterwards to meet the first Wednesday of August, and penult Wednesday of March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator: And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said commissioners, or their quorum, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any Act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions given by the late Assembly to their Commission, which are held as herein expressed, and to stand for instructions to this Commission; and, finally, with power to the said Commission to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which belongs to them to prevent, as they will be answerable; and they are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed or referred to them as above mentioned, and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause, and this Commission is to continue and endure till the next General Assembly; and the members of the said Commission are required punctually to attend the diets thereof, as is appointed by the 6th and 15th Acts of the late General Assembly, and the clerks are appointed not only to mark the absentees, but also to send lists of these absentees to the several Synods, in order to censure, according to former acts thereanent: and also, the Commission is ordered to present to the next General Assembly a list of the names of such of their members as shall be absent without a relevant excuse sustained by them, that the same may be read in the Assembly, who may take what farther course they shall think fit in that matter.

XVIII.

Sess. ult. April 16, 1706.—Act concerning the Libraries, and containing some additional Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

The General Assembly empowers their Commission to receive any delations or references that shall be made to them by the respective judicatories of this Church, in matters of schism and disorder, and not only to assist judicatories by their advice in such cases, but also to pass sentence and finally determine therein, as they shall see cause.

And the Commission are appointed to take care that the precepts already drawn by the preceding moderators of the Assembly, or Commission thereof, for payment of any sums out of the money gifted by her Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church, be paid, and that, in the first place, before others that may be granted afterwards.

The Presbyteries of Edinburgh, Linlithgow, and Dalkeith, are appointed to supply one diet of preaching before the Parliament, and the Commission to supply the other diet by naming and appointing ministers out of other Presbyteries, and the Synod

of Lothian and Tweeddale are to adjust the diets of the three Presbyteries above named in their bounds.

The Commission is to require a full and clear account from the committee, to whom the disposal and distribution of the libraries was recommended, *anno* 1705, how they have distributed the same, and from the agent, how he hath obeyed the orders of that committee anent the sending of these libraries and Irish Bibles to the respective places appointed.

And to call for an account from the respective Presbyteries of their receipt of their proportion of these Bibles and libraries, and how they have disposed of them according to the order of the General Assembly, 1705, and their said committee, and appoints the said Presbyteries to send these accounts to the commission or committee to be appointed by them for this affair, and that these accounts be sent in writing, subscribed by the moderator and clerk of the Presbytery; and ordains the commission to take care that the account of all these be recorded in a particular register for that purpose; and the General Assembly hereby recommends it to their commission, or their said committee, which they are hereby empowered to appoint for that effect, to distribute the eleven boxes of books lately sent down from England, and any libraries or books that shall be sent down betwixt and the next Assembly, to such places of this Church and nation as have most need, and may best answer the design of the donors.

The General Assembly hereby recommends it to their Commission to inquire into the state of the Highlands and Islands, how they are planted with ministers, and of the remaining Paganish customs among them, and of the increase of Popery, and how they are provided with schools, what places most need help in these matters, and what encouragement these may expect who incline to enter into a society for erecting and maintaining charity schools, for educating poor and indigent children.

And the General Assembly appoints all the Synods and Presbyteries concerned in the Highlands and Islands to send in accounts thereof to the commission, who are hereby ordained to prepare overtures thereanent, and give in the same to the next Assembly, to whom the said commission and others concerned are to be accountable for their diligence and management in the premises.

XIX.

Sess. ult. April 16, 1706.—Act concerning a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation.

The General Assembly, considering this nation's unthankfulness for, and unfruitfulness under the Gospel, and how sin and wickedness doth abound every where in the land, and profaneness and Popery, and other gross errors, increase and grow, and the great danger the Protestant religion and the Reformed Churches are in, through the sad distress and grievous persecution of some of them, and the dangerous condition of others, the continuance of a bloody war, the decay of trade, and impoverishing of the nation; and, likewise, considering how much the welfare and safety of this Church and nation dependeth on the preservation of the Queen's Majesty's person, and the conduct and success of her councils, and the result of the treaty now on foot, concerning the Union of both kingdoms of Scotland and England: Upon these and diverse other weighty considerations, the General Assembly find it their duty to call all ranks of persons, in this Church and nation, to solemn fasting and prayer, and to humiliation and reformation, beseeching and obtesting all and every one to search and try their ways, and turn unto the Lord, and to seek his face and favour.

And the General Assembly recommends to all the ministers of this Church, that with due prudence and zeal they do, in their preaching, reprove and warn of, and in prayer confess and acknowledge, the national and epidemical crying sins, both of former and present times, particularly enumerated in the causes of former public fasts, especially in the years 1690, 1700, and 1701, and those chiefly which abound in the respective places where the ministers labour.

And the General Assembly recommends and appoints that fervent prayers be poured out to God, that he would, of his abundant grace and mercy, grant to all an

humbling sight and sense of former and present sins, and give repentance for and remission of them, for the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour; and that God would continue the Gospel with us, and bless it with more success, and that it would please him graciously to put a stop to the growth of profaneness and Popery, and other errors, and that magistrates and ministers, and every one in their due place, may be directed and animated to more effectual and vigorous endeavours for discouraging, suppressing, and punishing, Popery and profaneness, and all error and ungodliness, and for reforming themselves and the land; and that all schism, division, dissension, and discord, may cease, and we may all become one in the Lord.

That God would long preserve and eminently bless our gracious Sovereign the Queen, direct her councils, and bless and prosper her forces, and those of her allies, by sea and land, in defence of the Reformed Protestant religion, and just liberties of Europe.

And that God would pity and relieve such of his Churches and people as are under the cross, and suffering for the truth, and support and establish them, and refine them in and bring them out of the furnace, and that he would preserve his Churches which are in danger, and would defeat all designs against the Reformed Churches and Protestant religion, and that God would bless the season of the year, that there may be food for man and beast.

And, lastly, that God would mercifully and graciously direct such as are commissioned both in this and the kingdom of England, for treating about a Union of both kingdoms, that all may be done to the glory of God and good of this Church, and all her Majesty's dominions.

And the General Assembly appoints the said fast and humiliation to be observed in all the parishes on this side of Tay upon the 23d day of May next, and in those on the other side of Tay upon the 6th day of June also next; and do appoint the Rev. Mr William Carstairs, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Mr George Meldrum, Professor of Divinity there, Mr John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, and Mr George Anderson, Professor of Divinity at Aberdeen, *Ministers*; and Sir James Agnew of Lochnaw, Sheriff-Principal of Galloway, *Ruling Elder*; to apply to the Lords of her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, for their civil sanction to this fast.

XX.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, the second Tuesday of April 1707, being the eighth day of that month.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 72d Psalm, from verse 16 to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
Jo. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 8, 1707.

I.

Sess. 1, April 8, 1707.—The Queen's Commission to David Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this National Church being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by the Right Honour-

able David Earl of Glasgow, her Majesty's Commission under the Great Seal of this kingdom, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this National Assembly, which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordained the same to be recorded in their registers, the tenor whereof follows :—" ANNA," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented the Queen's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows :—" ANNE, R.," &c.

III.

Sess. 3, April 10, 1707.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, April 11, 1707.—Act about Overtures concerning Ministerial Visitation of Families.

Some overtures concerning the ministerial visitation of families, being, according to an appointment of the late Assembly, prepared by their Commission, and transmitted to this Assembly; and having been considered by the Committee for Overtures, and again brought to this Assembly, and considered by them, they did, and hereby do, transmit these Overtures to the several Presbyteries within this National Church, that they may send their opinion thereanent to the next Assembly; and appoints the Clerk to send a written copy of the said Overtures to each Presbytery for that end.

V.

Sess. 5, April 12, 1707.—Act anent Schools in every Parish, and a Contribution thereanent.

The General Assembly, considering how much it would contribute to the advancement of religion, and the propagating of Christian knowledge, if a sufficient number of schools could be got erected and maintained through the kingdom, and being earnestly desirous for their part to do what in them lies to forward so good a work, do therefore enact and appoint in manner following: And, first, as to the lands that are of her Majesty's property, that application be made by the Commissions of this and subsequent Assemblies to the Lords of her Majesty's Treasury and Exchequer, for obtaining her Majesty's proportion of what is allowed by law for erecting of schools in parishes, according to her valued rent; and as to other heritors in parishes where schools are not settled according to law, Presbyteries are hereby appointed to use all suitable endeavours to get schools erected and maintained in parishes conform to the Acts of Parliament, and if that succeed not, that they apply to the Commissions of Assemblies, and give them an account of their diligence, who are hereby empowered to give all the assistance in this matter, by applying to the Government, or any other ways that is competent to them, and

as to places where parishes are so wide and spacious, that they require more schools than one in each parish; the General Assembly does hereby renew and continue the 14th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1704, entitled, "Act anent Erecting Schools in the Highlands," in its whole heads and clauses, and appoints the same to take effect until the Assemblies of this Church shall think fit to alter that act, and the General Assembly earnestly recommends it to the several Presbyteries to see the same put in due execution, and recommends it to the respective Synods and Presbyteries within this Church, to send distinct accounts to the Commission of this Assembly, betwixt and their meeting in August next to come, what parishes in their bounds have or want schools, and what are the reasons why they want the same, what places do most need them, and what is the extent of those parishes that are spacious, and stand in need of more schools than one, and what are the places in each parish that are most convenient for fixing these schools at, one or more. As also, that they send an account of the names of such students as are hopeful, and whom they could recommend for teaching the said schools; and the Commission is hereby ordained to put these accounts in order, and record the same in their books; and suchlike, the General Assembly does hereby appoint Presbyteries to deal earnestly with the patrons of such parishes as are or shall fall vacant, to apply the vacant stipends towards this so charitable and pious a use; and the Assembly hereby instructs their Commission to give all the encouragement and assistance they can to such who incline to enter into societies for erecting and maintaining of charity schools for educating of poor and indigent children, and to use their utmost endeavours to get such societies erected in the several corners of the country; and that they consider what farther encouragement can be given by the judicatories of this Church to the foresaid societies, and report overtures concerning the same to the next General Assembly; and, in like manner, Synods and Presbyteries are hereby strictly enjoined to inquire diligently what is become of the money already subscribed for, and collected in the several Presbyteries, for erecting schools in the Highlands, in pursuance of the foresaid Act, 14th General Assembly, 1704, and that they deal with such as have been deficient, yet to do what they can in so good a work, and that they report their diligence herein to the Commission of this General Assembly, betwixt and their said meeting in August next. And, lastly, the General Assembly does hereby appoint the several Presbyteries to give a particular account to the next Assembly, how former acts anent a school in every parish, the visitations thereof, and other things mentioned in these acts are observed, and recommends it to subsequent Assemblies, from time to time, to appoint a particular committee to receive the reports of Presbyteries in that matter, and prepare the same for the ensuing General Assemblies, who may do therein as they shall see cause.

VI.

Sess. 5, April 12, 1707, ante meridiem.—Act anent the Advancement of Learning.

The General Assembly, for the better advancement and encouragement of learning, do hereby recommend it to the Commissioners, directed to the several universities of this kingdom to subsequent Assemblies of this Church, that at the time of every General Assembly they do meet and consult together, and prepare overtures to be laid before the Assembly, for the establishment and advancement of piety, learning, and good order in the Schools and Universities, and that they be careful to keep a correspondence amongst the Universities for these good ends.

VII.

Sess. 5, April 12, 1707, ante meridiem.—Act anent Ministers publishing of Books, &c.

The General Assembly hereby appoints the several Presbyteries to take special

notice of any book or pamphlet that shall be framed or contrived, printed or published, by any minister of this Church, and examine if there be any thing therein contrary to the doctrine, worship, discipline, or government, or prejudicial to the rights, privileges, or unity of this Church, and that they censure such as shall transgress herein, according to the demerit of the cause.

VIII.

Sess. 6, April 14, 1707, post meridiem.—Act for suppressing of Popery, and preventing the growth thereof.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the lamentable increase of Popery in divers places of this nation, which they look upon as a sad judgment from the Lord, and matter of humiliation to all that love the truth, and though it were uncharitable to conclude that God is most displeased with those ministers and congregations which are most assaulted and shaken by these temptations, yet it is surely matter of humiliation to them; and, therefore, the General Assembly recommends to them to be frequent and serious in fasting and prayer to God, for restraining these winds of seduction. And besides what was recommended on this account in the eighth Act of the General Assembly, 1699, which is hereby renewed, it is moreover recommended, *1mo*, That if there be any vacant churches in those parts that are infested with Popery, all due care and diligence may be used to plant them with able, pious, prudent, and learned ministers. *2do*, That where there are ministers already, they do frequently commune with, and inquire at their elders of the case of the people, and of the danger they may be in, and of the trafficking of seducers amongst them, that they may the more timely counterwork them; and sessions are ordained to report their diligence in this matter to their respective Presbyteries. *3tio*, That Presbyteries where Popery increaseth do at each meeting confer anent their danger thereby, and what their duty is, and what endeavours may be used against this seduction, and record their success; or, if the defection be growing, *4to*, That the Synod in which these Presbyteries are, do at every Synodical meeting inquire concerning the state of those parts as to the growth of Popery, and give what assistance they can against these abominations; and for this end, *5to*, That they sometimes send ministers, one or more, that are well acquainted with these controversies, to assist the ministers of the bounds, not only to confer with the seduced, but also for establishing others; especially persons of more influence and authority in the bounds. *6to*, Where the parish is great, that there be probationers sent to assist the minister in preaching, that he may have the more time for travelling up and down among the people; but Presbyteries are to take special care that this be not improven for ease and sloth. *7mo*, For making this anent probationers practicable and useful, the General Assembly approves of the overtures of the Commission of the late General Assembly, dated the 11th of November last by-past, transmitted by the said Commission to the several Presbyteries; and in prosecution thereof, appoints and ordains that some probationers known in the Popish controversies be sent to those parts of the nation where Popery does most abound; to travel among the people under the inspection, and at the direction of the Presbyteries of the bounds, and show them the errors of the Church of Rome, and danger of the same; and to instruct them in the principles of the true reformed Protestant religion—and more especially in wide and spacious parishes, where ministers cannot be so frequently with their people; and that there be a contribution made amongst ministers, according to their stipends, for encouragement of those probationers in that work; and that ministers deal with persons who are charitably and piously inclined, to contribute also for so good a work. And it is hereby recommended to all Presbyteries, that they be more careful of transmitting lists of Papists to the Clerks of Privy Council termly, with particular informations according to the acts of the General Assembly, Parliament, and Council thereanent; and it is likewise recommended to all Church judicatories to apply to the civil magistrates within their bounds for ex-

ecuting the laws competent to them in these matters; and where the concurrence and assistance of supreme judicatories are requisite, the Commissions to be appointed by this and subsequent General Assemblies are hereby enjoined to name a committee of some of their number, from time to time, to prosecute the same according to law, and to manage the said missions and contribution; and, farther, to render effectual the overtures and act of the said late Commission, dated the 13th day of the said month, made for the better raising of the said contribution and managing of the same; and for beginning this so good a work, the General Assembly does, according thereto, *1mo*, Desire each minister, who has not already done the same in compliance with the said act of the Commission, yet to advance a quarter of a year's *centesima* of their stipend for one year, and recommends it to the brethren, who are members of this Assembly, to advance their proportion presently, if they can conveniently do it. *2do*, Agrees that each probationer to be missioned be allowed two hundred merks for half a-year. *3tio*, That these probationers be under the inspection of the Presbyteries of the bounds to which they go, and that they join with the minister of the parish, sometimes assisting him in preaching, as said is, and in informing of the people in reference to the truth; and the General Assembly appoints great care to be taken in choosing fit and able young men to be sent on this design, and for that end, seriously recommends it to all the Presbyteries to send accounts of such from time to time to the said Commissions or their committees; and these young men are hereby enjoined, before they go on in their mission, to spend at least a month in some of the universities in studying the cavils of the Popish missionaries, and the fittest way of dealing with the people; and the General Assembly hereby empowers the said Commissions or their committees to give suitable advices and directions to these young men as to their conduct in their work. And the Synods and Presbyteries in the South are hereby desired to send in their contributions to the Commission of this Assembly, or the committee to be chosen by them for management thereof, as said is; and those in the North to the Presbyteries to which these young men are sent, as soon as it is possible, that the same may be paid to the young men. And, farther, the General Assembly appoints their Commission to draw up a distinct account of the lamentable circumstances of those places where Popery most prevails, in order to move people to contribute to so pious a work: and, seeing it may be difficult to get probationers having the Irish language for all these Highland places which may need this assistance, the General Assembly appoints that such probationers who have not the Irish language shall preach that half of the day in which the minister useth to preach in English, and shall be assistant to him in dealing privately with those who have only English; and, in like manner, the Assembly recommends that some fit books be dispersed among the people for their information, and appoints that special care be taken to excite and keep the people intent on practical godliness, and to show how Popery is destructive thereto; and ministers are obtestated to beware of self-confidence in the management of this work, or of leaning to their own abilities and gifts, but that they do all with special dependence on God through Christ, and with prayer to him for ability and skill to manage the work aright, and to bless it with success. And, lastly, as the rolls and names of Papists are to be given up to the Clerks of Privy Council yearly, so it is hereby appointed and ordained, that at every Synod the names of the Papists within the several parishes of their bounds be given in to the clerk of the Synod, that their increase or decrease may be the better known, and suitable provision may be made for recovering the seduced, and preventing the seduction of more, and that the several Synods do transmit these lists of Papists yearly to the Commissions of Assemblies, and the said commissioners are hereby instructed and enjoined to take care that the above particulars and the acts of Assembly made thereanent be strictly observed and put into due execution, and that they do apply to the Government, as need shall require, for protection and assistance to such as shall be sent in mission as aforesaid.

IX.

Sess. 8, April 16, 1707.—Act approving the Actings and Proceedings of the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1706.

(In similar terms to the corresponding Acts of preceding years.)

X.

Sess. 9, April 17, 1707.—Act concerning the Synod of Orkney, and Erecting another Presbytery there.

The General Assembly, having heard the report of their Committee for the Affairs of the Church in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, to whom the petitions for the Presbyteries of Zetland, Orkney, and Caithness, were referred, and also having heard the commissioners from these Presbyteries at this Assembly, they did, and hereby do, appoint the act of the General Assembly, dated the 11th day of April 1706, concerning the more convenient meeting and greater ease of the Provincial Synod of Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland, to continue and stand in force in all time coming, without disjoining the Presbyteries of Zetland or Caithness therefrom, or annexing the Presbytery of Sutherland thereto; and seeing that but few of the Presbytery of Zetland can conveniently attend that Synod, and that there are therein but two Presbyteries besides, so that in some cases that meeting cannot do the work of a Synod, and there being eighteen ministers in the Presbytery of Orkney, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, divide and erect the same into two Presbyteries, viz., the ministers of the parishes in the mainland and south isles of Orkney, with a ruling elder for each minister in one Presbytery, to have their meeting for ordinary at Kirkwall, and to be called the Presbytery of Kirkwall; and the ministers of the North Isles, namely, Rousay, Egilshay, Westra, and Papa, North Ronaldshay, Sanday, Eday, and Stronsay, and Shapinsay, with a ruling elder for each minister in another separate Presbytery, to have their meeting for ordinary in the isle of Eday, and to be called the Presbytery of the North Isles; and in cases of weight and difficulty, the General Assembly appoints one of the ministers of Kirkwall, and the ministers of Evie and Deerness, to correspond with the said Presbytery of the North Isles, and meet therewith; and do hereby ordain the Presbyteries of Caithness, Kirkwall, the North Isles, and Zetland, to bring yearly their books to the Synod of Orkney, to be by them revised; and because the brethren of the Presbytery of Zetland are at great charges and trouble in attending the said Synod, and some of them at more than others of them, the Assembly appoints the brethren of the said Presbytery to go to the Synod by turns, and to bear equal burden in public matters; and ordains letters to be written to the Presbyteries in these bounds intimating the premises to them, and that the Synod of Ross and Orkney keep a mutual correspondence, as is usual in other Synods.

XI.

Sess. 11, April 18, 1707.—Act approving a Form of Process in the Judicatories of the Church with relation to Scandals and Censures.

The General Assembly, having this day, and at several former diets, had read in their audience the overtures concerning a Form of Process in the judicatories of this Church with relation to scandals and censures, which were transmitted by the late General Assembly to the several Presbyteries for their judgment thereupon, and having maturely considered the said whole overtures, with the remarks and observations of Presbyteries made upon the same after full reasoning, both in committees and open Assembly, upon the several particulars contained in the said Form of Process, the General Assembly did, by their votes, *namine contradicente*, and hereby do, ratify and approve the foresaid Form of Process as now amended in the whole heads and

articles thereof, and appoint and ordain the same to be observed and practised by the respective judicatories of this Church as an act and ordinance of Assembly and as fixed binding rules and directions in the whole matters therein contained, except the 7th, 8th, and 9th paragraphs of the fourth chapter, and what concerns the pressing of the Oath of Purgation—as to which the General Assembly supersedes at this time to enjoin the observation thereof as positive standing rules; but they did, and hereby do, unanimously recommend to the several Presbyteries and other judicatories of the Church, that they regulate themselves according to the advice therein insinuated, as they shall find to tend most to edification; the tenor of which Form of Process follows.

THE FORM OF PROCESS IN THE JUDICATORIES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, WITH RELATION TO SCANDALS AND CENSURES.

CHAPTER I.

Concerning Church Government, Discipline, Scandals, and Censures in general.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath instituted a government and governors ecclesiastical in his house, with power to meet for the order and government thereof; and to that purpose, the Apostles did immediately receive the keys from the hands of their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and did use and exercise the same upon all occasions, and Christ hath from time to time furnished some in his Church with gifts for government, and with commission to exercise it when called thereunto, and has promised his presence to be with them to the end of the world.

2. It is agreeable to, and founded on the Word of God, that some others besides those who labour in the word and doctrine be Church governors, to join with the ministers of the Word in the government of the Church, and exercise of discipline and oversight of the manners of the people, which officers are called ruling elders; as also, that the Church be governed by several sorts of judicatories, and one in subordination to the other, such as Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies.

3. Church discipline and censures for judging and removing of offences are of great use and necessity in the Church, that the name of God, by reason of ungodly and wicked persons living in the Church, be not blasphemed, nor His wrath provoked against his people, that the godly be not leavened with, but preserved from the contagion, and stricken with fear, and that sinners who are to be censured may be ashamed, to the destruction of the flesh, and saving of the spirit in the day of the Lord Jesus.

4. Nothing ought to be admitted by any Church judicatory as the ground of a process for censure, but what hath been declared censurable by the Word of God, or some act or universal custom of this National Church, agreeable thereto; and the several judicatories of this Church ought to take timeous notice of all scandals; but it is judged, that if a scandal shall happen not to be noticed in order to censure for the space of five years, it should not be again revived, so as to enter in a process thereanent, unless it be of an heinous nature, or become again flagrant, but the consciences of such persons ought to be seriously dealt with in private, to bring them to a sense of their sin and duty.

5. These Assemblies or Church judicatories before mentioned have power to convene and call before them any persons within their own bounds, whom the ecclesiastical business which is before them doth concern, either as party, witness, or otherwise, and to examine them according to the nature of the affair, and to hear and determine in such cases as shall orderly come before them, and accordingly dispense Church censures.

6. If a person be charged with a scandal, who lives within the bounds of another parish, the kirk-session of the parish where that person resides should be desired to cause cite that person to answer before the session in whose bounds the scandal happened, and the same course is to be followed in such cases by the other judicatories of the Church, seeing, for order's sake, they should not presume to exercise their authority without their own bounds.

7. The minister of the Word being in office above that of the ruling elder, cannot be liable to the censure of the kirk-session, but to the superior judicatories of the Church.

CHAPTER II.

Concerning the entering of Processes, Citation of Parties and Witnesses, and taking Depositions, and anent Fugitives from Discipline.

1. Members of kirk-sessions are wisely to consider the information they get of scandals, and consult with their minister thereanent, even before the same be communicated to others, that thereby the spreading of the scandal may be prevented, and it may be removed by private admonition, according to our Lord and Saviour's rule, Matth. xviii. 15, which, if amendment follow, is the far better way of gaining and recovering a lapsed brother, whereas the needless spreading of a scandal does sometimes harden the guilty, grieve the godly, and is dishonourable to religion.

2. When any business is moved in a Church judicatory, whether by information, petition, or otherwise, they are, in the first place, to consider, whether the matter in its circumstantiated case, be proper for them to enter upon, and whether it be orderly brought in, and proper for them to cognosce and discuss it themselves, or prepare it for superior judicatories, and should endeavour to shorten their work as much as with the edification of the Church they can, especially as to the head of scandal, but still, on all occasions, the office-bearers in the house of God are to show all prudent zeal against sin.

3. In proceeding in all causes where there is any person or parties concerned, the judicatory is to see that, before they proceed, these persons or parties be duly sisted before them by a legal and timeous citation in writing, bearing its cause, either at the instance of a party complaining, or, at least, by order of the judicatory; and, if they be residing within the parish, the same may be upon forty-eight hours' advertisement, and the execution of the summons bearing its cause, and made before two or three witnesses, inserted, is to be returned by the beadle or officer in writing, and the persons cited called at the door; and this is especially to be observed by Presbyteries and other superior judicatories of the Church.

4. Sometimes it may be fit that the party be privately spoken to before any citation be given, or process begun, for their better gaining, in which case, the minister is to exercise his own discretion, and take the concurrence of elders and others with him; but if the party cited as above appear not, there ought to be a second and then a third citation given by the order of the sessions and Presbyteries, either personally, or left at their dwelling-house, before the judicatory declare the person contumacious, unless the party be cited to appear before a superior judicatory, by reference or appeal, in which case there is not that need of so many citations before the superior judicatory, the party having actually appeared before the inferior judicatory; and being cited *apud acta* to appear before the superior, and the same marked in the minutes, or having been declared contumacious before the cause was brought before the superior judicatory.

5. All citations *apud acta* are peremptory, and if instructed, infer contumacy, if not obeyed.

6. If the person do not appear on the third citation, or upon a citation *apud acta*, and no relevant excuse adduced and verified, though in that case he be censurable for contumacy, yet it may be fit the judicatory proceed to take cognition, either by

examining witnesses upon oath, or by other documents, of the verity of the scandals delated against him, before they censure him for contumacy.

7. If the party appear, then the moderator is to inform the person of the occasion of his being called, and to give him, if desired, a short note in writing thereof, with the names of the witnesses that are to be made use of.

8. There seems to be no need of accusers or informers in ecclesiastical processes, where the same are not raised at the instance of a party complaining formally, but the party, if cited by order of the judicatory, is to answer the judicatory in what is laid to his charge; yet so, that if the party cited be found innocent and acquitted, those who informed the judicatory, whether the party require it or not, ought to be noticed for either their calumny or imprudence, as the judicatory shall find cause.

9. If there be witnesses to be made use of in the process, a list of their names ought to be given to the defenders some time before, or at least at their compearance, and the witnesses ought to be timeously cited to give evidence, and, if they refuse after three citations given, and executions returned, may be proceeded with as contumacious, or if judged needful, after the first or second citation, application may be made to the civil magistrate, that he may oblige them to appear.

10. Before the witnesses be judicially examined, the accused person is to be called, and the relevancy of the libel discussed, and if the defender compear, he may object against any of them, and if the objection be relevant, and made evident to the judicatory, the witnesses are to be cast; but a person's being the delator or informer doth not hinder him to be a witness, except in the case where he formally complained for his own interest, or of pregnant presumptions of malice against the person accused.

11. Though there be no relevant objection, yet the witnesses are solemnly to be purged of malice, bribe, or good deed done, or to be done, and of partial counsel.

12. The witnesses are to be sworn and examined in the presence of the accused party, if compearing, and he may desire the moderator to propose such questions or cross questions to the witnesses as may tend for his exculpation, which, if the judicatory think pertinent, are to be proposed; but no accused person is to interrupt the witnesses, or speak during the time of deposition.

13. If the party accused do before probation offer grounds of exculpation to be proven by witnesses, the moderator and clerk, if required, are to give warrant to cite the witnesses upon the parties' charges, the relevancy of the offered exculpation being first considered and sustained by the judicatory, and if the exculpation be fully proven as to the substance of the scandal, all further proof of the libel and accusation must there sist, and the defender is to be assoilzied; as if the libel be special as to the time and place of a fact, and the accused more pregnantly allege and clearly prove *alibi*; but if the substance of the scandal be once sustained and deponed upon, there can be no place for exculpation, unless it be as to some extenuating or alleviating circumstances, not contrary to, but consistent with, the depositions already taken.

14. If witnesses cannot subscribe their names to their deposition, the clerk is to mark that they declare they cannot write, and the moderator is to subscribe the same, whether they can subscribe or not.

15. After the depositions are ended, the parties being removed, the members of the judicatory, at the same or some after diet thereto appointed, are to advise the cause, and there and then to reason the affair calmly, speaking always to the moderator one after another, without interrupting one another, using no reflecting language to or of one another, nor too long harangues or digressions.

16. If any person or persons under process for scandals abscond, they should, after being called before the judicatory, and not compearing, be cited first from the pulpit of the parish where the process depends, and where they reside, and if they do not thereupon appear before the judicatory, before whom the process depends, they are by order of the Presbytery to be cited from the pulpits of all the kirks within their bounds, to compear before the Presbytery; and if they do not then compear, they are to be declared fugitive from church discipline, and the same intimated in all the

kirks within the bounds of the Presbytery, desiring, that if any knows of the said fugitives, they may acquaint the minister or elder of the bounds thereof; and the Presbytery are to sist there until they get further notice of these persons.

CHAPTER III.

Concerning Swearers, Cursers, Profaners of the Lord's Day, Drunkards, and other Scandals of that nature.

1. It may fall out that one single act of drunkenness, or breach of the Lord's Day, disobedience to parents, or of swearing, cursing, scolding, fighting, lying, cheating, or stealing, may be clothed with such circumstances as may be a just ground of process immediately, and even bring the persons guilty under the censure of the lesser excommunication and suspension from the benefit of the sealing ordinances, and require their appearance in presence of the congregation to be rebuked, before relaxation; but the weight of this is duly to be pondered, and Church judicatories, and members thereof, are to consider whether the private admonition of persons alleged and found guilty of the above scandals, if not clothed with such circumstances, or the bringing them to public, will tend most to edification, and proceed accordingly.

2. But ordinarily in all such offences, the guilty, for the first fault, should be spoken to in private by the minister or an elder, and admonished; and on promise from a sense of guilt to amend, they may sist there.

3. But if the person relapse, he should be called before the session, and if found guilty, may be there judicially rebuked; where the session on promise, from a due sense of sin to amend, may again sist.

4. But if the person amend not after that, the session should orderly proceed, unless repentance appear, and due satisfaction be offered, till they inflict the censure of the lesser excommunication and suspension from the benefit of the sealing ordinances, under which the censured are to lie, till amendment and reformation.

5. With respect to scandals, the grossness whereof makes it necessary to bring the persons guilty oftener than once before the congregation, the rules prescribed by the fourth Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1705, are to be followed.

6. If the guilty persons continue in this condition, or lie under the censure of the lesser excommunication a considerable time, and yet be found frequently relapsing in these vices they are censured for, it may be constructed such a degree of contumacy, and so aggravate the crime as to found a process of the censure of the higher excommunication, which is to be inflicted or not, as may tend most to the reclaiming of the guilty person, and edification of the Church.

CHAPTER IV.

Concerning the Sin of Fornication, Adultery, and Scandalous Carriage tending thereto.

1. In delations about the sin of uncleanness, it falls frequently out, that when the matter is put to the strictest trial, all that can be proven is but presumptions of guilt or scandalous behaviour, and not the act of uncleanness, the same being a work of darkness; and therefore this should oblige the kirk-session to be very cautious how to admit the public entering a process without good warrant, where there is not a child in the case, unless the scandal be very flagrant.

2. Many of these actions which give occasion to the raising a scandal of uncleanness are such as are not themselves alone publicly censurable, but to be passed by with a private rebuke or admonition.

3. Yet some of those actions which come under the name of scandalous behaviour may be so lascivious and obscene, and clothed with such circumstances as may be as offensive as the act of uncleanness itself, and as censurable.

4. If a married woman, whose husband hath been notoriously absent for a considerable time, beyond the ordinary time that women use to go with child, be found with

child, this also may give ground to a kirk-session for a process against her; but in this case, judicatories should be prudent in considering well all circumstances, and whether or not the person hath been always of entire fame before, as also how the public fame now runs.

5. When an unmarried woman is known to be with child, the same gives ground to a kirk-session for a process against her, and after she is cited before the session and appeareth, she is to be interrogated who is the father of that child, and though in other cases the divulging of a secret may be very imprudent, and, indeed, the raising of a scandal; yet in this case, where there is a child, whereby there is an undeniable scandal, and the keeping secret of the father a ground of greater offence, and of suspecting many innocent persons, if she discover not the father, she is to be looked upon as contumacious.

6. Prudence may sometime require that the person she nameth to be the father of the child be informed thereof, and spoken to privately, and if he deny the same, he is seriously to be dealt with to confess; but if he still deny, then the session is to cause cite him to appear before them.

7. In this process, when the delated father compeareth, he is to be interrogated, and if he deny, he is to be confronted with the woman, and the presumptions as particularly held forth as possible, and all along, there should be private treating with him, in all meekness, charity, and seriousness, and if, after all this, he deny, though the woman's testimony can be no sufficient evidence against him, yet pregnant presumptions, such as suspicious frequenting her company, or being *solus cum sola in loco suspecto*, or in suspected postures, and such like, which he cannot disprove to the satisfaction of the session, may so lay the guilt upon him, as to show him that there appears no other way of removing the scandal, but his appearance to be publicly rebuked therefor: If he will not submit himself to be rebuked as above, it perhaps may be more for edification, that a true narrative of the case be laid before the congregation, and intimation given, that there can be no further procedure in that matter till God in his Providence give further light, and to sist there at the time, than that an oath be pressed, and upon refusal, proceed to the higher excommunication; but if the person accused do offer his oath of purgation, and crave the privilege thereof, the Presbytery may (if they shall judge it for edification and removing of the scandal) allow the same, which may be to this purpose: "I, A. B., now under process before the Presbytery of

, for the sin of , alleged to be committed by me with C. D., and lying under that grievous slander, being repute as one guilty of that sin, I, for ending of the said process, and giving satisfaction to all good people, do declare, before God and this , that I am innocent and free of the said sin of , or having carnal knowledge of the said C. D.; and hereby call the great God, the judger and avenger of all falsehood, to be witness and judge against me in this matter if I be guilty; and this I do, by taking his blessed name in my mouth, and swearing by Him who is the great judge, punisher, and avenger, as said is, and that in the sincerity of my heart, according to the truth of the matter and mine own conscience, as I shall answer to God in the last and great day, when I shall stand before him to answer for all that I do in the flesh, and as I would partake of his glory in heaven after this life is at an end."

8. In taking this oath for purgation, all tenderness and caution are to be used, nor is the session to press any man thereto, but they are to deal with him and his conscience as in the sight of God, and if he offer to give his oath, the judicatory are to accept it or not as they shall see cause, and then to proceed to remove the scandal with the advice of the Presbytery, as may be most to edification; but this oath is not to be taken in any case but this, when the presumptions are so great that they create such jealousy in that congregation and session, that nothing will remove the suspicion but the man's oath of purgation, and when his oath will probably remove the scandal and suspicion, in all other cases this oath is in vain, and so should not be admitted, and never but by advice of the Presbytery.

9. This oath for purgation is to be taken either before the kirk-session or Presbytery or the congregation, as the Presbytery shall determine, and if the oath be taken before the session or Presbytery, it is to be intimated to the congregation that such

a person hath taken such an oath, and the party may be obliged to be present in the congregation, and may be put publicly to own his purging himself by oath, and so be declared free from the alleged scandal.

10. After an end is made as above with the delated father, the woman is to be dealt with to give the true father; and if, after all serious dealing and due diligence, she give no other, she is to be censured according to the quality of the offence confessed by her, without naming the person delated by her, the judicatory reserving place for further censure upon further discovery.

11. If the woman who hath brought forth the child doth declare she knoweth not the father, alleging she was forced, as in the fields, by a person unknown, or any the like reason; in these cases great prudence is to be used, the former behaviour of the woman exactly searched into, and she seriously dealt with to be ingenuous; and if she hath been of entire fame she may be put to it to declare the truth as if she were upon oath, but not without the advice of the Presbytery, and no formal oath should be taken; and if the woman confess she was not forced, but doth not know the man, whether married or unmarried, the same censure is to be inflicted upon her as in the case of adultery.

12. If a person doth voluntarily confess uncleanness, and if there be no child, and the case be brought to the kirk-session, the session is to inquire what presumptions there are of the truth of the thing confessed, or what may have moved the person to make that confession, whether it floweth from disquietness of mind, or from sinister design, as when a man suing to a woman for marriage is denied, and for revenge, or for to obtain his desire, spreads the report that he hath been guilty with her, they are to be dealt with according as the presumptions upon search are found, or not.

13. If it be found that there is no ground for the confession, and that it is false, the person confessing is to be censured as defaming himself, and likewise as a slanderer of the other party; and withal application is to be made by the session to the civil magistrate that he may be punished according to law.

14. If there be need of witnesses, the directions formerly mentioned, Chapter II. are to be followed.

15. When persons guilty of uncleanness live one in one parish and another in another parish, the process against them and censures are to be before the session of the parish where the woman liveth, or where the scandal is most notour.

16. If a scandal of uncleanness be committed where neither party resides, as if persons having their fixed residence in one parish do commit uncleanness in another parish, or perhaps in the fields, or in the time of fairs or markets, in these cases they are to be processed and censured where their ordinary abode is, except the place of their abode be at a considerable distance from the place where the sin was committed, and the scandal be most flagrant where it was committed.

17. When there is a scandal of uncleanness, whereof persons are guilty living in different parishes, the session where the sin was committed is to acquaint the other sessions where any of the persons resides, who are *ex debito* to cause summon these persons to appear before that session where the scandal is to be tried.

18. When a person is convicted of scandal by a session of another congregation than his own, and the censure of the lesser excommunication is inflicted, the session is to send an account thereof to that session to which he belongs; but there is no need of any other sentence of his own session to fix the censure on him, but only a public intimation thereof to be made in his own parish.

19. When a person is censured and absolved from his scandal in another congregation than where he lives, he is to bring a testimonial of his absolution, which is to be intimated to the congregation he lives in, if the scandal be also flagrant there; otherwise, it will be sufficient to intimate the same to the session, and the same is to be done in the case of the profession of repentance, where there has been a sentence of the lesser excommunication.

CHAPTER V.

Concerning Appeals from a Kirk-Session to a Presbytery, &c.

1. All persons who judge themselves leased by the procedure or sentence of a kirk-session, may appeal to the Presbytery, by declaring and protesting at passing of the sentence, and should thereupon, according to the eighth act of the General Assembly, 1694, give in the appeal, with the reasons thereof, in writing, to the moderator or clerk of the session, within the space of ten days after the time of appealing, and procure extracts thereof, and present the same to the next meeting of the Presbytery thereafter, if there be a competent time, at least ten free days betwixt the time of appealing and the meeting of the Presbytery, and should then insist in the appeal, wherein, if the appellant fail, the appeal, *ipso facto*, falls and becomes null, and the appellant is to be held as contumacious, and proceeded against accordingly by the kirk-session.

2. When an appeal is brought from a kirk-session to a Presbytery, the Presbytery is to consider whether the cause is of that nature as it behoved at length to come to the Presbytery by the course of discipline, before the final determination thereof, as if it be in a process of alleged adultery, or such like, then the Presbytery, to save themselves time, may fall upon the consideration of the affair without insisting much upon the *bene* or *male appellatum*, though it seem to be preposterously appealed.

3. But if the cause be such as the kirk-session are the competent and proper judges of even to its ultimate decision, and if there hath been no cause given by the kirk-session, by their breaking the rules of an orderly process, either by the course of the process, or by the incompetency of the censure, the Presbytery is not to sustain the appeal.

4. If the Presbytery do not sustain the appeal, and find there hath been some fault, passion, or culpable mistake in the appellant, the Presbytery is to inflict some censure, such as a reproof before the Presbytery, or appoint an acknowledging of their precipitancy before their own session, or such like, on those appellers they find to have been malicious and litigious, thereby to prevent unnecessary appeals; and that beside remitting back to the session to stand either to the censure of the session, if it be inflicted already, or to sist themselves during the process if it be depending.

5. If the appeal be sustained, and yet upon proceeding on the cause the Presbytery find the appellant censurable, it is always to be minded that whatever censure be inflicted to remove the offence he hath given to the Presbytery, yet the appellant, if found guilty, is to undergo a censure, either before the kirk-session or congregation he belongs to, such as the Presbytery thinks he deserves, else Presbyteries will be always troubled with appeals.

6. If, on the other hand, on trial of the process, the Presbytery find the kirk-session hath unwarrantably proceeded, either in contributing to the raising of a scandal, or inflicting the censure without a sufficient cause, and thereby the appellant leased, the Presbytery is not only to assoilzie the appellant, but to take such ways as may be proper and effectual to vindicate the appellant's innocence, and wipe off the scandal taken at him.

7. Herein the Presbytery is to exercise great prudence, doing justice to the innocent, yet so as not to weaken the kirk-session's authority in that congregation, if in justice it can be avoided.

8. But such an emergency may very well occasion the Presbytery's giving the minister and elders of that session suitable injunctions and rules to walk by, or private admonitions, or to call for a visitation of their session register.

9. The same method is to be followed in appeals from Presbyteries to Synods, and from Synods to General Assemblies.

10. An appeal being made by parties, should sist the execution of the sentence appealed from, only while the appeal is duly and diligently prosecuted, and may thereby be determined; otherwise not unless the judicatory appealed to receive the appeal, and take the affair before them; and in that case the judicatory appealed from is to sist until the appeal be discussed.

CHAPTER VI.

Concerning Processes which natively begin at the Kirk-Session, but are not to be brought to a final determination by them.

1. There are some processes which natively begin at the kirk-session, which, for the atrocity of the scandal, or difficulty in the affair, or general concern, the session having the opportunity of frequent meetings of the Presbytery to have recourse unto, do not determine of themselves, such as scandals of incest, adultery, trillapse in fornication, murder, atheism, idolatry, witchcraft, charming, and heresy and error, vented and made public by any in the congregation, schism and separation from the public ordinances, processes in order to the highest censures of the Church, and continued contumacy; but the kirk-session, having received information of such gross scandals, they are to weigh the same according to the rules and directions prescribed them in processes which belong to their peculiar province, and if they find good ground for a process, they are to deal with the person accused to confess that which cannot now be hid nor amended till satisfaction be made to the Church, which, when done, the session is to refer the case, and send an extract of their procedure thereanent to the Presbytery.

2. When there is no confession of the scandals above mentioned, the session are not to proceed to lead probation, by witnesses or presumptions, till an account of the matter be brought by reference to the Presbytery as aforesaid; and the Presbytery do thereupon appoint the session to proceed and lead probation; and after probation is led, the same is to be brought to the Presbytery, who may inflict what censure they see cause.

3. Sometimes it will fall out that the process is so clear, as in a case of judicial confession, that the kirk-session may summon the delinquent when before them *apud acta*, to compare before the Presbytery, without previous acquainting them thereof; but where there is any difficulty the kirk-session should inform the Presbytery, and take their advice, before a party be summoned before them.

4. When the party or parties compare before the Presbytery, if they confess and profess repentance for their sin, then the Presbytery having gravely rebuked, and seriously exhorted the party or parties, are to determine the censure, and prescribe the time and place of the parties their profession of repentance publicly in the church of that congregation where the process began, the scandal being there to be taken away, or remit them to the session to receive orders thereanent.

5. It is thought more fit that the delinquents be appointed to remove the scandal in the congregation where the offence is most flagrant, especially if they reside there, rather than in the place where it was committed, if it be not public there, and that intimation of the removing thereof be made in other places, if the judicatory shall find it needful.

6. When persons censured for these grosser scandals do apply to the kirk-session for relaxation, they may both be privately conferred with, and likewise their acknowledgments heard before the session; but they ought not to be brought before the congregation, in order to their absolution, nor absolved, but by advice and order of the Presbytery.

CHAPTER VII.

Concerning Processes against Ministers.

1. All processes against any minister are to begin before the Presbytery to which he belongeth, and not before the kirk-session of his own parish.

2. The credit and success of the Gospel (in the way of an ordinary mean) much depending on the entire credit and reputation of ministers, their sound doctrine and holy conversation, no stain thereof ought lightly to be received, nor when it comes before a judicatory ought to be negligently inquired into, or, when found evident, ought to be slightly censured.

3. And because a scandal committed by a minister hath, on these accounts, many aggravations, and once raised, though it may be found to be without any ground, yet it is not easily wiped off; therefore, a Presbytery should exactly ponder by whose information and complaint it comes first before them, and a Presbytery is not so far to receive the information as to proceed to the citation of a minister, or any way begin the process until there be, *first*, Some person who, under his hand, gives in the complaint, with some account of its probability, and undertakes to make out the libel; *2do*, Or at least do, before the Presbytery, undertake to make it out, under the pain of being censured as slanderers; or, *3tio*, That the *fama clamosa* of the scandal be so great as that the Presbytery, for their own vindication, see themselves necessitated to begin the process without any particular accuser; but the Presbytery in this case should be careful, first, to inquire into the rise, occasion, broachers, and grounds of this *fama clamosa*.

4. All Christians ought to be so prudent and wary in accusing ministers of any censurable fault, as that they ought neither to publish nor spread the same, nor accuse the minister before the Presbytery without first acquainting the minister himself, if they can have access thereto; and then, if need be, some of the most prudent of the ministers and elders of that Presbytery, and their advice got in the affair.

5. If there shall be ground found to enter in a process against a minister, the Presbytery should first consider the libel, then order him to be cited, and to get a full copy, with a list of the witnesses' names to be led for proving thereof, and a formal citation, in writing, is to be made, either personally, or at his dwelling-house, bearing a competent time allowed to give in answers to the libel, and his just defences and objections against witnesses, at least ten free days before the day of compareance, and the citation should bear the date when given, and the names of the witnesses to the giving thereof; and the execution bearing its date, with the names and designations of the witnesses, should be made in writing, and signed by the officer and witnesses, which being accordingly returned, he is to be called, and if he compare, the libel is to be read unto him, and he is to be inquired, if he has any answers to give in to the libel, that they may be read and considered, in order to the discussing of the relevancy; and if the Presbytery find the same, and that there is cause to insist, they are to endeavour to bring him to a confession, whereby he may most glorify God; and if he confess, and the matter confessed be of a scandalous nature, censurable in others, such as the sin of uncleanness, or some other gross scandal, the Presbytery (whatever be the nature of his penitency, though to the conviction of all) are *instantly* to depose him, *ab officio*, and to appoint him in due time to appear before the congregation where the scandal was given, and in his own parish, for removing the offence by the public profession of his repentance.

6. If a minister be accused of any scandal, and cited to appear before his own Presbytery, and do absent himself, by leaving the place, and be contumacious, without making any relevant excuse, after a new public citation and intimation made at his own church when the congregation is met, he is to be holden as confessed, and to be deposed and censured *instantly* with the lesser excommunication; but if, after some time, he do not return and subject himself to the censures of the Church, he may be proceeded against till he be censured with the greater excommunication, if the judicatory see cause for it.

7. If the minister accused do appear and deny the fact after the relevancy is found, the Presbytery proceeding to probation, and to find the truth of the matter, all the circumstances are to be exactly canvassed, and the accused heard to object against the witnesses. As also, he should be allowed to be present at the examination, and modestly to cross-interrogate, and then the reputation of the witnesses and their habiliy duly regarded, and the examinations considered; if, after consideration of all these, the judicatory shall find the scandal sufficiently proven, they are to proceed to censure, as advised in the case of confession in paragraph 5th.

8. If the matter laid to the minister's charge be such practices as, in their own nature, manifestly subvert that order, unity, and peace, which Christ hath established in his Church, or unsoundness and heterodoxy in doctrine, then great caution should be used, and the knowledge and understanding of witnesses much looked unto; and,

withal, if the errors be not gross, and striking at the vitals of religion, or if they be not pertinaciously stuck unto, or industriously spread with a visible design to corrupt, or that the errors are not spreading among the people, then lenitives, admonitions, instructions, and frequent conferences, are to be tried to reclaim without cutting off, and the advice of other Presbyteries sought, and unless the thing be doing much hurt, so as it admits of no delay, the Synod or General Assembly may be advised with in the affair, and the same intimated to the minister concerned.

9. If the libel and complaint brought against a minister be a multitude of smaller things laid together, as several acts of negligence or other unsuitable actions, the Presbytery, in proceeding therein, are to make a Presbyterial visitation of that parish to which the minister belongs, and at the said visitation, are first to see if any of these things, now laid to the minister's charge, were committed prior to the last Presbyterial visitation of that parish, and whether they were then laid to his charge, and if they were not, it should be tried how they come to be laid to his charge now.

10. If the Presbytery find those things laid to his charge to be committed since the last visitation, or find a satisfying reason wherefore they were not then tabled, they are to inquire what diligence hath been used in acquainting the minister with the offence taken at these things when first committed by him, and how far the minister hath been guilty of giving offence after he knew offence to be taken.

11. It should likewise, in this case, be inquired, whether any of the complainers did first, in a prudent private way, inform any of the neighbouring ministers of some of these things committed by their minister, who is now challenged, before these offences came to be so many, as to merit a public and solemn trial, and accordingly the Presbytery is to judge.

12. If the Presbytery find, upon trial, the complaint to resolve on the minister's having committed such acts of infirmity or passion, as, considering all the circumstances, may be either amended, and the people satisfied, and no such offence taken, or at least not to remain so as to hinder the minister's profiting the people, and that the offence was taken by the minister's own people only or mainly; then the Presbytery is to take all prudent ways to satisfy and reclaim both minister and people, and do away the offence.

13. But before a minister deposed for scandalous carriage can be restored to the exercise of the ministry, there should not only be convincing evidences of a deep sorrow for sin, but an eminent and exemplary humble walk and edifying conversation, so apparent and convincing as hath worn out and healed the wound the scandal gave.

14. Immediately on the minister's being deposed by the Presbytery, the sentence is to be intimated in his congregation, the church declared vacant, the planting thereof with another minister hastened, and never delayed on the expectation of his being reponed, it being almost impossible that ever he can prove useful in that parish again.

CHAPTER VIII.

Concerning Processes in order to the Censure of the greater Excommunication.

1. Since there is a distinction betwixt the greater and the lesser excommunication, it seems that whatever have been the causes of the first process, yet ordinarily all processes that are in order to the greater excommunication are to be grounded on manifest contumacy, or obstinate continuance in scandalous practices; and where there is no manifest contumacy or continuance as aforesaid, the lesser excommunication needs only have place; yet in some extraordinary cases, the Church, according to Scripture warrant, hath summarily excommunicated persons guilty of notour atrocious scandalous sins, to show the Church's abhorrence of such wickedness.

2. Even where there hath been a scandal delated, and contumacy following, by not appearing, it should be considered whether any scandalous practice hath been proven or not; if not proven, then only the simple contumacy is to be proceeded against, for which it were hard to go a greater length than the lesser excommunication.

3. If the scandal hath been proven, and the censure of the lesser excommunication intimated, as in Chapter III., it seems most reasonable that there be no further pro-

ceeding unless the scandal be gross, or of an heinous nature, or that it is spreading and infectious, as in heresies or schism in the Church, in which cases contumacy is to be proceeded against in order to the greater excommunication.

4. The kirk-session having brought the process to an intimation of the censure of the lesser excommunication, before they inflict the same they are to refer the affair to the Presbytery, bringing their whole proceedings before the Presbytery in writing, that the Presbytery may thereby have a clear and full view of the whole affair.

5. The Presbytery finding the kirk-session hath orderly proceeded, and that the lesser excommunication is not sufficient, and that the affair is so weighty as to oblige them to enter on the process, they are to cause their officer to cite the scandalous person.

6. If the party appear, then the Presbytery is to proceed in the inquiry at the accused about the scandal alleged and libelled, and if he deny it, then they are to proceed and lead probation as in other cases.

7. But if the party appear not, but condemn the citation, the Presbytery causeth renew the same until he hath got three citations, and after the three citations he is to be cited out of the pulpit; and, for the further conviction of all concerned, intimation is to be made that the judicatory will proceed and inquire into the presumptions or probation of the guilt; and this is to be done although the delinquent be absent.

8. Then the Presbytery is to order the minister of the congregation next Sabbath, after forenoon sermon, to acquaint the congregation what proceedings the kirk-session first, and thereafter the Presbytery, had made in the affair, and how contumacious the party was, and that the Presbytery intended to proceed to the highest censure; and the minister is gravely to admonish the party (if present) to repent and submit himself to the discipline of the Church, threatening him, if he continue impenitent, that the Church will proceed; yea, though he be absent, the minister is to acquaint the people that the Church requires him to repent and submit as above said, under the foresaid certification.

9. There should be three public admonitions, and a Presbytery should intervene betwixt each admonition; and if, after all, that person continue impenitent or contumacious, the same is to be represented to the Presbytery, who are thereupon to appoint public prayers thrice to be made, in which the minister is to exhort the congregation seriously to join with him in prayer for the scandalous impenitent or contumacious person, which he is solemnly to put up to God, humbly begging that he would deal with the soul of the impenitent, and convince him of the evil of his ways.

10. These public prayers of the Church are to be put up three several Sabbath days, a Presbytery (where its meetings are more frequent, once a month at least) intervening betwixt each public prayer, both to show the Church's tenderness towards their lapsed brother, their earnestness to have him reclaimed, and likewise to create a greater regard and terror of that dreadful censure, both in the party and in all the people.

11. If, after all, the scandalous person makes no application, but continues impenitent, the Presbytery, after prayer, is to pass sentence, and appoint a minister to intimate the same, and to show the Presbytery's resolution to proceed upon such a Sabbath as they shall name, for pronouncing that dreadful sentence solemnly in face of the congregation, unless either the party, or some for him, signify some relevant ground to stop their procedure.

12. That day being come, it were fit the minister did preach a sermon suited to that solemn occasion, or at least after sermon the minister should show the congregation what he is going about, introducing the narrative of the process with a discourse concerning the nature, use, and end of Church censures, particularly that of the greater excommunication, if he hath not done it fully in his sermon.

13. Then narrating all the steps of the process in order, showing the Church's faithfulness and tenderness towards the scandalous person, and declaring his obstinate impenitency; and that now, after all other means were used, there remained only that of cutting off the scandalous person from the society of the faithful, and intimating the Church's warrant and order to him so to do.

14. And before the minister pronounce the sentence he is to pray, and desire all the congregation to join with him therein, that God would grant repentance to the ob-

stinate person, would graciously bless his own ordinance, and make the censure effectual, both to edify others, and to be a mean to reclaim the obstinate sinner.

15. Then, after prayer, the minister is, with great gravity and authority, to pronounce the censure, showing his warrant from our Lord's command, and the Apostle Paul's direction, and recapitulating the Presbytery's warrant, in obedience thereunto, and resuming the scandalous and obstinate person's behaviour, whom he is to name; he, therefore, in the name and authority of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ doth, *in verbis de præsenti*, pronounce and declare him or her excommunicated, and shut out from the communion of the faithful, debarring that person from their privileges, and, in the words of the Apostle, delivering that person over to Satan; which sentence is to be intimated according to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1704.

16. If, after prayer, or before the censure be pronounced, the scandalous person do make any public signification of his repentance, and of his desire to have the censure stopt, the minister, upon apparent seriousness in the scandalous person, which he sheweth to the congregation, may thereupon delay pronouncing the sentence, till he report to the Presbytery at their next meeting, who are then to deal with the scandalous person as they shall find cause.

17. After the pronouncing of this sentence, the people are to be warned that they hold that person to be cast out of the communion of the Church, and that they shun all unnecessary converse with him or her; nevertheless, excommunication dissolveth not the bonds of civil or natural relations, nor exempts from the duties belonging to them.

18. Although it be the duty of pastors and ruling elders to use all diligence and vigilance, both by doctrine and discipline respectively, for preventing and purging out such errors, heresies, schism, and scandals, as tend to the detriment and disturbance of the Church; yet, because it may fall out, through the pride and stubbornness of offenders, that these means alone will not be effectual to that purpose; it is therefore necessary after all this to employ the aid of the civil magistrate, who ought to use his coercive power for the suppressing of all such offences, and vindicating the discipline of the Church from contempt.

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning the Order of Proceeding to Absolution.

1. If, after excommunication, the signs of repentance appear in the excommunicated person, such as godly sorrow for having incurred God's heavy displeasure by his sin, occasioned grief to his brethren, and justly provoked the Church to cast him out of their communion, together with a full purpose of heart to turn from his sin unto God through Christ, and to reform his life and conversation, with an humble desire of recovering peace with God and his people, and to be restored to the favour of God and light of his countenance, through the blood of Jesus Christ, and to the communion of the Church; and the Presbytery upon his application be satisfied therewith, and judge that he ought to be absolved, and thereupon give warrant for his absolution, he is to be brought before the congregation, and there also to make free confession of his sin and sorrow for it, to call upon God for mercy in Christ, to seek to be restored to the communion of the Church, promising to God, through grace, new obedience, and more holy and circumspect walking, as becomes the Gospel, and that this appearance before the congregation be as often as Church judicatories shall find may be for edification and trial of the professing penitent's sincerity; and being satisfied in this, then the minister and congregation are to praise God, who delighteth not in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should repent and live; as also for blessing the ordinance of excommunication, and making it effectual, by his Spirit, to the recovering of this offender, to magnify the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, in pardoning and receiving to his favour the most grievous offenders, whensoever they unfeignedly repent and forsake their sins; but before the minister proceed to absolution, he is to pray with the congregation to this effect: "That the Lord Jesus Christ, Prophet, Priest, and King of his Church;

who, with the preaching of the Gospel, hath joined the power to bind and loose the sins of men; who hath also declared, that whatsoever by his ministers is bound on earth shall be bound in heaven; and also, that whatsoever is loosed by the same shall be loosed and absolved in heaven, would mercifully accept his creature N., whom Satan of long time hath held in bondage, so that he not only drew him to iniquity, but also so hardened his heart that he despised all admonitions; for the which his sin and contempt, the Church was compelled to excommunicate him from the society of the faithful; but now, seeing the Holy Spirit, by his grace, hath so prevailed, that he is returned and professeth repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, that it may please God, by his Spirit and grace, to make him a sincere and unfeigned penitent; and, for the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ unto death, so to accept of this poor, believing, and returning sinner, that his former disobedience be never laid to his charge; and that he may increase in all godliness, so that Satan in the end may be trodden under foot by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ; and God may be glorified, the Church edified, and the penitent saved in the day of the Lord."

2. Then shall follow the sentence of absolution, in these or the like words:—"Whereas thou N. hast, for thy sin, been shut out from the communion of the faithful, and hast now manifested thy repentance, wherein the Church resteth satisfied, I, in the name of the Lord Jesus, before this congregation, pronounce and declare thee absolved from the sentence of excommunication, formerly denounced against thee, and do receive thee to the communion of the Church, and the free use of all the ordinances of Christ, that thou mayest be partaker of all his benefits, to thy eternal salvation."

3. After this sentence of absolution, the minister speaketh to him as to a brother, exhorting him to watch and pray, and comforting him as there shall be cause; the elders embrace, and the whole congregation holdeth communion with him, as one of their own; and the absolution should be intimated in all the Churches where the excommunication was intimated.

XII.

Sess. 12, April 19, 1707, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for considering and discussing several Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do, therefore, nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Crichton, minister at Edinburgh, &c. &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof fifteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon; and afterwards the first Wednesday of August, November, and March, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own Moderator: And such like, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by an act or order of this Assembly, except it be otherwise remitted to them, and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions to be given to them by this Assembly, and to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; and they are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed or referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings, they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue

and endure till the next General Assembly; and members are required to attend the diets of the Commission, and the absentees ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the late Assembly.

XIII.

Sess. 12, April 19, 1707, ante meridiem.—Instructions to the Commission of the General Assembly.

1. That the Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the Government, or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances, and abuses and disorders, committed contrary to the established doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof inflicted on scandalous persons, settling vacant churches, and regulating the poor, by using endeavours for providing maintenance and labour for them.

2. [Same as in 1703, 1704, and 1705.]

3. [Same as in 1704 and 1705.]

4. [Same as in 1705.]

5. [Same as in 1703, 1704, and 1705.]

6. The said Commission are empowered to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

7. The said Commission are empowered to give all due encouragement and assistance to any proposals which may be made to them about endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the effectual curbing and suppressing of profaneness and vice.

8. The Commission are appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially amongst the ministers thereof; and to gain such as separate therefrom; and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by another act recommended to Presbyteries, and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies or Commissions thereof have carried; and to take off the said censures, or proceed to further censure, as the said Commission shall see cause; and further, the General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th Act of the late General Assembly, concerning Schism and Disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission.

9. That the Commission endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this or preceding Assemblies agreed upon, concerning the erecting of schools in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places; as also to give all due assistance and encouragement for propagating the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus Christ in these and foreign parts of the world.

10. That the Commission have a special respect to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1703, concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and supplying thereof with ministers and probationers; and the Commission are hereby empowered to proceed according to the said act in so far as they shall find it needful.

11. Seeing there is not a full report made to this Assembly concerning the libraries, Irish Bibles, Psalm-Books, and Catechisms, and about the state of the Church in the Highlands and Islands, and the remaining idolatrous, Pagan, and Popish superstitious customs in some places there—the General Assembly recommends to this Commission to prosecute the instructions given thereanent by the Assembly, *anno* 1706, to their Commission, and to use all means in their power for extirpating these idolatrous and superstitious practices; and to take care that the charges of any who have been employed about the same be reimbursed out of the money given by her Majesty for these ends.

12. The General Assembly hereby empowers their Commission to give all due assistance to the several Universities and Colleges, when any minister is called to any

office therein, and to receive appeals and references, and finally to determine in the same.

XIV.

Sess. ult., April 21, 1707.—Act concerning Planting of the Highlands, and maintaining Bursars, &c.

The following overtures were brought in from the Committee, to whom the consideration of the state of the Church in the North and Highlands was remitted, viz., 1mo, That it be inquired how the 9th and 16th Acts of the General Assembly, anno 1699, and the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1703, are observed. 2do, That inquiry should be made what bursars there are having the Irish language, and how the acts made concerning them are obeyed, particularly the 13th and 14th Acts of the Assembly, 1704; and 5th and 11th Acts of the General Assembly, 1705. 3tio, That at each Assembly, the names of the Irish bursars be called for, and an account thereof given in to the Clerk; as also, what hope there is of their being useful in this Church: Which overtures being considered by the General Assembly, they did, and hereby do, approve thereof, and empowered their Commission to put the same, and the acts therein mentioned, in execution, and to take the same under consideration at their first meeting after the rising of this Assembly.

XV.

Sess. ult., April 21, 1707.—Act against Innovations in the Worship of God.

The General Assembly of this Church, taking into their serious consideration that the purity of religion, and particularly of divine worship, and uniformity therein, is a signal blessing to the Church of God, and that it hath been the great happiness of this Church, ever since her reformation from Popery, to have enjoyed and maintained the same in a great measure, and that any attempts made for the introduction of innovations in the worship of God therein have been of fatal and dangerous consequence: Likeas, by the 5th Act of the Parliament, anno 1690, and 23d Act of the Parliament, 1693 years, and the Act lately passed for security of the present Church Establishment, the foresaid purity and uniformity of worship are expressly provided for; and being well informed, by representations sent from several Presbyteries of this Church, that innovations, particularly in the public worship of God, are of late set up in some places in public Assemblies within their respective bounds, and that endeavours are used to promote the same, by persons of known disaffection to the present Establishment both of Church and State; the introduction whereof was not so much as once attempted, even during the late Prelacy; and considering also that such innovations are dangerous to this Church, and manifestly contrary to our known principle, (which is, that nothing is to be admitted in the worship of God but what is prescribed in the Holy Scriptures,) to the constant practice of this Church, and against the good and laudable laws made since the late happy Revolution for establishing and securing the same, in her doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; and that they tend to the fomenting of schism and division, to the disturbance of the peace and quiet both of Church and State: Therefore, the General Assembly being moved with zeal for the glory of God, and the purity and uniformity of his worship, doth hereby discharge the practice of all such innovations in divine worship within this Church, and does require and obtest all the ministers of this Church, especially those in whose bounds any such innovations are or may happen to be, to represent to their people the evil thereof, and seriously to exhort them to beware of them, and to deal with all such as do practise the same, in order to their recovery and reformation; and do instruct and enjoin the Commission of this Assembly to use all proper means, by applying to the Government or otherwise, for sup-

pressing and removing all such innovations, and preventing the evils and dangers that may ensue thereupon to this Church.

XVI.

Sess. ult., April 21, 1707.—Act concerning the Scriptural Songs.

The General Assembly, upon Report of their Committee for Overtures, who were appointed to receive the report of those named to put in order the remarks of Presbyteries upon the version of the Scriptural Songs, finding that but very few Presbyteries have sent in their remarks upon these Songs, and that even those who have made any remarks upon them, judge the said version not yet fit for public use; do, therefore, recommend it to the several Presbyteries to be careful yet to revise the said Songs, and transmit their opinion thereanent to the next Assembly; and, in the meantime, appoints those who were nominated by the Commission of the late General Assembly to revise these Songs at Edinburgh, yet to meet, and again revise the same, and report to the next General Assembly; and adds Mr John M'Bride to that Committee.

XVII.

Sess. ult., April 21, 1707.—Act concerning the Revising the Overtures about the Method of Procedure in Ecclesiastical Judicatories.

The General Assembly, considering that the large Overtures concerning the discipline and method of procedure in ecclesiastical judicatories in the Church of Scotland, transmitted by the General Assembly, *anno* 1705, to Presbyteries, may be very useful to ministers and judicatories, and deserve yet to be farther considered by Presbyteries, in order to complete a method and form of procedure in ecclesiastical judicatories; do, therefore, recommend it to the several Presbyteries to compare the said large Overtures with the Form of Process approved in this Assembly, and report to the General Assembly from time to time their judgment, as to what is yet wanting and necessary to be added to both these overtures, that the same may be supplied, by adding to either of them, until this Church arrive at a complete system of rules in their proceedings in matters of discipline.

XVIII.

Sess. ult., April 21, 1707.—To the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, the humble Address of the Ministers and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

When we consider the many and great advantages that we enjoy under your Majesty's happy Government, we look upon ourselves as obliged, in the conclusion of this our meeting, to renew those sincere acknowledgments of them which we did with all humility lay before your Majesty when we came first together. We cannot, without the deepest sense of gratitude, call to mind the tender and affectionate care which your Majesty hath expressed towards us in this juncture; for, in your royal goodness, you have not only honoured us with a representative entirely and deservedly acceptable to us, whose prudent and obliging management upon this occasion hath justly increased our esteem of him and confidence in him; but your Majesty hath also been concerned to preserve Christian unity and harmony amongst us, by manifesting a pious care not to straiten us in any thing wherein your Majesty did judge our principles were concerned. We have such grateful impressions

of this your Majesty's wise and tender management, as will not only influence ourselves to a firm and steady loyalty, but put us upon using our utmost endeavours, in our stations, to maintain and promote it amongst all in whom we have an interest, in which we crave liberty to assure your Majesty that we shall not be wanting; for we cannot but acknowledge that we are under the highest obligations, not only as subjects, but as Protestants, to be constant and fervent in our addresses to the Sovereign God, that He would richly bless, long preserve, and prosper your Majesty, whose zeal for maintaining of our holy religion, and restoring to their just rights those that have been unjustly oppressed for adhering to it, hath been, in the course of your glorious reign, manifested to the world, and which, to our great joy, hath signally appeared in your Majesty's most gracious answer to the late address of our brethren, the distressed and persecuted Protestants of France.

May the great God, in his infinite mercy, make your Majesty an illustrious instrument, not only to procure a firm peace to Europe, but to restore the ruined Zion of our Redeemer, in the dominions of that haughty monarch, who hath impiously gloried in his having razed it even to the foundation thereof; that the Almighty may be always your strength and defence; that he may always compass your royal person "with his favour as with a shield;" that he may long continue you to be a guardian to the Protestant churches, and liberties of Europe, a blessing to your loving people, and possess your Majesty at last of glory, honour, and immortality, is, and shall be, the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
JO. STIRLING, *Moderator.*

XIX.

The next General Assembly of this Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, upon the third Thursday of April 1708, being the 15th day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JOHN DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 15, 1708.

I.

Sess. 1, April 15, 1708.—The Queen's Commission to David Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of this Church being constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable David Earl of Glasgow, her Majesty's commission, sealed with the Seal ordained to be kept and used in Scotland, in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and represent-

ative in this Assembly, which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordained the same to be recorded, the tenor whereof follows:—"ANNA," &c.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

Her Majesty's High Commissioner presented the Queen's most gracious Letter directed to this General Assembly, which was publicly read with all due honour and respect, and is appointed to be recorded in the registers of this Assembly, the tenor whereof follows:—

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The full and satisfactory accounts we have had of your good conduct and prudent management in the last and former Assemblies, give us full confidence of your meeting now in the same good disposition, and that you will improve this opportunity to do what may be further necessary for promoting religion, discouraging profaneness and immorality, and preventing the growth of Popery. For these ends, we recommend to you to continue your care for providing for such churches as are still vacant with pious and learned ministers, in which you shall not want our concurrence and assistance. We have again chosen our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and councillor, David Earl of Glasgow, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly. And as we have sufficient experience of his fidelity to us, and of his ability and fitness to discharge this trust, so we know that he is acceptable to you. We have fully instructed him in all things we think needful; and, therefore, you may give him entire trust and credit. We cannot but acknowledge our satisfaction with the zeal and affection the ministers have shown at this juncture to our person and government; upon the appearance of an invasion by our enemies; and we doubt not of your being all in the same good disposition, and that ye will encourage the people in their loyalty to us, and in abhorrence of this design, which will subvert our religion, and all that is dear to us. We again assure you of our firm resolution to maintain the government of the Church of Scotland as it is by law established, and to protect you in the free enjoyment of all the rights and privileges that by law you are possessed of. And, not doubting but you will act in such a manner in this Assembly, as that we shall have new reasons to be satisfied with you, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court of St James's, the 16th day of April 1708, and of our reign the 7th year.

By Her Majesty's Command,

DAVID NAIRN.

III.

Sess. 3, April 17, 1708.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We received your gracious letter with all dutiful respect, to our great joy and satisfaction; and we should be unaccountably defective in gratitude as well as duty to your Majesty, if we had not all the good disposition to manage ourselves answerably to what your Majesty expects, and is pleased to recommend to us. We look upon it as a signal blessing, which we earnestly pray God may long continue to us, that we have a Sovereign upon the throne that doth so constantly excite and encourage us to a zealous concern for true religion, and for preventing the growth of Popery, and dis-

couraging profaneness and immorality, which we hope shall ever more and more oblige us in our stations, and by all methods proper for us, to make the best improvement of the present opportunity, which the late circumstances we were in do make so valuable, for promoting pure Christianity and a holy practice, and possessing all that we have any influence upon with a just abhorrence of Popery, and all its errors and superstitions, for the effectual suppressing whereof we must and do still rely upon your Majesty's royal authority, to cause put the good laws against the same to due execution. A pious, learned, and faithful ministry is, under God, the great support of our holy faith, and so necessary a mean for the advancing of the great end of the Gospel, that we are resolved, through Divine assistance, to continue our endeavours, to which your Majesty doth so religiously encourage us, to have all vacancies planted with such a ministry, being persuaded that your Majesty, in your royal wisdom, will be careful to discourage the opposition made to us in several places, by some that are not more disaffected to our Church constitution than to your Majesty's royal person and government. We have had such proofs of the sufficiency, firm loyalty to your Majesty, and good affection to this Church of the Earl of Glasgow, that as he is most acceptable to us, so we, with all thankfulness, acknowledge the obliging proof that your Majesty hath given of a kind regard to us in honouring this Assembly with such a representative of your royal person, to whom we shall give that entire trust and credit which your Majesty requires. It cannot but animate our zeal for your Majesty's person and government, that you are pleased to take notice, with so much goodness, of the affection and loyalty shown by the ministers of this Church in the late juncture, of the appearance of an invasion from your Majesty's enemies, when certainly it was their duty, and their plain and visible interest, to oppose and witness against an attempt so injurious to your Majesty, and your royal crown and dignity, and so destructive to our peace and our religion and liberties, and that threatened no less than the involving your Majesty's dominions in confusion and ruin; and, therefore, we find ourselves obliged, under the most sacred ties of duty and gratitude to your Majesty, our only rightful and lawful Sovereign, to encourage more and more the people under our care in their loyalty to your Majesty, and firm adherence to the present happy establishment. The renewed assurance which your Majesty is pleased to give of your firm resolution to maintain the Presbyterian government of this Church, as by law established, and to protect us in the enjoyment of all our rights and privileges, is to us most acceptable, and shall ever be obliging upon us to manage ourselves so as to witness our sincere and deep resentment of this blessing of your royal favour. That the God of heaven may prevent your Majesty always with the best blessings of his goodness, and ever guide your Majesty by His counsel, till, after a long and happy reign upon earth, He crown you with glory in heaven, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
W. CARSTAIRS, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 5, April 20, 1708.—Act against Popery.

The General Assembly, having under consideration what was represented to them by brethren from diverse corners of this Church, of the growth of Popery, and what may be the dangerous consequences thereof to the Church and Protestant religion, do seriously and earnestly recommend to ministers of the Gospel, that in their sermons and catechisings of the people under their charge, they use all due care and diligence in informing them of the abominable errors of the Church of Rome, and instructing them in the truths of the Reformed religion, and faithfully warning them of their danger from Popery.

V.

Sess. 9, April 23, 1708, post meridiem.—To the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, the most Humble, Faithful, and most Dutiful Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and most loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of this Church, have had so many marks of your royal favour, and are so happy in having such a Sovereign, that we should be enemies to ourselves, and regardless of all that ought to be dear to us, as men and as Christians, as well as unaccountably undutiful to your Majesty, if we were not earnest in our prayers to God for your Majesty's preservation, and for the stability of your throne, and if we had not the utmost abhorrence of the late no less bold than mischievous attempt that was made by the French monarch to invade this kingdom with an armed force, on design to assist a Popish Pretender in usurping the sovereignty of your Majesty's kingdoms, which you govern by a most unquestionable title, a title that we, in our stations, and by all means proper for us, are resolved ever to maintain with a firm and unbiassed zeal.

We both admire, and thankfully acknowledge, the wonderful goodness of the overruling God, in confounding the contrivances of your Majesty's declared enemy against your royal person and government, and for the subversion of the Reformed religion, and of the civil liberties, not only of these nations, but of Europe.

As we tremble at the thoughts of the calamities and bloody confusions that we were upon the brink of being involved in, so we shall ever preserve a thankful remembrance of the seasonable disappointment of our too well grounded fears, which, under the merciful God, we owe to your Majesty's wise conduct, the watchful and prudent care of his Royal Highness, the Lord High Admiral, and the fidelity and diligence of those that were employed by your Majesty for our defence and safety by sea and land.

Whatever encouragement, Madam, that French and Popish enemy might have had from this part of Britain, or elsewhere, we, for our part, cheerfully embrace this opportunity of declaring to the world, that all of the communion of this Church are so sensible of the blessings that, by the Divine favour, they enjoy under the government of your Majesty, their only rightful and lawful Sovereign, and of the many advantages of the late happy Revolution, of which the settling the crown upon your Majesty and Protestant successors is none of the least; they have so great a concern for the Protestant interest, and such an abhorrence of Popery and tyranny, and know so well the many dismal and lamentable instances of French government, that they have an equal detestation of the counsels of Versailles and pretensions of St Germain's.

That all attempts against your royal person and government may have no other effect than the firmer establishment of your throne, the greater security of the Protestant succession, and a deeper sense in your subjects of the happiness they enjoy under your Majesty's wise administration—and that such success may attend your Majesty's arms, and those of your allies, as shall set just limits to the exorbitant power of France, give a solid and lasting peace to Europe, and a comfortable relief and security, by the favour of God, to all the Protestant Churches at home and abroad; and that the gracious God may ever guide your Majesty by his counsel, till, after a long and happy reign upon earth, He crown you with glory in heaven, shall be the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

W. CARSTAIRS, *Moderator.*

VI

April 23, 1708, post meridiem.—Act for suppressing Schism and Disorders in the Church.

The General Assembly, finding that there are several disorderly practices in sundry parts of this Church, to the great dishonour of God, and prejudice of the Church; therefore, they strictly enjoin and peremptorily appoint all the Presbyteries and Synods to take particular notice of all their members, preachers, or others under their inspection; and if they find any ministers or others to fall into irregularities or schismatical courses, that they duly call them to an account, and censure them, according to the merit of their fault, even to deposition of ministers and elders; and to apply to the Commission for their advice, as they shall see cause, and report their diligence herein to the next Assembly. And, in particular, the General Assembly hereby refers the disorders and schismatical courses of Mr James Farquhar, minister of Tyrie, and Mr John McNeillie, probationer, entirely to the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly; hereby empowering the said Commission to call these persons before them, and to censure them as they shall be found to deserve.

VII

April 24, 1708.—Act concerning a Solemn National Thanksgiving.

The General Assembly of this National Church, considering what a surprising deliverance the gracious God hath been pleased, in his infinite goodness, to bestow upon us in this land, in particular, from a threatened invasion of cruel enemies, whereby, according to the unchangeable course of Popery and tyranny, by which this invasion was managed, we were inevitably to lay our account, not only with the scattering of our families and spoiling of our goods, but also the violent invading of our persons and consciences, by methods of cruelty worse than fire and faggot, as the known massacres of Paris, in the year 1572, and of the Protestants in Ireland, in the year 1641, and the continued cruelties used against the Protestants in France, especially since the year 1685, can testify and witness to the world; and that God did thus graciously appear for us when we were unworthy of the least kind regard from him, being a people laden with iniquity, and that have not rendered unto God according to his benefits: We, from a dutiful sense of this signal care, and seasonable appearance of Divine Providence for this Church and nation, cannot but look upon it as our duty to lift up our souls in blessing the God of our salvation for this and all his other wonders of mercy that he hath wrought for this Church and nation, and to call all persons in this National Church to give to the infinitely wise God the glory of his free goodness, taking shame and confusion of face to ourselves, because of our highly aggravated iniquities, and searching and trying our ways, and turning again to the Lord, from whom we have deeply revolted—repentance, reformation, and showing mercy to the poor, being the best evidences of thankfulness for the great mercies of the infinitely holy God, and the only way to secure a continuance of our blessings. The General Assembly doth likewise call and seriously exhort all persons of this Church to join with their thanksgiving earnest prayers to God, that he would turn us to himself in his dear Son, our only propitiation, and to one another in ways of truth, justice, and holiness; that he would bless and preserve our gracious Queen, in whose life, under him, our peace and safety are so much bound up; that he would graciously direct all her councils, and give such success to her arms, and those of her allies, by sea and land, against the common enemy, as shall, through his blessing, bring these desolating wars to an end, that shall be for his own glory, and the comfort and joy of all sincere lovers of truth and righteousness; that he would preserve his Gospel to us in its purity while sun and moon endure; that he would compassionate our distressed Protestant brethren abroad, and deliver them from the oppression of their cruel enemies; that God would assist the ministers and other members of this Church, and judicatories thereof, to acquit themselves so faithfully to

God, and dutifully towards her Majesty's person and government, as may more and more engage her Majesty to be propitious and favourable to this Church, in its worship, discipline, and government, and give all encouragement to the orderly exercise thereof, in its several judicatories; that he would, in his compassion, give seasonable weather, and crown the year with his mercy; and, above all, that he would give us grace to fear him and his goodness, inclining our hearts to obey his voice, that he may not be provoked to turn and do us hurt, after all the great good he hath done us. And the General Assembly appoints the said thanksgiving to be observed in all the parishes within this National Church upon the first Thursday of June next, being the third day of that month.

VIII.

Sess. 12, April 26, 1708, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for considering and discussing several Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake; do therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Carstares, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Moderator, &c., to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof fifteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten hours in the forenoon, and afterwards the first Wednesday of July, last Wednesday of September, first Wednesday of December, and first Wednesday of March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient; with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this Assembly, except it be otherwise restricted, and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions to be given to them by this Assembly, and to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Presbyteries and Synods, that are of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church. And the said Commission are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed or referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue and endure till the next General Assembly, and members are required to attend the diets of the Commission, and the absentees ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the Assembly, 1706. And for the better attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbyteries of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days appointed for the meetings of the Commission.

IX.

Sess. 12, April 26, 1708.—Instructions to the Commission of the General Assembly.

1. [Same as in 1707.]
2. [Same as in 1703, 1704, 1705, and 1707.]
3. [Same as in 1704, 1705, and 1707.]

4. [Same as in 1705 and 1707.]
5. The said Commission is to apply to her Majesty for the civil sanction to fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.
6. [Same as in 1707.]
7. [Same as in 1707.]
8. The Commission are appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially among the ministers thereof, and to gain such as separate therefrom, and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by other acts recommended to Presbyteries; and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies, or Commissions thereof, have carried, and to proceed to farther censure, as the said Commission shall see cause. And further, the General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th Act of the General Assembly, 1706, concerning schism and disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission.
9. That the Commission endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this and preceding Assemblies agreed upon, concerning the erecting of schools in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places, as also to give all due assistance and encouragement to any proposals that may be made for propagating the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, in these and foreign parts of the world, and to apply to and correspond with the Lords of Council and Session about this design; and, if need be, to address her Majesty thereanent; and to write to Presbyteries, from time to time, to excite charitable persons in their bounds to contribute towards that design, and Presbyteries to return accounts of their diligence in that matter to the said Commission. And, further, it is referred to the Commission to use their endeavours for putting in execution the 5th Act of the late Assembly, entitled, "Act anent a School in every Parish, and a contribution thereanent;" as also the 8th Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act for Suppressing of Popery, and Preventing the Growth thereof;" and likewise the 15th Act of that Assembly, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God."
10. [Same as in 1707.]
11. That the said Commission receive and consider any representations or references that shall be made to them by Presbyteries, and others concerned, about large and spacious parishes, and use all means proper to them for obtaining new erections in such parishes, or stipends to collegiate ministers in the same.
12. Seeing there is not a full report made to this Assembly concerning the libraries, Irish Bibles, Psalm-Books, and Catechisms, and about the state of the Church in the Highlands and Islands, and the remaining idolatrous, paganish, and Popish superstitious customs in some places there, the General Assembly recommends to this Commission to prosecute the instructions given thereanent by the Assembly, *anno* 1706, to their Commission, and to use all means in their power for extirpating these idolatrous and superstitious practices; and to take care that the charges of any who have been employed about the same, be reimbursed out of the money given by her Majesty for these ends.
13. The General Assembly hereby empowers their Commission to give all due assistance to the several universities and colleges when any minister is called to any office therein, and to receive appeals and references, and finally to determine in the same.

X.

Sess. 13 et ult., April 27, 1708.—Act and Recommendation concerning Ministerial Visitation of Families.

The General Assembly, finding that overtures concerning the ministerial visitation of families have been transmitted to the several Presbyteries within this National Church for their opinions thereanent, and that the plurality of the Presbyteries who returned their opinions about the same have consented to the passing of these over-

tures in manner after mentioned ; and the General Assembly, judging that what is therein proposed may be of great use to the ministers of the Gospel, though not as binding rules, yet as a help to them when they go about that necessary work of family visitation ; therefore, this General Assembly did unanimously, and hereby do, recommend the same as such to the several ministers of this National Church, the tenor whereof follows :—

“ Seeing, for the faithful discharge of ministers’ work, they ought, besides what is incumbent to them in the public congregation, to take special care and inspection of the particular persons and families under their oversight and charge, in order to which, it hath been the laudable custom of this Church, at least once a year, if the largeness of the parish, bodily inability in the minister, or other such like causes, do not hinder, for ministers to visit all the families in their parish, and oftener, if the parish be small, and they be able to set about it.

“ For the more uniform and successful management of which work, although in regard of the different circumstances of some parishes, families, and persons, much of this work, and the management thereof, must be left to the discretion and prudence of ministers in their respective oversights, yet these following advices are offered and overtured as helps in the management thereof, that it may not be done in a slight and overly manner.

“ 1. First of all, it seems needful that ere a minister set out to this work he should labour to have his own heart in a suitable frame for it, by exciting in himself the love of God, and the desire of the salvation of his people’s souls, and the sense of the weight of the charge given him, to watch for souls as one who must give an account, and of the difficulty of this part of his work in particular ; for perhaps it may be found no less difficult to apply to particular families, and persons therein, teaching and warning every one, than it is to dispense the word in common in the public congregation.

“ 2. That such a time in the year be chosen for such ministerial visitation, as the families whom he visits may be best at leisure to meet with him, when they may be expected at home, and least incumbered with affairs ; and it were fit, that when a minister designs to visit any part of his parish, intimation thereof should be made either in public from the pulpit, or some other way, that they may order their affairs so that he may have opportunity to meet with them at home.

“ 3. It is fit when a minister designs to visit any part of the parish, that he be accompanied with the elder of the bounds, and that before they go forth to the work they may confer together concerning the state and condition of the persons and families of these bounds, that the minister may be able to speak the more suitably to their condition, and as may be most for edification.

“ 4. When they enter a house or family, after a short account of the design of the visit, and expression of their wishes and desires for the blessing of God upon the family, and that, above all, their souls may prosper, it were fit to take an account of the names of the family, parents, children, and servants, and to inquire for certificates from them who are lately come to the parish, and to mark them in their book or roll for catechising ; and to take notice who can read, and of the age of children when capable to be catechised.

“ 5. After the minister has got an account of the persons dwelling in the family, he may speak to them all in general of the necessity of regeneration, and the advantages of serious religion and godliness, of piety towards God, and justice and charity towards man.

“ 6. And next, more particularly, to the servants, of their duty to fear and serve God, and to be dutiful, faithful, and obedient servants, and of the promises made to such, commending to them the reading of the Scriptures as they can, and prayer in secret, and love and concord among themselves ; and, in particular, a holy care of sanctifying the Lord’s Day.

“ 7. The minister may apply his discourse to the children as they are capable, with affectionate seriousness, showing them the advantage of knowing, loving, seeking, and serving God, and remembering their Creator and Redeemer in the days of their youth, and honouring their parents ; and to remind them how they were dedicated to

God in baptism ; and when of age, and fit, and after due instruction of the nature of the covenant of grace and the seals thereof, to excite them to engage themselves personally to the Lord, and to desire and prepare for, and take the first opportunity they can of partaking of the Lord's Supper ; to be especially careful how they communicate at first, much depending thereon, (and such of the servants as are young are to be exhorted hereto in like manner,) exciting them also to daily reading of the Scriptures, and to secret prayer, and sanctifying the Lord's Day.

"8. After the minister has spoken to servants and children, he should speak privately to the master and mistress of the family about their personal duty toward God, and the care of their own souls' salvation, and their obligation to promote religion and the worship of God in their family, and to restrain and punish vice, and encourage piety, and to be careful that they and their house serve the Lord, and sanctify the Lord's Day ; and after this, it may be fit to exhort masters to take care that God be worshipped daily in the family, by prayer and praise, and reading the Scriptures. *Secundo*, Concerning the behaviour and conversation of the servants, and their duty towards God and man, and how they attend the worship of God in their family ; how they attend the public worship on the Lord's Day, and how they behave after sermons ; if any of them be piously inclined ; if they make conscience of secret prayer and reading the Scripture. *Tertio*, If there be catechising and instructing the ignorant and weak ; if due care be taken in educating the children ; and, particularly, if they be put timeously to school, and how they profit thereat ; and how the Lord's Day is spent after sermons in the family, and in secret ; in all which the minister may mix in suitable directions, encouragements, and admonitions, as he shall see cause, and most for edification.

"9. It may be useful to inquire who have Bibles, and to encourage them who are able to get a Bible of their own, and to make diligent and religious use thereof ; and to commend to parents and masters of families to have the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, and other good books, for instruction in faith and manners.

"10. If any be tainted with errors or given to vice, they should be particularly dealt with and spoken to, either privately or before others, as may be most for edification ; and all are to be exhorted that are in the family to watch and edify one another, and to carry toward any that walk disorderly according to the rule, Matthew xviii. 15.

"11. As the minister is to exhort all in the family to peace and love among themselves and their neighbours, so, if there be any difference and division, either in the family or with the neighbours, the minister should endeavour to remove the same, and to make peace, and excite to follow it with all men as far as possible.

"12. It may be also inquired at those who received tokens to communicate the last season for it whether they have made use of them or not ; and those who have communicated may be inquired privately how they have profited thereby, and excited to remember and pay their vows to the Lord.

"13. If there be any in the parish who keep not church communion with us, whatever their motives be, ministers ought to deal with God for them, and with themselves, in such a way as may be most proper to gain them, and exoner our own consciences before God and his people, waiting if God peradventure will prevail with them ; who can tell but our making them sensible of our tender love and affection to their persons, especially to their souls, giving them all due respect, and doing them all the good we can, yet still discountenancing their sin, may in the end be blessed of God for their good. Jude 22, 23 ; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

"Seeing there is need for all this of much prudence, zeal for God, and love to souls, and affectionate seriousness, all this should be carried on with dependence on God, and fervent prayer to Him, both before a minister set forth for such work, and with the visited, as there shall be access to, and opportunity for it."

XI.

Sess. 13 et ult., April 27, 1708.—Act concerning Ministers and Probationers having the Irish Language as to their Settlement.

The General Assembly does hereby discharge all the Presbyteries of this Church

for the future to concur with any call or design of settling any minister or probationer having Irish in any congregation in the Lowlands, unless such persons have been for a year at least in the Highlands supplying vacancies, and no call offered to them; and in that case, Presbyteries are allowed to settle them, but with this condition, that so soon as a call comes from any Highland parish needing one having the Irish language, that such persons shall be transported.

And the General Assembly hereby renews all former acts made anent planting the Highlands, and refers it to their Commission to take care that the same be put to due execution.

XII.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Act for the better Observation of the Lord's Day.

Forasmuch as ministers from diverse parts of this National Church do represent that there is a general profanation of the Lord's Day, by travelling thereupon, carrying goods, driving cattle, and other abuses, to the great scandal of religion, and manifest breach of many good laws, and acts of Parliament and General Assemblies; which the General Assembly of this Church being desirous to prevent, in so far as is competent to them, therefore, they did, and hereby do, appoint each Presbytery within this Church to nominate two or three of their number to attend the Lords Commissioners of Justiciary, at their first circuit that falls to be in their bounds, and to represent to their Lordships the profanation of the Lord's Day by the foresaid wicked and sinful practices: And the General Assembly does seriously recommend to the said Lords of Justiciary to take such effectual courses as they in their wisdom shall think fit to restrain and punish the foresaid abuses, which the Assembly will acknowledge as a singular service done to God and his Church: And they do in the meantime enjoin all the ministers of this Church from their pulpits to advertise their people among whom such practices are, of the great hazard their immortal souls are in by such courses, and that if they continue therein there will be a necessity to represent to the Lords Justices all transgressors of the laws made against profaning of the Sabbath, and warn them to abstain therefrom in time coming: And, further, the General Assembly enjoins ministers and church judicatories to take care that former acts of Assembly made against breach of the Lord's Day be observed, and not only to proceed with ecclesiastical censures, but to apply to the justices of the peace in their bounds, and other magistrates, for putting in execution the good laws already made against the breach of the Sabbath and other immoralities.

XIII.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Act, Overture, and Recommendation, concerning Probationers and Intrants to the Holy Ministry.

The General Assembly, considering that it is of great importance and advantage to this Church that none be licensed to preach the Gospel as a probationer, or be settled in the ministry, but such as are duly qualified for that holy work: Therefore, the General Assembly does seriously recommend to all Presbyteries the punctual observance of all the acts already made concerning probationers or intrants to the ministry: And, farther, the General Assembly transmits it as an overture to the several Presbyteries, that, before any Presbytery receive any upon trial, in order to his being licensed, they appoint three or four of their number privately to converse with him, and to take trial of his knowledge in divinity, and particularly the modern controversies; and of what sense and impressions he has of religion upon his own soul; and that they make report of their diligence herein before the Presbytery admit him to the probationary trials. And, in regard there may be in Presbyteries different sentiments as to men's sufficiency for the ministry, even upon the second trials, and that it cannot but weaken the hands of intrants when their sufficiency is contested, even in the Presbytery that ordains them; and that it may occasion division if the

Presbytery shall proceed to ordain notwithstanding of the protestations of their brethren on the head of insufficiency; the Assembly transmits as an overture, that in this case, the Presbytery shall refer the whole affair to their respective Synods, and that the Synod shall appoint some of their number to examine *coram* the intrants whose abilities and fitness are thus questioned, and give directions to the Presbyteries in such cases as they shall see cause: And, lastly, the General Assembly recommends the strict observance of these things to the several Presbyteries until the next Assembly, and appoints Presbyteries to be careful to give their remarks thereupon, that the same may be turned into a standing act and constitution of this Church, if the Assembly shall see cause.

XIV.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Recommendation for preventing competing Calls.

The General Assembly recommends it to the several Presbyteries to think upon some overture to prevent competitions of calls; and in case of such competitions, how to prevent their coming to superior judicatories; as also, an overture to prevent the giving of a second call by a different parish to any minister or probationer, during the dependence of a prior call from another parish or parishes, and process thereupon, and until the first call and process be discussed.

XV.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Act and Reference concerning the Publishing a Version of the Scriptural Songs.

The General Assembly do instruct and appoint their Commission maturely to consider the printed version of the Scripture Songs, with the remarks of Presbyteries thereupon; and, after examination thereof, they are hereby authorised and empowered to conclude and establish that version, and to publish and emit it for the public use of the Church, as was formerly done on the like occasion, and when our version of the Psalms was published in the year 1649; and seeing there are many copies of the said version lying on the author's hand, it is recommended to ministers and others to buy the same for private use in the meantime.

XVI.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Act concerning the larger Overtures, about the Method of Procedure in Church Judicatories.

The General Assembly, finding that many Presbyteries have not as yet returned their opinion about the large overtures concerning the method of procedure in ecclesiastical judicatories, which were transmitted to them by former Assemblies; they do hereby, of new, require the several Presbyteries forthwith to take these overtures under their consideration, and send in their opinions about the same to the Commission of this Assembly, to be by them prepared against the next Assembly.

XVII.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1708.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh upon the second Thursday of April, 1709 years, being the fourteenth day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 124th Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by
JOHN DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

[The following Acts, in the Original Edition, are appended to those of 1708, not having been inserted in their proper place.]

Sess. 5, April 20, 1708, post meridiem.—Acts concerning the Proposals about Propagating Christian Knowledge, Suppressing Popery, Erecting Schools, &c.

The General Assembly does resolve, that they will appoint a committee to receive reports from Presbyteries, how the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1707, entitled, "Act anent Schools in every Parish;" and the 8th Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act for Suppressing Popery, and Preventing the Growth thereof," have been obeyed, and to receive reports from the several Presbyteries as to what advance is made in their bounds, in the subscriptions towards the design of propagating Christian knowledge, and in the contributions of the quarter *centesima*, for encouragement of such as shall be sent in mission to those places where Popery abounds; and the Assembly earnestly recommends to and enjoins the several Synods and Presbyteries to see to the punctual execution of these two acts, and do ordain an account of their diligence herein to be inserted in their books: And that committee, when named, are hereby empowered to act and manage in these matters, under the inspection and by the direction of the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly.

Sess. 6, April 21, 1708, post meridiem.

The General Assembly, finding that there is no committee yet named to receive in reports from Presbyteries of the advances made in the subscriptions for propagating Christian knowledge, and other ends mentioned in yesternight's resolve, they do now nominate and appoint, for these ends, the persons following, viz., the Right Reverend Messrs William Carstairs, Moderator, George Meldrum, George Hamilton, William Wishart, John Stirling, James Ramsay at Kelso, James Haddo, John Bonar, John Moncrief, Thomas Wilkie in Canongate, William Mitchel there, Neil M'Vicar, John Anderson at St Andrews, George Barclay, David Blair, Patrick Cuming, James Hart, Robert Horsburgh, George Turnbull, William Moncrief at Largo, and John Brown, *Ministers*; the Lord President, Lord Justice-Clerk, Lord Pollock, Lord Tillicoultry, Lord Minto, Lord Forglen, Lord Bowhill, Senators of the College of Justice; Sir James Stewart, her Majesty's Advocate, Sir Samuel Maclellan, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Sir James Campbell of Aberuchill, Lieutenant-Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Sir Walter Pringle, Mr William Brodie, Mr Walter Steuart, Mr James Gellie, advocates; Sir James Smollet of Bonhill, Sir George Home of Kello, Sir Hugh Cunningham of Craigend, Walter Stewart of Pardovan, and John Alexander of Blackhouse, *Ruling Elders*.

ACT OF THE COMMISSION OF 1708.

At Edinburgh, the 28th April 1708, post meridiem.

The Commission of the General Assembly, taking into consideration what is referred to them in their instructions by the late General Assembly, concerning the propagating of Christian knowledge; and finding that diverse of their number, and some others, were named by the said Assembly for that end, and for other affairs specified in two acts of the same Assembly, but the times and places of their meetings not having been concerted, this Commission appoints the same to be within the Assembly-House, the last Thursday of each month, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and oftener, as the said Committee shall think fit; and they are from time to time to report an account of their diligence to this Commission.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 14, 1709.

I.

Sess. 1, April 14, 1709.—The Queen's Commission to David Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of this Church being constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable David Earl of Glasgow, her Majesty's commission, sealed the 11th day of April current, with the Seal ordained to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, and of the same tenor with former commissions, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is by order of this Assembly recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

Eadem Sessione.—Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

ANNE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, April 16, 1709.—The General Assembly's Answer to her Majesty's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, April 18, 1709, ante meridiem.—Act concerning People's Behaviour in time of Divine Worship.

The General Assembly, considering the great reverence and holy fear that is owing to the infinitely glorious and holy God by his rational creatures, especially when they are employed in acts of immediate worship, such as prayer and praise; do, therefore, seriously recommend it to persons of all ranks, that, considering in whose presence they are, and with what deep humility the glorious God is to be adored by sinful men, they would forbear bowing, and other expressions of civil respect, and entertaining one another with discourses, while divine worship is performing, and holy ordinances are dispensing; and that as to this matter, people carefully observe what is enjoined in the first head of the Assembly's Directory for the Public Worship of God in this Church, entitled, "Of the Assembling of the Congregation, and their Behaviour in the Public Worship of God;" and ordains this to be intimated in the several congregations of this Church.

V.

Sess. 4, April 18, 1709, ante meridiem.—Act concerning Planting the Highlands, and Probationers having the Irish Language.

The General Assembly, considering that several probationers who have lived in

the Highlands in their childhood, but through disuse have lost much of the Irish language, yet upon application thereto have soon recovered it, and have been very useful, and that some probationers, who, in their younger years, have lived in the Highlands, and had the Irish language, and can still speak it, do, notwithstanding, excuse themselves from preaching in that language, whereby the acts of Assembly are eluded; therefore, and in order to the more effectual planting of the Highlands, the General Assembly does appoint and ordain that when any Presbytery is to take a young man under trial, who hath lived for some time of his younger years in the Highlands, or where the Irish language is generally spoken, they write to that Presbytery in whose bounds he hath lived the said time, to make inquiry whether such a person hath the Irish language, or might soon acquire it, and upon report that he hath it, or may soon acquire it, that he be sent to supply in the Highlands, as one that hath the Irish language; and if the Presbyteries receiving such men on trials shall neglect the premises, and settle any in these circumstances in a congregation having only the English language, the Assembly certifies such Presbyteries that they shall be censured, and the person so settled shall be transportable to any Highland congregation that shall call him, and shall be liable to be sent as a supply to the Highlands, notwithstanding any such settlement; and the General Assembly does empower their Commission to be named by them to receive complaints from any Presbytery or parish in the Highlands, who shall find themselves leased in this matter, and to put this present Act in execution in all points.

VI.

Sess. 5, April 19, 1709, post meridiem.—Act and Recommendation for furthering the Design of propagating Christian Knowledge.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the instructions given by the last Assembly to their Commission, to give all due assistance and encouragement to any proposals to be made for propagating the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus Christ in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and foreign parts of the world; and that the said Assembly had appointed a Committee to receive in reports from Presbyteries of the advances made in the subscriptions for promoting the foresaid design, and to act and manage in that matter under the inspection and by the direction of the foresaid Commission; and the General Assembly having heard the report of the said Commission, that there are now very considerable advances made in the said subscriptions; and her Majesty having, by her royal proclamation, dated the 18th day of August last bypast, with the advice of her Privy Council, approved of and recommended the foresaid charitable design, and declared her resolution to grant her letters patent for erecting the subscribers into a society and corporation for managing that affair; and the General Assembly, considering that the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, in the eternal salvation of the immortal souls of people, are deeply interested in this truly pious and glorious design, and that the zeal and forwardness of others, both in England and the United Provinces, in carrying on such a work, hath been blessed of God with wonderful and comfortable success; does, therefore, with all earnestness, beseech and exhort all the people of this National Church to contribute their best endeavours, in their stations, to promote this noble and excellent undertaking; and, particularly, that in zeal for the glory of God, and in pity and compassion toward many thousands in this Church and nation, especially in the Highlands and Islands, who live in barbarity and ignorance, and toward so great a part of the world as is this day perishing for lack of knowledge, they would cheerfully embrace this precious opportunity of honouring the Lord with their substance, and making to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. And the Assembly does seriously recommend to the ministers and elders of this Church to go through their respective parishes on such days as the several Presbyteries shall appoint, and receive and collect subscriptions for or contributions of money from such persons whose hearts God shall incline thereunto; and that ministers take occasion, on a Sabbath before they begin this work, to read and intimate this act from the pulpit to their respective congregations, and to exhort, excite, and stir up their people to sub-

scribe or contribute, according to their ability, on this occasion. And the Assembly does hereby recommend to the several Presbyteries within this Church to be careful to promote the taking subscriptions and making collections for the end foresaid, within their respective bounds, so soon as conveniently can be; and where parishes are vacant, that they appoint some of their number to preach, and intimate this act, and join with the elders of such parishes, if any be, or with such of the heritors or parishioners as will assist in taking subscriptions and making collections as is above expressed; and that the several Presbyteries do, without delay, call for and take in reports from all the ministers within their bounds, containing a particular account of the subscribers, and sums subscribed for, and money collected in each parish, and send an extract thereof, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, to the Clerk of the Commission of this Assembly; and thereafter, upon advertisement from the said Commission, send in the principal subscriptions and money collected, to be delivered to any person whom the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, when constituted, shall appoint to receive the same, upon his receipt thereof. And the General Assembly does hereby instruct and empower their Commission to be appointed by them, to promote by all proper means the foresaid glorious design of propagating Christian knowledge; and appoints the agents of the Church to dispatch printed copies of this act to all the Presbyteries of this Church, for the ends foresaid.

VII.

Sess. 5, April 19, 1709, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Better Attendance of Members on the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, finding that some Presbyteries send not their full representation to General Assemblies, and that some commissioners from Presbyteries do not attend conform to their commissions, does, therefore, strictly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to send their full representation to Assemblies; and that they make choice of such as are able to attend, and whom they have reason to believe will give due attendance: And with respect to such as are chosen commissioners to General Assemblies, who wholly absent themselves from the Assembly, the Clerk of the Assembly is hereby appointed to send their names to their several Presbyteries and Synods; and the Assembly ordains, that for the first fault they be censured by their Presbytery, and that the censure be recorded in their Presbytery books; and for the second fault, that they be censured by the Synod of their bounds, and the censure recorded in their Synod books; and that for the third fault they be suspended by their respective Synods or Presbyteries, conform to the Act, Session 27, *ult.* August 1647, entitled, “Act for censuring Absentees from the General Assembly.” And in case it shall happen that any of the persons chosen to represent Presbyteries shall fall sick, or have any other lawful excuse for not attending the Assembly, the General Assembly appoints, that in due time they acquaint the moderator of their Presbytery therewith, and the moderator is hereby empowered to call a meeting of the Presbytery *pro re nata*, in order to make choice of other fit persons in their room; and if the Presbyteries or Synods shall find cause to sustain the excuses offered by their said commissioners, the Assembly ordains that what is offered by way of excuse be also recorded in their books; and as to such persons as shall withdraw from Assemblies before the dissolution thereof, the Clerk of the Assembly is ordained to send an account thereof to their Presbyteries, that they may, as they see cause, admonish them therefor.

VIII.

April 25, 1709.—Act concerning a Fast.

The General Assembly, being sensible of the many evident signs of God's displeasure against this land, manifested by the unseasonableness of the weather, especially in seed-time, with the sad effects thereof in the present dearth and threatened scarcity,

and the great loss of flocks and cattle in divers parts of the land, and by many spiritual plagues on all ranks, justly inflicted upon us by an holy and righteous God, for our great and manifold sins, committed against the clearest Gospel light, and most solemn engagements and deepest obligations to the contrary; and notwithstanding of the many signal mercies and remarkable deliverances that God hath been pleased to bless us with, the forgetting of which, and our unanswerableness thereto, is none of the least of our transgressions, does judge it necessary that a day be set apart for solemn prayer, fasting, and humiliation, before the Lord, for the causes above mentioned: And the General Assembly, finding it convenient at this time to refer it to the several Synods and Presbyteries, to name a day for this solemn duty, does ordain them, as soon as possible, to set apart a day for solemn public prayer, fasting, and humiliation, in all the churches within their respective bounds, upon the accounts foresaid: And the General Assembly recommends it to all the ministers of this Church to be most serious in holding forth to their people on that occasion the heinous sins of this land, both of the former and present time, and for their direction therein, they are hereby referred to the causes of former public fasts, especially in the years 1690, 1700, and 1701; and to exhort all ranks of persons to flee to Christ for peace and pardon, and to unfeigned repentance, thorough reformation, and fervent prayer to God, that he would be graciously pleased to pour out the Spirit from on high upon persons of all ranks, bless his ordinances with more success, remove all our distempers, heal our breaches, defeat all designs tending to the disturbing of the public peace, either by foreign invasion or intestine broils in favour of a Popish Pretender; that he would preserve and bless the person of our gracious sovereign the Queen, direct her councils, and favour her forces by sea and land with success, so as that this long, bloody, and expensive war, may issue in such a peace as shall be for the interest of the reformed religion, and for the relief and restitution of distressed Protestants in France and elsewhere, and of the just liberties of Europe, that he would bless the season, and crown the year with his goodness. And the Assembly ordains these presents to be read by all the ministers of this Church, from their pulpits, upon the Lord's Day before the day appointed by their respective Synods or Presbyteries for the observation of this fast; and for this end, that these presents be printed, that copies thereof may be in readiness for the commissioners from the several Presbyteries to take along with them.

IX.

Sess. 12, April 26, 1709, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for discussing several Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, does, therefore, nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs Thomas Vernour at Balmaclellan, &c., &c., to be commissioners of this Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any twenty-one of the said commissioners, whereof fifteen are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House here at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock in the forenoon; and afterwards, the first Wednesdays of August and January next, and oftener, when and where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said commissioners to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred or that shall be referred to them by any act or order of this Assembly, except it be otherwise restricted, and to do everything contained in and conform to the instructions to be given them by this Assembly, and to advert unto the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Presbyteries or Synods, that may not be of universal

concern to or influence upon this whole Church: And the said commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed or referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly as they shall see cause, and this Commission is to continue and endure till the next General Assembly, and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, 1706; and for the better securing of a quorum and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meetings of the Commission; and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are of the Commission are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof, and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the Commission.

X.

April 26, 1709.—Instructions to the Commission of the General Assembly.

1. That the Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to the government or any magistrate, for their countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances, and abuses, and disorders, committed contrary to the established doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof inflicted on scandalous persons; and that they assist Presbyteries and Synods in planting vacancies as they shall be applied to by them.

2. That when any of the ministers who served under the late prelacy, whose lives and doctrine may render them useful to this Church, shall apply for reception unto a share of the government thereof, the General Assembly do hereby empower and recommend to their Commission to receive them, according to the thirteenth paragraph of the 16th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1697, and that the foresaid Commission be careful to get due information from the Presbyteries where these persons applying did or do officiate, and for the time reside.

3. That the said Commission use their utmost diligence for getting payment of the money gifted by the Queen's Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church, and in disposing thereof, they are to take care that the public debts of the Church be first paid, according to an act passed in this Assembly thereanent, and to the instructions given to the Commission of the General Assembly, *anno* 1706, which are hereby renewed; and that the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, *anno* 1699, to ministers and probationers who go North, or to the Highlands and Islands, to preach, be rendered effectual; and likewise, that the said Commission cause defray the extraordinary charges and expenses that Presbyteries and ministers have been at, particularly in these places, in carrying on the planting of Churches and other public affairs of the Church there.

4. And the foresaid Commission is hereby empowered to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made or to be made to them by this Assembly; and in references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, the Highlands and Islands, which shall be brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and that transportations to any parishes in these places, whether privileged by former acts of Assembly or not, be carried on, and that in the most expeditious way, providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods, excepting causes particularly referred to them.

5. The said Commission is to apply to her Majesty for the civil sanction to fasts and thanksgivings, as occasion requires, and to specify the causes thereof.

6. The said Commission is empowered to give all due advice and assistance to any proposals that may be made to them about endeavours for reformation of manners, for the effectual curbing and suppressing of profaneness and vice.

7. The Commission is empowered to give all due assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

8. The Commission is appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially among the ministers thereof, and to gain such as separate therefrom, and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by another act recommended to Presbyteries; and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies, or Commissions thereof, have carried, and to proceed to further censure, as the said Commission shall see cause. And further, the General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th act of the General Assembly, 1706, concerning schism and disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission; and that they take notice of what misrepresentations may be made, either at home or abroad, of the doctrine, worship, or constitution of this Church, and that they take all decent and proper methods for the vindication thereof.

9. That the Commission endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this and preceding Assemblies agreed upon concerning the erecting of schools in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places, as also to give all due assistance and encouragement to any proposals that may be made for propagating the knowledge of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, in these and foreign parts of the world, and to apply to and correspond with the Lords of Council and Session about this design; and, if need be, to address her Majesty thereanent; and to write to Presbyteries from time to time to excite charitable persons in their bounds to contribute towards that design, and to correspond with the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, when the same shall be established, in order to advance the said pious design; and Presbyteries are appointed to return accounts of their diligence in that matter to the said Commission. And further, it is referred to the Commission to use their endeavours for putting in execution the fifth Act of the Assembly, 1707, entitled, "Act anent a School in every Parish, and a Contribution thereanent;" as also the eighth Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act for Suppressing of Popery, and Preventing the Growth thereof;" and likewise the fifteenth Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God."

10. That the Commission have a special respect, so far as the present circumstances require, to the ninth Act of the General Assembly, 1703, concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and supplying thereof with ministers and probationers; and the Commission is hereby empowered to proceed according to the said Act, in so far as they shall find it needful.

11. That the said Commission receive and consider any representations or references that shall be made to them by Presbyteries and others concerned, about large and spacious parishes, and use all means proper for them for obtaining and rendering effectual, and preserving new erections in such parishes, or stipends to collegiate ministers thereto.

12. Seeing there is not a full report made to this Assembly concerning the libraries, Irish Bibles, Psalm-Books, and Catechisms, and about the state of the Church in the Highlands and Islands, and the remaining idolatrous Pagan and Popish superstitious customs in some places there, the General Assembly recommends to this Commission to prosecute the instructions given thereanent by the General Assembly, *anno* 1706, to their Commission, and to use all means in their power for extirpating these idolatrous and superstitious practices; and to take care that the charges of any who have been employed about the same be reimbursed out of the money given by her Majesty for these ends.

13. The General Assembly hereby empowers their Commission to give all due assistance to the several Universities and Colleges, when any minister is called to any office therein, and to receive appeals and references, and finally to determine in the same.

XI.

Sess. 12, April 26, 1709, ante meridiem.—Act for erecting Public Libraries in Presbyteries.

The General Assembly, considering how much it might tend to the advancement of learning, that public libraries were settled, at least one in every Presbytery, and many pious and charitably inclined persons having contributed toward that good design; and the Assembly being desirous to encourage and promote the same, does hereby earnestly recommend it to such of the Presbyteries of this Church as have not received any of the books sent for that end from England, to contribute amongst themselves, in order to lay a foundation for a library at each Presbytery seat; and also endeavour to procure collections in their several parishes, of more or less, according as their parishioners are able and willing to give and bestow for that end; and the General Assembly refers it to their Commission to use all endeavours to forward the execution of what is hereby recommended; and Presbyteries who have got a share of these libraries are desired to send accounts to the Commission of their receipt of them, where they are fixed, how they have observed the rules sent with these libraries, and what improvements they are making of them, and other things relating to the said libraries, enjoined to them by acts of former Assemblies and their Commissions.

XII.

Sess. 12, April 26, 1709.—Act against Bourignonism.

The General Assembly, understanding that the dangerous errors of Bourignonism, already condemned by this Church, do, notwithstanding, abound in some places of this nation; does, therefore, earnestly recommend it to Presbyteries to use all effectual means to prevent the spreading of these and other errors, as is enjoined by the 10th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1701, and other acts therein mentioned; and, further, does hereby instruct their Commission to use all suitable endeavours for that purpose; and, particularly, if there be any meetings of such as are tainted with these errors, that care be taken to suppress the same.

XIII.

Sess. 13, April 26, 1709, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Larger Overtures about the Method of Procedure in Church Judicatories, and other Overtures mentioned in the 13th, 14th, and 16th Acts of the General Assembly, 1708.

The General Assembly, finding that many Presbyteries have not as yet returned their opinions as to the overtures and recommendation concerning probationers and intrants to the holy ministry, and the recommendation concerning competing calls, contained in the 13th and 14th Acts of the last Assembly, nor their remarks upon the larger overtures, concerning the method of procedure in ecclesiastical judicatories, which were transmitted to them by former General Assemblies; does hereby, of new, require and enjoin the several Presbyteries forthwith to take under their consideration the said larger overtures, especially the Second Chapter, Sections first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and ninth thereof; and Chapter Third, Sections first, se-

cond; third, fourth, fifth, sixth, twelfth, and thirteenth of that Chapter; and also the said other overtures and recommendations, and send in their opinions about the same to the Commission of this Assembly, against their meeting in August next; and the General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to take the methods which they shall judge most effectual, either by appointing diets in *hunc effectum*, or committees, to consider the said overtures, and report to the Presbyteries: and, to the end that the Assembly may be in the better case to consider these and other things of importance that may come before them, the General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to choose the wisest and most grave and experienced of their number to represent them in the next Assembly.

XIV.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1709.—Act concerning Bursaries.

The General Assembly, having inquired how Synods and Presbyteries have obeyed what is enjoined by the 13th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1704, entitled, “Act for bestowing Bursaries upon Students having Irish;” and, finding that some Synods and Presbyteries have been deficient in that matter, and judging it needful to continue the said act for some time, did, and hereby do, enjoin the several Presbyteries yet to collect and pay in their proportions of money for maintaining bursars in manner prescribed by the said act for bygone years; and Synods are appointed to see this done, and to record their diligence in this matter in their books, and bring an account thereof to the next General Assembly; and the General Assembly renews and revives the said act, and appoints the same to stand and be in force until the next Assembly; and, in the meantime, refers it to their Commission to think upon and prepare some overtures for the right application and management of the foresaid bursaries for the future, and report the same to the next General Assembly.

XV.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1709.—Act concerning Ministers deposed or suspended, and Probationers silenced.

The General Assembly, considering that Church judicatories and congregations are and may be imposed upon by ministers deposed or suspended, and probationers whose licences are taken from them and declared null, for irregularities and misdemeanours, to the great prejudice of the interests of religion; does, therefore, appoint the several Synods and Presbyteries of this Church to send accounts from time to time to the Clerk of the General Assembly, of all ministers who are or shall be deposed or suspended, and probationers who are or shall be silenced by them: And the clerk is hereby ordered to lay the same before the General Assembly, or Commission thereof, at their first meeting after it comes to his hand, that due and proper methods may be used to make the same publicly known to all concerned.

XVI.

Sess. ult., April 27, 1709.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, upon the last Wednesday of April next, 1710 years, being the twenty-sixth day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 48th Psalm, from the 10th verse, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 26, 1710.

I.

Sess. 1, April 26, 1710.—Act appointing the Queen's Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of this Church being constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable David Earl of Glasgow, her Majesty's commission, sealed at Edinburgh the 25th day of April current, with the seal ordained to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, and of the same tenor with former commissions, appointing him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is by order of this Assembly recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

Her Majesty's gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented April 26, 1710.

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. We have made choice of our right trusty and well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Glasgow, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, having had many proofs of his fidelity to us, and his affection to the Church of Scotland, and other good qualities for discharging that trust, whom we have instructed in what we thought necessary for the present exigency; and, therefore, you may give entire trust to him. The experience we have of the calmness, decency, and orderly procedure in former Assemblies, very acceptable to us, and suitable to the prudence and wisdom of so great and reverend a meeting, does not suffer us to doubt, that you will at this time go on in the same way, and that you will proceed still to plant vacant churches with learned, diligent, and pious ministers; to promote religion and holiness, suppress vice, profanity, and impiety; and prevent the growth of Popery and Atheism. We take this occasion to repeat to you the assurances of our royal protection, for maintaining you in the full possession of your rights and privileges, as by law established. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 29th day of March 1710, and of our reign the 9th year.

By Her Majesty's Command,

QUEENSBERRY.

III.

Sess. 3, April 28, 1710.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We have so dutiful a sense of your Majesty's great goodness to us, in continuing to countenance our Assemblies by your royal authority—in being graciously pleased to give us repeated assurances of your protection and favour, and to maintain us in the full possession of our rights and privileges—in your tender care to prevent any thing that may disturb our peace and harmony, and to disappoint the designs of such as would either divide or make us uneasy, and in the many other great advantages that we enjoy under your wise and benign administration—that we look upon ourselves to be under the greatest obligations, cheerfully to embrace every opportunity of testifying our untainted loyalty and true affection to your Majesty's person and government. We can with confidence affirm, that we, and all the ministers of this Church whom we represent, will, upon all occasions, witness in our stations a sincere and constant zeal for your Majesty's honour, and the stability of your throne.

We do thankfully acknowledge that it is a particular instance of your Majesty's royal favour to us, that you have been pleased to make choice of the Earl of Glasgow to represent your royal person in this Assembly. His steady faithfulness to your Majesty, and the many proofs we have had of the wisdom and kindness of his management upon several other occasions, when he was clothed with his present high character, cannot but make him most acceptable to us, and oblige us to give him that entire trust and respectful regard that your Majesty expects we should, and he justly merits.

It is with no small joy that we find that the peaceable and calm procedure of former Assemblies is so acceptable to your Majesty, which cannot but engage us to be concerned to go on in the same way, that your Majesty may have full satisfaction in our management.

The just sense, Madam, that we ought to have of the infinite goodness of our God, in bestowing upon us the most valuable blessing of revealed religion, of the infinite love of our Redeemer, who came into the world to be the propitiation for our sins, and to destroy the works of the devil, and of the worth of the immortal souls of men, doth oblige us to acknowledge with all thankfulness to God the blessing we enjoy of being under the government of so religious a Sovereign, and heartily to fall in with what your Majesty so piously recommends to us, in using our utmost endeavours, in our stations, to promote religion and holiness, suppress vice, profanity, and impiety, prevent the growth of Popery and Atheism, and provide vacant churches with learned, diligent, and pious ministers.

And we crave leave upon this occasion to assure your Majesty, that we abhor all principles that stain the glory of the reformed Christian religion, and all opinions that have a tendency to shake the excellent and solid foundation upon which your Majesty's just title to the supreme government of your dominions, and the security of your throne in a Protestant succession, against all Popish Pretenders, are happily established.

May the God of heaven long preserve your Majesty, for the comfort and safety of all your good subjects, for the advantage of the Protestant interest both at home and abroad, and for a public blessing in the world; may he continue the peace of your dominions, and always crown your arms by sea and land with such success, as your Majesty may be in a capacity signally to contribute to the procuring a solid and safe peace to Europe, and such relief to distressed Protestants in France, Silesia, and elsewhere, as may answer your Majesty's known pious inclinations, and our earnest prayers and desires; and may your Majesty, after a long, peaceable, and happy reign, upon earth, be possessed of a crown of glory, righteousness, and life, in heaven.

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. MITCHEL, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 6, May 2, 1710.—Overtures anent Trying and Licensing Probationers for the Holy Ministry.

(An Act on this subject was passed in 1711.)

V.

Sess. 7, May 3, 1710.—Act and Recommendation concerning Soldiers under Scandals.

The General Assembly, finding that there are several references made to them by inferior judicatories of this Church, concerning soldiers under scandals, who refuse to submit to the discipline of the Church for removing the said scandals; for remedy thereof, they did resolve that this matter should be represented to the Right Honourable the Earl of Leven, Commander-in-Chief of her Majesty's forces in Scotland; and did, and hereby do, appoint and ordain ministers, kirk-sessions, and Presbyteries, to apply to the magistrates of the bounds, and also to the commanding officer on the place, from time to time, as need requires, and crave that both officers and soldiers may be obliged to submit to the discipline of the Church according to law, and her Majesty's gracious proclamations against profaneness; and if this shall be refused or delayed, the Assembly do appoint that the matter be laid before the Commission of the General Assembly, that they may do further therein what the law directs.

And the Earl of Leven being present in the Assembly, the moderator, at the Assembly's desire, and in their name, did earnestly entreat his Lordship would assist and countenance the Church in this matter, and would give such orders as his Lordship should find most effectual, for bringing officers and soldiers to give all due submission and obedience to the censures of the Church. His Lordship was pleased to assure the Assembly, that as he was glad of any occasion to serve the interests of this Church, so he would take care to give all necessary directions in this matter.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 6.—Act for a Solemn Fast.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the many evidences of God's displeasure and fearful symptoms of approaching judgments, the great and crying sins of the land, atheism, irreligion, Popery, many errors and dreadful delusions, with immoralities of all kinds, are come to a great height, and that all these sins are heinously aggravated, as being committed by a professing people in a reformed land, against the clearest light of the glorious Gospel, and innumerable mercies that God hath been pleased to bless us with: And, notwithstanding of the many excellent laws made against these evils, and the royal proclamations which our most gracious Sovereign, out of a true zeal for the glory of God, has emitted, and that our woeful security under all these evils, plainly hold forth that many spiritual plagues are inflicted on us by a righteous and jealous God: Therefore, the General Assembly do judge it the duty of this Church, and of every person therein, to lay these things to heart, and to be humbled for them; and do appoint the second Thursday of July next to be set apart for solemn fasting and humiliation in all the churches within this land; and the General Assembly recommends to all the ministers in this Church to be free and faithful in holding forth to their people the heinous sins both of the former and present times, and in exhorting all ranks of persons to flee to Christ for peace and pardon, and to unfeigned repentance, reformation, and fervent prayer to God, that in his great goodness He would be pleased to pour down the Spirit of grace and supplication upon persons of all ranks, bless his ordinances with more success, remove all dis-

temper, heal our breaches, defeat all designs of our restless adversaries, tending to the breaking of the public peace by open force, or secret contrivances, preserve and bless the person of our Sovereign, and direct her councils, and that the Lord of Hosts would continue to favour her forces by sea and land with success, so that this long, bloody, and expensive war, may issue in such a peace, as shall be for the glory of God, the interest of the Reformed religion, the relief of the distressed Protestants in France and elsewhere, the perpetual peace and prosperity of these lands, and for the honour of our Sovereign the Queen's Majesty, in this and all succeeding generations; and that the Lord would bless the season, and crown the year with his goodness: And the Assembly ordains these presents to be read by all the ministers of this Church from their pulpits, with grave and serious exhortations suitable to the occasion; and that public intimation hereof be made the Lord's Day immediately preceding the day appointed for observation of the said fast.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 6, 1710.—Act for the due Observation of the Fast now appointed by the General Assembly, and of Fasts and Thanksgivings which may be hereafter appointed.

The General Assembly, considering that by the 6th act of this Assembly, they have, for the weighty grounds and causes therein specified, appointed a solemn fast to be observed through this whole Church; and that it much concerns the honour of God and good of this Church, that the same be duly and religiously observed; do, therefore, recommend it to all the ministers of this Church, that with due prudence and zeal they do, in their preaching, reprove and warn of, and in prayer confess and acknowledge, the epidemical crying sins both of former and present times, highly aggravated by the violation of our solemn covenants and engagements, and many professed resolutions to the contrary: And the General Assembly does beseech and obtest people of all ranks to be sincere and serious in humiliation and supplication, and universal reformation, as they would find mercy of the Lord, and have deserved wrath averted, and would obtain the blessing of the Lord on themselves, and their posterity after them. And because it is much for the glory of God, and peace and welfare of this Church, that fasts and thanksgivings, whether appointed by the Church or the supreme magistrate, for just and necessary causes, be duly observed: Therefore, the General Assembly enjoins all the ministers and members of this Church religiously to observe all such fasts and thanksgivings, lest, by their contempt thereof, they provoke a holy and jealous God, and bring on this Church desolating and unavoidable judgments; and the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries and Synods to take particular notice of the due observation of this act, and ordains these presents to be intimated, together with the foresaid act for the fast, in all the congregations of this Church.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 6, 1710.—Act concerning Bills or Petitions for Charity.

The General Assembly does enact and declare, that in all time coming, no petitions for charity shall be transmitted to nor regarded by the General Assembly, unless the petitioners produce therewith ample testimonials as to their life and conversation, and recommendations from the Synod or Presbytery of the bounds where they reside, bearing such persons to be truly objects of charity.

IX.

Sess. 11, May 8, 1710.—Act for suppressing Bourignonism.

The General Assembly, finding by instructions from several Presbyteries to their commissioners, that the gross heresies and errors going under the name of Bourignonism are greatly prevailing in the bounds of several Synods in this National Church;

they (as a remedy against the same) do appoint all ministers in whose parishes the foresaid errors do abound to preach most particularly and faithfully against the same ; and that all Presbyteries in whose bounds the foresaid errors do prevail do oblige all schoolmasters, teachers, governors of youth, and chaplains within their province, to subscribe the Confession of Faith, as the confession of their faith ; and if any of the foresaid persons refuse to do the same, that thereupon the Presbytery declare the said persons incapable of such offices, and apply to the heritors and heads of families concerned, in order to their discharging the said persons from the foresaid offices ; and in case of their refusal to comply therewith, that the Presbytery do send up the names of the foresaid persons refusing to subscribe the Confession of Faith, unto the Commission of the General Assembly, together with the names of the parishes and families in which they reside, that so the said Commission may proceed against all such persons as they shall see cause. And all Presbyteries, in whose bounds there are any societies of Bourignonists, avowedly professing these principles, and dispersing the books containing the same, are hereby ordained to send in to the Commission of the General Assembly an exact and full account of the particular leading persons of the said societies, together with the names and errors of the books they are dispersing ; and the said Commission is enjoined to take such measures as they shall judge most convenient for the effectual suppressing of the same ; and they are hereby also instructed to apply to the Government for hindering of incorrect, false, and spurious translations of the Bible, to be spread abroad : And, lastly, the Assembly recommends to the professors of divinity within this National Church to make a full collection of the errors of Antonia Bourignon, and of such other errors as do reflect upon the nature, person, and offices of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to write a confutation of the same.

X.

Sess. 12, May 9, 1710.—Act concerning Bursaries and Students having Irish.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that now, through the mercy and goodness of God, most of the Lowland Presbyteries are competently planted, and that the promoting of knowledge, religion, and civility in the Highlands, is the common concern of this National Church ; do, therefore, enact and appoint, that the one-half of the whole bursaries of all the Presbyteries within Scotland, the whole to be applied for the education of such youths as have the Irish language, in philosophy and divinity at the Colleges of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, and Aberdeen, and that the same be paid to collectors to be appointed by the Presbyteries of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews, and Aberdeen, (which Presbyteries are to be accountable to their respective Synods concerned for what money they receive ; and, for this end, that the Synods of Glasgow, Galloway, and Dumfries, pay in their bursaries to a collector to be appointed by the Presbytery of Glasgow, and under their inspection accountable to their Synod ; in like manner, the Synods of Merse and Lothian to the Presbytery of Edinburgh ; the Synods of Perth, Fife, and Stirling, to the Presbytery of St Andrews ; and the Synods of Angus, Aberdeen, Moray, Ross, and Orkney, to the Presbytery of Aberdeen ; and the other half to be disposed of to Lowland bursars as Presbyteries shall see cause, conform to the acts of the Assembly ; and this to begin the first day of October next to come, and to continue for four years or longer, as the General Assembly shall see cause : And it is hereby declared, that the respective Synods to which the said bursaries do belong shall have the choice and presentation of the said Irish bursars ; and that no person shall have the benefit of either Highland or Lowland bursaries but such as bring a testimonial or recommendation from their Synods respectively, bearing their having been examined by their Synod, and the Synod's good hopes of them as sober youths, piously inclined, and well-affected to the government of Church and State ; and that they are good proficient in the Latin, and are such as they judge may in due time prove able ministers of the Gospel or schoolmasters ; and if they be presented to Irish bursaries, bearing that they have the Irish language, and have obliged themselves to employ their talents in these services in the Highlands, either in the bounds of

the Synods presenting and recommending them, or some other by their allowance : And the Assembly appoints the foresaid testimonials to be recorded, together with the bursars' names, and to be reported to each Assembly. And further, the General Assembly hereby renews the eighth Act of the Assembly, 1701, entitled, "Recommendation to Synods anent maintaining Bursars having the Irish Language," and the eleventh Act of the Assembly, 1705, entitled, "Act anent Bursars," and appoints the said acts to be observed until the General Assembly see cause to recal the same.

The General Assembly having had transmitted to them from their Committee for Overtures the representations of the Irish students in the College of Edinburgh, referred to said committee by the Assembly, upon Monday the first instant ; and having heard an overture of the said committee, bearing that they were informed that some of the said students do want bursaries, and others of them who have recommendations in their favour have been greatly disappointed, and much discouraged in the prosecution of their studies ; and, therefore, did overture, that the General Assembly should refer to and empower their Commission to be appointed by them to inquire how former recommendations about students have been observed, and to take care that the foresaid students be provided of bursaries, and have all due encouragement to prosecute their studies. The General Assembly having considered this overture, they do refer and empower according thereto in all points ; the said students being always qualified in the terms of this act, and other acts above narrated.

XI.

Sess. 13, May 10, 1710.—Representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with an Act and Recommendation thereupon.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, bearing that the said Society being established by her Majesty's letters patent, according to the desire of former General Assemblies, and commissions and committees thereof, and a nomination of the members of the said Society, made out of the subscribers, then brought in ; and having met in a general meeting, made choice of a president, treasurer, secretary, and committee, in the terms of the said letters patent ; and considering the trust reposed in them, and how much the glory of God is concerned in the matter, as also that our gracious Queen, and likewise the General Assembly, and other judicatories of this Church, and many charitable and piously inclined persons of all ranks, have showed their zeal for promoting the great design of the said Society, and many have contributed liberally for that end.

And the Society being desirous faithfully, diligently, and impartially, to discharge the said trust so as may most advance the said design, and be to the satisfaction of all good Christians, especially such as are contributors, found it needful, in the first place, to use all proper means to procure subscriptions and contributions, and to secure the same upon interest ; and in order to this letters have been, since the beginning of November last, twice written to the several Presbyteries, and once to the Synods, anent the observation of what was recommended by the sixth act of the late General Assembly, and desiring that the said contributions might have been brought into the Society's treasurer ; as also, letters have been written to the Justices of the Peace at their Quarter Sessions, and to the Magistrates of Burghs through Scotland, entreating their concurrence and assistance in promoting this good work in their several stations, according to her Majesty's pleasure, expressed in the said letters patent, copies whereof were transmitted with all the said letters : And though some reverend Presbyteries and ministers have showed a commendable concern in this matter, yet there is no account of any diligence from others, which, it is like, has fallen out through forgetfulness or some mistakes ; and to remove the same the Society agreed unto, and caused print and disperse, a scheme of their designed management ; and, therefore, craving in manner therein mentioned. The General Assembly, in compliance with the desire of the said Society, and for encouraging that pious and worthy design of propagating the knowledge of Christ, did, and hereby do, enjoin the exact observation of the said 6th Act of the late Assembly, where the same is not yet done,

and appoints the several Presbyteries to see the same done, and to return to the secretary of the Society a report of their diligence, in the terms of the letters sent to them, as soon as they can.

And that the Society may the better know how to employ the interest of their stock when the same comes in, the General Assembly does hereby recommend to the several Synods concerned in the Highlands and Islands to inquire what parishes do need more schools than one, and how many they need, what is the extent of those parishes in length and breadth? As also, what ministers have more churches or places of public worship than one? And whether these churches do stand in different islands or not? And if there be a school for every kirk or island? Or any person in these places to teach children to read? Or any catechists? As also, in what place Popery abounds most? And where catechists will be needful? And the Assembly appoints Synods to send an impartial and true account of the above particulars to the secretary of the said Society, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, as soon as they can; and at furthest betwixt and the first day of April 1711, that the same may be laid before the Society and their committee, that they may have the whole matter before them, in order to the disposing of the annual rents of their stock, where it is most needful.

And that this work may not be retarded, the General Assembly does seriously exhort all ministers and other charitable persons, whose hearts God has inclined to favour this excellent design, that they forthwith put their contributions in the hands of the treasurer to the Society, that the same may be laid out upon interest, seeing the Society cannot dispose upon any of their stock, but only the annual rents thereof.

And that there may be the greater plenty of fit instruments to be employed on the said design, in the terms of her Majesty's letters patent, the General Assembly have, by the 10th Act of this Assembly, appointed, likeas they hereby do appoint, that the one-half of the whole bursaries of all the Presbyteries in Scotland be bestowed on hopeful and pious students having the Irish language for the space of four years, conform to the tenor of the foresaid Act. And the General Assembly does hereby enjoin and require the several Synods of this Church to see all the foresaid appointments put in due execution, and that they report an account of their diligence herein to the General Assembly, from time to time. And, lastly, the General Assembly does hereby appoint and ordain the commissions to be named by this and subsequent Assemblies, and likewise the whole Synods and Presbyteries within this Church, to give all due encouragement, countenance, and assistance, to the said Society, or those employed by them, as they shall be orderly applied to for that effect from time to time.

XII.

Sess. 13, May 10, 1710.—Act for preserving the Purity of Doctrine.

The General Assembly, considering that the purity of doctrine is a signal blessing to the Church of God, and that it hath been the great happiness of this Church, ever since her reformation from Popery, to have enjoyed and maintained the same; and that the avoiding all expressions in matters of faith, contrary to the form of sound words, tends not a little to preserve the said purity which is so desirable: And it being informed that in some places some expressions are used, and opinions as to some points of religion vented, which are not agreeable to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and the known sentiments of the greatest lights and most famous Gospel ministers wherewith this Church has been blessed: Therefore, the General Assembly does discharge all persons to vent any opinions contrary to any head or article of the said Confession and Catechisms, or use any expressions in relation to the Articles of Faith not agreeable to the form of sound words expressed in the Word of God, and the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church, which are most valuable pieces of her reformation. And the General Assembly does hereby further enact, that no minister or member of this Church presume to print or disperse in writing any Catechism, without the allowance of the Presbytery of the bounds and of the commission; and the Presbytery is hereby appointed to lay any such Catechism

before the commission ; and the General Assembly does enjoin and require Synods and Presbyteries carefully to advert to the observation of this act, and that they notice the transgressors thereof.

XIII.

Sess. 13, May 10, 1710.—Overtures for Regulating the Calling of Ministers.

Considering that the debates and contentions among those who claim votes in calling ministers, are ordinarily occasioned upon the account of their different inclinations, as to the person to be called. To prevent all such debates, it is overtured that the Assembly recommend to the several Presbyteries, when any parish is vacant, to take care to adjust all differences as to persons' rights to vote in a call to that parish, and to make up a list of the voters, and that all this shall be done before the Presbytery order the moderating a call ; 2^{do}, Considering the great inconveniences of admitting proxies to compare before Church judicatories, and that it is contrary to the ancient and laudable practice of this Church, particularly in calling ministers, and that any person having a vote may signify his mind by a writ to the respective judicatories, which should be held as valid as if he were personally present to vote : Therefore, it is overtured, that the Assembly recommend to all judicatories of this Church not to admit proxies to vote and plead before them.

The General Assembly having heard and considered the foresaid overtures, they do transmit the same to the several Presbyteries of this Church, and appoints them to send in their opinion thereabout to the next General Assembly, that the said Assembly may turn the same into an act and standing rule of this Church, if the majority of Presbyteries agree thereto.

XIV.

Sess. 14 et ult., May 11, 1710.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing several Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake ; do therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs Thomas Vernour at Balmaclellan, &c., to be commissioners of this Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons, &c. (The powers granted to the Commission are the same as in 1709.)

XV.

Sess. 14 et ult., May 11, 1710.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

1. That the Commission, as often as they shall see cause, apply to her Majesty, or any inferior magistrate, for their countenancing of, and concurring with, the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances, and abuses, and disorders, committed contrary to the established doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof, inflicted on scandalous persons ; and that they assist Presbyteries and Synods in planting vacancies, as they shall be applied to by them.

2. The Commission are empowered to send commissioners to London, to obtain redress with relation to Popery, irregularities, and other things, that are grievous to this Church.

3. That when any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrine may render them useful to this Church, shall apply for reception into a share of the government thereof, the General Assembly do hereby empower and

recommend to their Commission to receive them, according to the thirteenth paragraph of the 16th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1697; and that the foresaid Commission be careful to get due information from the Presbyteries, where these persons applying did, or do officiate, and for the time reside.

4. That the said Commission use their utmost diligence for getting payment of the money gifted by the Queen's Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church; and in disposing thereof, they are to take care that the public debts of the Church be first paid, according to an act passed in the last Assembly thereanent, and to the instructions given to the Commission of the General Assembly, *anno* 1706, which are hereby renewed; and that the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, *anno* 1699, to ministers and probationers who go North, or to the Highlands and Islands, to preach, be rendered effectual; and, likewise, that the said Commission cause defray the extraordinary charges and expenses that Presbyteries and ministers have been at, particularly in these places, in carrying on the planting of churches, and other public affairs of the Church there.

5. And the foresaid Commission is hereby empowered to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made or to be made to them by this Assembly, and in references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, the Highlands, and Islands, which shall be brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and that transportations to any parishes in these places, whether privileged by former acts of Assembly or not, be carried on, and that in the most expeditious way; providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods, excepting causes particularly referred to them.

6. That the said Commission appoint fasts and thanksgivings, as they shall see occasion, and specify the causes thereof, and apply to her Majesty for the civil sanction thereto.

7. The said Commission is empowered to give all due assistance to any proposals that may be made to them, about endeavours for reformation of manners, for the effectual curbing and suppressing of profaneness and vice.

8. The Commission is empowered to give all due assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

9. The Commission is appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially among ministers thereof; and to gain such as do separate therefrom, and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by another act recommended to Presbyteries; and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies or Commissions thereof have carried, and to proceed to further censure as the said Commission shall see cause; and, further, the General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th Act of the General Assembly, 1706, concerning schism and disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission; and that they take notice of what misrepresentations may be made, either at home or abroad, of the doctrine, worship, or constitution of this Church, and that they take all decent and proper methods for the vindication thereof.

10. That the Commission endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this or preceding Assemblies agreed upon, concerning the erecting schools in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion, and reformation in these places; as also, to give all due assistance and encouragement to any proposals that may be made for propagating the knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus Christ in these and foreign parts of the world.

11. It is referred to the said Commission to use their endeavours for putting in execution the 5th Act of the Assembly, 1707, entitled, "Act anent a School in every Parish, and a Contribution thereanent;" as also the 8th Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act for Suppressing of Popery, and Preventing the Growth thereof;" and, likewise, the 15th Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God."

12. That the Commission have a special respect, so far as the present circumstances require, to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1703, concerning the planting of

vacant churches in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, and supplying thereof with ministers and probationers; and the Commission is hereby empowered to proceed according to the said act, in so far as they shall find it needful.

13. That the said Commission receive and consider any representations or references that shall be made to them by Presbyteries and others concerned, about large and spacious parishes, and use all means proper for them, for obtaining and rendering effectual, and preserving new erections in such parishes, or stipends to collegiate ministers thereto.

14. Seeing there is not a full report made to this Assembly concerning the Irish libraries, Irish Bibles, Psalm Books, and Catechisms, and about the state of the Church in the Highlands and Islands, and the remaining idolatrous, Pagan, and Popish superstitious customs in some places there; the General Assembly recommends to their Commission to prosecute the instructions given thereanent by the General Assembly, anno 1706, to their Commission, and to use all means in their power for extirpating these idolatrous and superstitious practices; and to take care that the charges of any who have been employed about the same be reimbursed out of the money given by her Majesty for these ends. And the Commission is empowered to dispose upon any libraries that may come from England, and also the Bibles and Catechisms in Irish, that are here already.

15. The General Assembly hereby empowers their Commission to give all due assistance to the several universities and colleges when any minister is called to any office therein, and to receive appeals and references, and finally to determine in the same.

XVI

Sess. 14 et ult., May 11, 1710.—Act and Reference concerning the Larger Overtures, and the Overtures in the 13th, 14th, and 16th Acts of the General Assembly, 1707.

The General Assembly appoints their Commission to go through the larger printed overtures concerning the method of procedure in Church judicatories, and the remarks of Presbyteries thereupon, already brought in, and to consider what amendments are fit to be made thereupon; and the several Presbyteries who have not yet sent in their remarks upon these overtures, are desired to send the same in to the clerk of the Commission, betwixt and their meeting in August next, at farthest; and the brethren present were appointed to put their Presbyteries in mind of this; and the Commission is ordered to have their report ready against the next General Assembly, and to present these overtures with their amendments to them.

XVII

Sess. 14 et ult., May 11, 1710.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh the tenth day of May 1711 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN
AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 10, 1711.

I.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1711.—Act appointing the Queen's Commission to the Marquis of Annandale to be Recorded.

The General Assembly being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by the most Honourable William Marquis of Annandale, her Majesty's Commission, sealed at Edinburgh the 9th day of May current, with the seal appointed by the Treaty of Union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, to be kept and used in Scotland, in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, and of the same tenor with former Commissions, constituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this Assembly; which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is, by order of this Assembly, recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

May 10, 1711.—The Queen's gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

ANNE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1711.—The General Assembly's Answer to her Majesty's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1711.—Act recommending Prayers for the Queen, and for the Succession to the Throne, in the Protestant Line, in the House of Hanover.

The General Assembly did, by an unanimous vote, and hereby do, recommend to all the ministers of this Church, that in their public prayers, after praying for her Majesty Queen Anne, they do expressly mention the Princess Sophia, Electoress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the Protestant line in that family, upon whom the succession to the crown of these dominions is by law established; or that they pray in such terms as their congregations may understand that they mean the Princess Sophia, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants.

V.

Sess. 6, May 16, 1711.—Act concerning Marriage.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint that the acts of the General Assembly concerning proclamation of bans be duly observed, and that inquiry be made, that the persons desiring marriage be not within the forbidden degrees, and be single and free persons, and that all concerned do consent.

VI.

Sess. 6, May 16, 1711.—Recommendation concerning the Administration of the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly, considering that in some places the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered only in the summer season, wherethrough people are deprived of the benefit of that holy ordinance during the rest of the year; do therefore recommend to Presbyteries to do what they can to get it so ordered, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper may be administered in their bounds through the several months of the year.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1711.—Recommendation concerning Family Worship.

The General Assembly does earnestly recommend to Presbyteries to use their utmost endeavours that the worship of God be set up and performed, in all its parts, in the families within their bounds, according to former acts of Assembly, and directions given concerning the same.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1711.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are several weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Carstairs, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c., &c., to be commissioners of this Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with full power to the said persons, &c. (The powers are the same as in the two preceding years; the quorum is made 31.)

IX.

Sess. 11, May 21, 1711.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

1. The Commission are appointed and empowered to take care that what is enacted and ordered by this Assembly be duly observed by all concerned.

2. The Commission, as often as they see cause, are empowered to apply to her Majesty, or any inferior magistrate, for their countenancing of, and concurring with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness; and seeking redress of grievances, abuses, and disorders, committed contrary to the established doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof, inflicted on scandalous persons; and to assist Presbyteries and Synods in planting vacant kirks, as they shall be applied to by them for that effect.

3. The Commission are appointed to take care and do what is proper for them, to preserve and maintain all the rights and privileges of this Church.

4. The Commission are empowered to send Commissioners to London, if they shall see cause, to obtain redress with relation to Popery, irregularities, and other things that may be grievous to this Church.

5. When any of the ministers who served under the late Prelacy, whose lives and doctrine may render them useful to this Church, shall apply for reception into ministerial communion, and a share of the government of this Church, the General Assembly do hereby empower and recommend to their Commission to receive them, according to the 13th paragraph of the 16th Act of the General Assembly, 1697; and

the foresaid Commission are to be careful to get due information from the Presbyteries, where the person applying did, or does officiate, and for the time resides.

6. The Commission are empowered to dispose of the money gifted by her Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church; and, in disposing thereof, they are to take care that the public debts of the Church be first paid, and that in the order, and according to an act passed in the Assembly, *anno* 1709, and the instructions given to the Commission of the General Assembly, held in the year 1706, which are hereby renewed, and that the encouragement granted by the General Assembly, 1699, to ministers and probationers who go to the North, or to the Highlands and Islands, to preach, be rendered effectual; that the said Commission cause defray the extraordinary charges and expenses that Presbyteries and ministers have been at, particularly in these places, in carrying on the planting of churches and other public affairs of the Church there.

7. The Commission are empowered to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made or to be made by this Assembly, and in references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, the Highlands and Islands, which shall be brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and transportations to any parish in these places, whether privileged by former Acts of Assembly or not, are to be carried on, in the most expeditious way, providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods, excepting causes particularly referred to them.

8. The said Commission are empowered to appoint fasts and thanksgivings, as they shall see occasion, and specify the causes thereof, and apply to her Majesty for the civil sanction thereto.

9. The Commission are empowered to give all due assistance to any proposals that may be made to them about endeavours for reformation of manners, and for the more effectual curbing and suppressing of profaneness and vice.

10. The Commission are empowered to give all due assistance to any Synod or Presbytery, in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

11. The Commission are appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church, upon all emergencies, especially among the ministers thereof; and to gain such as do separate therefrom, and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by a former act recommended to Presbyteries; and to take notice, how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies, or Commissions of the same, have carried, and to proceed to further censure, as the Commission shall see cause; and further, this General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1706, concerning schism and disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission.

12. The said Commission are to take notice of what misrepresentations shall be made, either at home or abroad, of the doctrine, worship, discipline, or constitution of this Church, and to take all decent and proper methods for the vindication thereof.

13. The said Commission are to endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this or preceding Assemblies agreed upon, concerning the erecting of schools in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places, and to keep a correspondence with the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee, and to give them all suitable assistance and encouragement, according to the 11th Act of the late General Assembly thereanent, which is hereby renewed.

14. The said Commission are appointed and empowered to use their endeavours for getting a legal school erected in every parish, according to law, for putting in execution the 5th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1707, entitled, "Act anent a School in every Parish;" and also to hold hand to the execution of the 8th Act of that same Assembly, entitled, "Act for Suppressing of Popery, and preventing the Growth thereof;" and likewise the 15th Act of that Assembly, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God."

15. The Commission are appointed to have a special respect, so far as the present

circumstances do require, to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1703, concerning the planting vacant churches in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and supplying thereof with ministers and probationers; and the Commission are hereby empowered to proceed, according to the said act, in so far as they shall find it needful.

16. The said Commission are empowered to receive any representations or references that shall be made to them by Presbyteries, and others concerned, about large and spacious parishes, and use all means proper for them for obtaining, and also rendering effectual, and preserving new erections in such parishes, or stipends to collegiate ministers thereto.

17. The said Commission are empowered and appointed to prosecute the instructions given by the General Assembly, held in the year 1706, to their Commission, in so far as what is therein appointed is not already done; and particularly, to use all means in their power for extirpating idolatrous and superstitious practices, and to inquire how former orders about the same, and concerning the Irish Bibles, Psalm Books, and Catechisms, and Libraries, have been observed; and to dispose upon such of these Bibles as yet remain, or any libraries that may come to hand.

18. The said Commission are empowered to give all due assistance to the several universities and colleges, when any minister is called to any office therein, and to receive appeals and references, and finally to determine in the same.

X.

May 22, 1711.—Act concerning Probationers, and settling Ministers, with Questions to be proposed to and Engagements to be taken of them.

The General Assembly, considering the great prejudice that may arise to this Church from the licensing too many probationers and persons not duly qualified, do, for preventing thereof, enact and appoint, that none be admitted to trials in order to be licensed, but such as have attended the profession of Divinity for six years, or have closely followed the study of Divinity, and of the languages, for that space at least, after they have past their course of Philosophy at the College, and made proficiency therein, in case their circumstances did not allow them to attend the profession, though it were to be desired that they should attend the profession of Divinity much of that time; but this shall not be extended to students having the Irish language, providing, that before any Presbytery license such students within the said six years, they first consult the General Assembly or Commission thereof, in the matter: And, further, the General Assembly do appoint and ordain that none be licensed in any Presbytery, except they have resided therein for the space of six years, or do produce to them sufficient testimonials from the Presbyteries in whose bounds they have last, or for the most part resided, bearing expressly, that it is the desire of these Presbyteries that those students should be entered upon trials; and such students as come from abroad shall produce satisfying testimonials from the Professors under whom they studied; and the time of their being abroad shall be accounted a part of the said six years; but none of these students shall be entered on trials for the space of a whole year after they come to Scotland: And the General Assembly does also appoint and ordain that the above space of six years being expired, and testimonials produced in manner foresaid, the Presbytery which is to take the trial of these students shall, before they enter them upon trials in order to be licensed, write letters to all the other Presbyteries within the Synod, acquainting them with their design; and at the next meeting of the Synod, they shall also acquaint the Synod thereof, and obtain their special advice and judgment in that particular: And the Assembly, considering that it is of great importance and advantage to this Church that none be licensed to preach the Gospel as a probationer, or be settled in the ministry, but such as are duly qualified for that holy work, they

do seriously recommend to all Presbyteries the punctual observance of all acts already made concerning probationers and intrants to the ministry: And further, that before any Presbytery receive any upon trials, in order to his being licensed, they appoint three or four of their number privately to converse with him, and to take trial of his orthodoxy, knowledge in divinity, particularly the modern controversies, and other necessary qualifications for the ministry, and what sense and impressions he has of religion upon his own soul; and that they make report of their diligence herein before the Presbytery admit him to the probationary trials. And, moreover, the General Assembly, finding it inconvenient that the calls of parishes to probationers be lodged in their hands before their trials in order to ordination be over, and until the Presbytery be satisfied both as to their sufficiency and fitness for these parishes to which they are called; therefore, they do hereby discharge Presbyteries to put the call of any parish into the hands of the probationer called, and appoint them to keep the same still in their own hands, until the said probationer's trials be all over, and that the Presbytery be fully satisfied both as to his sufficiency and fitness for that parish: And the General Assembly, judging it fit that the same method should be followed in all Presbyteries as to the questions put to all engagements taken of probationers when licensed, and ministers when ordained or admitted; and that probationers and ministers should not only give sufficient proof of their piety, literature, and other good qualifications for the ministry, but also come under engagements to adhere to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, do therefore enact and appoint that the following Questions be put to all such as pass trials in order to be licensed, as also to such as shall be ordained ministers, or admitted to any ministerial charge or parish, and that they shall subscribe the Formula after set down, before they be licensed, ordained, or admitted, respectively: And the General Assembly hereby strictly prohibits and discharges the licensing, ordaining, or admitting of any who shall not give satisfying answers to these questions, and subscribe the Formula hereto subjoined.

**QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO ALL PROBATIONERS FOR THE HOLY MINISTRY, BEFORE THEY
BE LICENSED TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.**

1mo, Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

2do, Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assemblies of this National Church, and ratified by law, in the year 1690, and frequently confirmed by divers Acts of Parliament since that time, to be the truths of God, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and do you own the whole doctrine therein contained as the confession of your faith?

3tio, Do you sincerely own the purity of worship presently authorised and practised in this Church, and asserted in the 15th Act of the General Assembly, 1707, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God;" and do also own the Presbyterian government and discipline now so happily established in this Church; and are you persuaded that the said doctrine, worship, discipline, and Church government, are founded upon the Holy Scriptures, and agreeable thereto?

4to, Do you promise, that, through the grace of God, you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and in your station to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the said doctrine, worship, and discipline, and the government of this Church, by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies?

5to, Do you promise, that in your practice you will conform yourself to the said worship, and submit yourself to the said discipline and government of this Church, and shall never endeavour, directly nor indirectly, the prejudice or subversion of the same?

6to, Do you promise, that you shall follow no divisive course from the present establishment in this Church?

7mo, Do you renounce all doctrines, tenets, or opinions whatsoever, contrary to or inconsistent with the said doctrine, worship, and government of this Church?

8vo, Do you promise that you will subject yourself to the several judicatories of this Church, and are you willing to subscribe to these things?

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO MINISTERS AT THEIR ORDINATION.

1mo, Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

2do, Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified by law, in the year 1690, to be founded upon the Word of God; and do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and, to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of worship, as presently practised in this National Church, and asserted in the 15th Act of the General Assembly, 1707, entitled, "Act against Innovations in the Worship of God?"

3tio, Do you disown all Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Bourignon, and other doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to and inconsistent with the foresaid Confession of Faith?

4to, Are you persuaded that the Presbyterian government and discipline of this Church are founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto, and do promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and never to endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of your power, in your station, to maintain, support, and defend the said discipline and Presbyterian government, by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, during all the days of your life?

5to, Do you promise to submit yourself willingly, and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, unto the admonitions of the brethren of this Presbytery, and to be subject to them, and all other Presbyteries and superior judicatories of this Church, where God, in His Providence, shall cast your lot; and that, according to your power, you shall maintain the unity and peace of this Church against error and schism, notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise; and that you shall follow no divisive courses from the present established doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church?

6to, Are not zeal for the honour of God, love to Jesus Christ, and desire of saving souls, your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the function of the holy ministry, and not worldly designs and interest?

7mo, Have you used any undue methods, either by yourself or others, in procuring this call?

8vo, Do you engage, in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, to rule well your own family, to live a holy and circumspect life, and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully, to discharge all the parts of the ministerial work, to the edification of the body of Christ?

9no, Do you accept of and close with the call to be pastor of this parish, and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people?

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO A MINISTER ALREADY ORDAINED, AT HIS ADMISSION TO A PARISH.

You having been already ordained a minister of the Gospel of Christ, it is supposed that the usual questions were put to you, and that you did then declare, &c., (here the questions put to ministers at their ordination are to be repeated.) And then say, And do you not now consent and adhere to these declarations, promises, and engagements, and accept of, and close with the call to be minister of this parish; and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people?

FORMULA, TO BE SUBSCRIBED BY ALL SUCH AS SHALL PASS TRIALS, IN ORDER TO BE LICENSED, AND THAT SHALL BE ORDAINED MINISTERS, OR ADMITTED TO PARISHES.

I do hereby declare, that I do sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assemblies of this National Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, and frequently confirmed by divers Acts of Parliament since that time, to be the truths of God; and I do own the same as the confession of my faith: As likewise, I do own the purity of worship presently authorised and practised in this Church, and also the Presbyterian government and discipline now so happily established therein; which doctrine, worship, and Church government, I am persuaded are founded on the Word of God, and agreeable thereto: And I promise, that, through the grace of God, I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same, and, to the utmost of my power, shall, in my station, assert, maintain, and defend the said doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies; and that I shall in my practice conform myself to the said worship, and submit to the said discipline and government, and never endeavour, directly nor indirectly, the prejudice or subversion of the same; and I promise, that I shall follow no divisive course from the present establishment in this Church; renouncing all doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to, or inconsistent with, the said doctrine, worship, discipline, or government of this Church.

XI.

Sess. 12, May 22, 1711.—Act concerning Beggars.

The General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to apply to the justices of the peace, and other magistrates, to put in execution the laws concerning the poor and vagrant beggars, and providing work and maintenance for them.

XII.

Sess. 13, May 23, 1711.—Act concerning Students of Divinity, and others who go Abroad to Preach the Gospel.

The General Assembly being informed, that some have gone from this Church into other countries, and there take upon them to preach the Gospel, who have either been deposed from the ministry by the judicatories of this Church, for scandals they were found guilty of; or have pretended to a licence when they were not licensed; or who, upon their application to the judicatories of this Church, have not been admitted to trials; or, upon trials, have not been found fit and worthy to be licensed to preach—yet do retire to other countries where they are not so well known, in order to enter on trials; and after they are admitted in foreign places, do not recommend themselves by a holy life and ministerial conversation, to the reproach of the Church of Scotland where they were educated: Therefore, and for vindication of this Church, and to prevent as much as possible the evils that may arise from such practices, they hereby inhibit and discharge all young men educated in this Church, or students of divinity, to go to foreign places, and there offer themselves to trials for licence to preach the Gospel, and ordination to the holy ministry, unless they carry along with them sufficient testimonials from the professors of divinity under whom they studied, if they have attended the profession of divinity, and from the minister of the parish and Presbytery of the bounds where they resided; and Presbyteries are discharged to grant such testimonials, except upon due inquiry into the person's life and conversation, soundness in the faith, proficiency in studies, and abilities and fitness for the ministerial function: And appoints the Commission to acquaint ministers in foreign places, where such practices may fall out, with this act, and advertise them what testimonials they ought to receive.

XIII.

Sess. 13 et ult., May 23, 1711.—Act concerning the Receiving of Strangers into Church Communion, and Baptizing their Children.

The General Assembly, considering that all due encouragement ought to be given to persons educated in other Protestant churches, who have come, or may come, to reside in this country, and may incline to join in Communion with this Church: Therefore, they hereby recommend to all ministers, in whose parishes any such strangers may happen to reside, to show all tenderness to them, when they come to desire the benefit of sealing ordinances; and if such strangers, being free of scandal, and professing their faith in Christ, and obedience to him, shall desire baptism to their children, ministers shall cheerfully comply with their desire in administering the sacrament of baptism to their children, upon the parents engaging to educate them in the fear of God, and knowledge of the principles of the reformed Protestant religion.

XIV.

Sess. 13 et ult., May 23, 1711.—Act concerning the Inspection of Universities and Colleges.

The General Assembly recommends to the several Presbyteries, within whose bounds colleges or universities are, to take particular care that all the masters thereof do acknowledge, profess, and subscribe, in manner appointed by the sixth act of the Parliament, 1707, entitled, "Act for Securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government," and to take special notice of what is taught in colleges and universities, and that nothing be taught therein contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Confession of Faith of this Church, or to the worship, discipline, or government of the same; and to observe the morals and conversation both of masters and scholars, and that they apply first to the faculty of the universities or colleges for redress; and in case any difficulties do occur to Presbyteries which they cannot overcome, they are appointed to lay the same before the Synod of the bounds, General Assembly, or Commission thereof; who are to consider any representations that shall be laid before them by Presbyteries, with relation to these things, and to give their advice and assistance therein.

XV.

Sess. 13 et ult., May 23, 1711.—Act concerning Preaching in Vacant Churches.

The General Assembly, considering that it tendeth much to the quiet and peace of this Church, that all the ministers thereof take care to observe good order; do therefore prohibit and discharge any minister to take upon him to preach in any vacant congregation, not within the bounds of his own Presbytery, without an invitation either from the Presbytery in whose bounds the vacancy is, or at least from some neighbouring minister within the bounds of that Presbytery.

XVI.

Sess. 13 et ult., May 23, 1711.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh the first Thursday of May next, 1712 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 122d Psalm, from the third verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

OVERTURES

TRANSMITTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, anno 1711, TO THE SEVERAL PRESBYTERIES WITHIN THIS NATIONAL CHURCH, THAT THEY MAY RETURN THE SAME, WITH THEIR OPINION, TO THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY, TO THE END THAT THEY MAY BE PASSED INTO ACTS, IF THE PLURALITY OF PRESBYTERIES DO ACQUIESCE THEREIN.

I.

May 16, 1711.—Overtures concerning Admission of Infants to Baptism.

(See Act IV. 1712.)

II.

May 23, 1711.—Overture concerning the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

(An Act on this subject was passed in 1712.)

III.

May 23, 1711.—Overtures concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches, especially tanquam jure devoluto.

Considering how needful it is that Presbyteries be very tender of giving any ground of complaint, in their planting of parishes, especially *tanquam jure devoluto*, and that any who judge themselves lesed may have an opportunity of being heard by superior judicatories, and if wronged, may be redressed: It is therefore overtured, that when a parish falls vacant, the Presbytery in whose bounds it lies, shall with all diligence declare and intimate the vacancy; and if there be no legal eldership settled therein, the Presbytery shall not proceed to plant upon the *jus devolutum*, until they first use all proper means to establish a legal eldership in the parish; and if access to the church be refused in order to these ends, after all endeavours used to obtain the same, or if after an eldership is settled, or where there was a legal eldership in the parish before the vacancy; and that the heritors and elders delay to give a legal call, then the Presbytery shall propose to the heritors and elders, or to the heritors and people, where there is no legal eldership, a list of several fit persons, that they may agree to one of them to be their pastor, and endeavour to gain their consent to one of that list; or in case a fit person be proposed by the heritors, elders, or people, the Presbytery shall endeavour to bring the heritors and elders, or the heritors and people, where there is no legal eldership, to an agreement to that person; and in order to this, some of the Presbytery shall be appointed to discourse with those

concerned from time to time, or to essay to do it within the currency of the six months after falling of the vacancy, and even when the six months are expired; and before the Presbytery proceed to settle the parish *tanquam jure devoluto*, they shall continue to deal with the parish, at least for their consent to a Presbyterial call, and when there is no hope of success, then the Presbytery may proceed to the said settlement; but if any of the heritors, elders, or heads of families, or persons of good reputation in the parish, do compare before the Presbytery, and offer sufficient objections against the person to be settled, as to his orthodoxy, literature, life and conversation, or other ministerial qualifications, the Presbytery, before they proceed to the settlement, shall take trial of the said objections; and if any difficulty occur, or that there appear any heat or division in the parish about a call, the Presbytery shall not proceed until they have the advice and direction of the Synod, and shall acquaint the parish, that they may attend the Synod to hear their determination; or if there be any appeal from the Presbytery's procedure, they shall sist the foresaid settlement till the time appointed for the next meeting of the Synod or General Assembly appealed to; and if the appellants do not then insist in their appeal, the Presbytery may proceed as if the same had never been made; but if the appellants do insist, then the judicature appealed to shall proceed and discuss the same without delay, and give sentence therein as they shall find cause; and if there be a further appeal from the Synod to the General Assembly, the foresaid settlement shall likewise stop, until the time appointed for the meeting of the next General Assembly, unless the appellants do pass from their said appeal: But because some persons, from a litigious or disaffected humour, do oppose the settlement of a vacant church, with a fit and qualified person, and do appeal with a design to continue the vacancy for some time longer; therefore, to prevent this, it should be declared, that unless those who do oppose the planting of any vacant parish, do timeously give in in writing under their hands, sufficient objections against the person designed to be settled, and offer to prove the same in due time, and give in also the reasons of their appeal within ten days thereafter, in manner appointed by the Acts of the General Assembly, the same shall not be regarded, nor the appeal be received without it, but the settlement shall go on as if the appeal had never been made, and the judicature shall intimate this to the appellant at making the said appeal. The General Assembly, having heard and considered the above Overtures, they did, and hereby do, transmit the same to the several Presbyteries of this Church; and appoints them to be careful to send in their remarks thereupon to the next General Assembly, that the same may be turned into a standing act and constitution of this Church, if the plurality of Presbyteries, who shall send in their remarks thereupon, shall be found to agree thereto; and, in the meantime, the General Assembly appoints the rules and directions therein proposed to be strictly observed until the next Assembly.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 1, 1712.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 1, 1712.—Act appointing the Queen's Commission to his Grace
John Duke of Atholl to be Recorded.*

The General Assembly, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by his Grace John Duke of Atholl, her Majesty's commission, sealed at Edinburgh the 30th day of April last, with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England, to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, and of the same tenor with former commissions, con-

stituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly ; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is, by order of this Assembly, recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

The Queen's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them the 1st of May 1712.

ANNE, R.,

Right reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. We have had so much experience of your good conduct in your Assemblies, that we have very gladly countenanced by our authority this your meeting ; and we hope that you will take it as a particular mark of our regard to you, that we have appointed our right trusty and right entirely beloved cousin and counsellor, John Duke of Atholl, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, who, we doubt not, will be acceptable to you. It hath always been our concern to employ our authority for suppressing vice and immorality ; and we assure you, that such magistrates as shall be most faithful in executing the laws, and conforming themselves to our royal pleasure, signified in our proclamations, in punishing all such practices as are a scandal to the Christian profession, shall have most of our countenance and favour. Lest any late occurrences may have possessed some of you with fears and jealousies, we take this solemn occasion to assure you, it is our firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland as established by law ; and whatever ease is given to those who differ from you in points that are not essential, we will, however, employ our utmost care to protect you from all insults, and redress your just complaints. As we are sensible that a pious and learned ministry is (under God) the great support of Christianity, so we are resolved to countenance you in your endeavours to promote it. The address of the Commission of the late General Assembly, which was presented to us by those commissioned by them to take care of their affairs here, did so much manifest their loyalty and good affection to our royal person and government, and their true concern for the succession in the Protestant line, as established by law, that it could not but be acceptable to us ; and it gives us ground to expect, that there will be nothing in your procedure but what shall be dutiful to us, and agreeable to the conduct of former Assemblies ; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 17th day of April 1712, in the eleventh year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

DARTMOUTH.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church, of that part of our Kingdom of Great Britain called Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 3, 1712.—The General Assembly's Answer to her Majesty's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We do accept, with all thankfulness, your Majesty's royal favour, in continuing to countenance, by your authority, our meetings ; and do take it as a very particular mark of your regard to us, that you have been pleased to appoint the Duke of Atholl to represent your royal person in this Assembly ; a choice for us, so visibly attended with all desirable advantages, specially considering his known zeal for the Protestant

religion, and against all immorality, that we cannot but acknowledge it to be most acceptable and obliging.

Your Majesty's great concern to employ your authority for suppressing vice and immorality, doth tend so much to the advancement of the glory of God, and the interest of our holy religion, and withal to the honour of your Majesty's reign, and the peace and quiet of this Church and country, that we must ever make it our utmost study and endeavour, in our places and stations, to promote the practice of true Christianity, in opposition to all profaneness and impiety; and it is a satisfaction to us, that your Majesty is pleased to assure us, that such magistrates as shall be most faithful in executing the laws against those practices which are a scandal to the Christian profession, shall have most of your Majesty's countenance and favour; and we humbly presume to persuade ourselves, that your Majesty will, in your royal wisdom, find out such methods as shall be most proper for making your pious purposes, expressed in your proclamations, more effectual than hitherto, to our deep regret, they have been.

The late occurrences which your Majesty is pleased to take notice of have, we must acknowledge, possessed us with fears and jealousies; but, as we have always embraced, and do at present lay hold upon the assurance your Majesty is pleased to give us of your firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland, as established by law, so we cannot, but with all dutiful submission, and in that truth and ingenuity that becomes the faithful ministers and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, put your Majesty in mind of the representations and petitions laid before you by the Commission of the last General Assembly, for a remedy in these matters; humbly hoping, that these our most just complaints may come in due time and manner to be redressed.

Your Majesty's just sense, that a pious and learned ministry is (under God) the great support of Christianity, doth greatly encourage us to use our utmost endeavours for promoting of it, as being most firmly persuaded, that your Majesty's best assistance to us will never be wanting in so good a work.

That the address of the Commission of the late General Assembly, presented to your Majesty, asserting their loyalty and good affection to your Majesty's royal person and government, and their true concern for the succession, in the Protestant line, of the illustrious House of Hanover, upon which it is established by law, was acceptable to your Majesty, is to us most satisfying; specially, since your Majesty is graciously pleased to take it for a ground to expect that there will be nothing in our procedure but what shall be dutiful, it being indeed our most earnest desire, ever to testify to your Majesty, and to all men, our most firm and steady loyalty and affection to your Majesty and your government; and also our sincere and zealous concern for the succession in the Protestant line, as being certainly the greatest securities both of our religion and liberties, and all that can be dear to men.

That your Majesty may be guided and directed of God in the great and weighty affairs of your government, and that after a long and happy reign upon earth, you may be possessed of a blessed immortality, shall be the earnest and constant prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 6, 1712.—Act concerning the Admission of Infants to Baptism.

Children born within the verge of the visible Church of parents, one or both, professing the Christian religion, have a right to baptism.

It being the duty of Christian parents to dedicate their children to God in baptism, and to covenant for their education in the faith of Christ, no other sponsor is to be taken, unless the parents be dead, or absent, or grossly ignorant, or under scandal, or contumacious to discipline; such being unfit to stand as sponsors in transacting a solemn covenant with God. In which cases, the immediate parent who is in such circumstances is to be required to provide some fit person; and if it can be, one related to the parent of the child, should be sponsor; but if either of the parents, whether father or mother, give evidence to Church judicatories, and the congregation offended, of their repentance for removing the scandal, the suspension they were under as to Church privileges should be taken off, according to the rules of this Church, and the penitent parent should be allowed to present the child.

In the case of children exposed, whose baptism, after inquiry, cannot be known, the Kirk-session is to order the presenting of the child to baptism, and to see to the Christian education thereof; and it is recommended to the parish to take care of the maintenance of the child.

The parent or sponsor ought to speak to the minister of the parish before the child be offered to baptism.

V.

Sess. 6, May 7, 1712.—A Representation of the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Promoting Christian Knowledge, with an Act of the General Assembly thereupon.

Unto the very Reverend the Moderator, and the remanent Reverend and Honourable Members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge,

Humbly represents,

That before the erection of the said Society, the General Assembly, 1709, by their sixth Act, did, out of their great wisdom and zeal for that pious undertaking of propagating Christian knowledge, seriously recommend to all the ministers and elders of this Church to go through their respective parishes on such days as the several Presbyteries should appoint, to receive and collect subscriptions and contributions for promoting thereof; and appointed ministers on a Sabbath day, before they begin this work, to read and intimate this act from the pulpit to their respective congregations; and to exhort and excite their people to subscribe and contribute; and recommended to the several Presbyteries to be careful to promote subscriptions and collections within their bounds, and to appoint some of their number to preach in vacant parishes, and to intimate the said act, and to join with and assist the elders or heritors and parishioners in taking subscriptions, and making collections; and to call for reports from each minister in their bounds, containing a particular account of the subscribers, and sums subscribed for, and money collected in each parish; and to send in an extract thereof, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, to the clerk of the Commission, now secretary to the society; and thereafter, upon advertisement, to send in the principal subscriptions, and money collected, to the society's treasurer.

And after the society was constituted, they did apply to the General Assembly, 1710, who, by the 11th Act of that Assembly, did enjoin the exact observation of the foresaid sixth act, 1709; and recommended to the several Synods concerned in the Highlands and Islands, to inquire into the state of the several parishes in their bounds, as to the particulars contained in the said act; and to send an exact account thereof to the secretary of the society, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, that the society might the better know what places of the country did most need the assistance of charity schools; and they exhorted all ministers, and other charitable persons, to put their contributions forthwith in the treasurer to the society's hands.

And since that time, the society, in pursuance of the pious ends of their erection, have, by themselves and their committees, in the first place, essayed all proper means to bring in the money subscribed for, and to procure more subscriptions and contributions, by dealing themselves with persons of all ranks of their acquaintance, writing frequently to the reverend Synods and Presbyteries, and particular ministers of this Church, to the justices of the peace in their quarter-sessions, and to magistrates of burghs; and by settling societies of correspondents, consisting of gentlemen in the several shires, and in some of the royal burghs; and by these means there is come to their treasurer's hands about four thousand four hundred pounds sterling money; all which, except a very small part, is lent out upon good security for annual rent, to sufficient and responsible hands.

And, in the next place, for the due employing of the annual rents of this stock, which only the society are empowered to dispose of, the society and their committees have made it their work to find out the most proper places of the Highlands and Islands, and remote corners of Scotland, in which they should erect their charity schools, and persons most fit for teaching the said schools, by writing letters upon that subject to the several Synods and Presbyteries, and particular ministers and gentlemen concerned in the Highlands and Islands, and to the professors in the universities.

And after having received all the information that they could expect, they agreed to set up presently eleven charity schools—beside the catechist or schoolmaster of St Kilda—in the following places, viz., one in Abertarff; one in Castletoun of Braemar; a third in Auchintoul, both in the Highlands of the shire of Aberdeen; a fourth in the parish of Larg in Sutherland; a fifth in the parish of Diurness, in the country of Strathnaver; a sixth in Elrish, in the Presbytery of Skye; a seventh in his Grace the Duke of Atholl's Highlands; an eighth in Glenelg; a ninth in Harray, in the continent of Orkney; a tenth in the Island of Sanday, in the North Isles there; and the eleventh in Zetland.

The society have found out a competent number of young men, duly attested by their respective Presbyteries, and whom (upon suitable trials) they have found sufficiently qualified for teaching the said schools; and they have settled schoolmasters in several of the foresaid places, and have given them commissions and the necessary instructions, and are going on with all diligence to settle the rest; and they have allowed to the schoolmasters of the first eight schools, and to the catechist or schoolmaster at St Kilda, each of them two hundred pounds; and to the three schools in Orkney and Zetland, one hundred pound Scots each per annum of salaries, which, with books needful to be furnished, goes near to exhaust all the annual rents of the money yet got in; and the society have resolved, as their stock increases, to settle free schools also in the countries of Assynt and Gairloch, Glenlivet, and Inveraven, and other remote places that most need their assistance.

So that nothing hinders the further progress of that good work but the want of a fund sufficient to carry it on; and as to this, albeit the committee, in the society's name, does thankfully acknowledge the commendable zeal and concern of some reverend Presbyteries and ministers in this matter; yet they cannot but regret that the distinct and excellent method laid down by the foresaid sixth act of the Assembly, 1709, has not been so duly observed by some reverend Presbyteries as might have been expected, whereby it has fallen out that the society cannot possibly get the names of subscribers and contributors, with their sums subscribed for and contributed, so exactly and regularly booked and recorded, as they proposed at first to do; nor can they for the most part know what parishes and persons in parishes have contributed, which deprives them of the means of dealing with persons of note and others that are deficient, and in many other respects exceedingly prejudices the work: And there are a great many Presbyteries and parishes in Scotland from which there is no contribution at all come in; and the society are informed that there are several subscriptions taken, and money collected in some parishes not yet brought to their treasurer's hands; and there are several subscribers deficient in payment, and many persons of honour and note, and others charitably inclined, who would willingly subscribe and contribute to this pious undertaking, if they were applied to and dealt with for that effect; which the society does attribute to forgetfulness in some of the reverend ministers, or perhaps to some pre-

judices and mistakes arising from misrepresentations, which some who are no friends to this undertaking do very industriously propagate, and others who are friends to it do too easily give credit to. For removing whereof, the society did formerly cause print and disperse a scheme of their designed management, and now are ready to lay their books open to any persons who shall think fit for their satisfaction to peruse the same.

And, seeing this charitable and pious undertaking is now so far advanced, and did it meet with suitable encouragement, would prove of excellent use to the nation, both with respect to its religious and civil concerns, and that the only probable way to promote it, is, that the reverend judicatures and ministers of this Church will resolve to follow exactly the method prescribed by the former acts of Assembly.

It is therefore humbly entreated, that this Venerable Assembly would be pleased again earnestly to recommend to the reverend Presbyteries and ministers the exact observation of the two acts of Assembly above mentioned, and would appoint the reverend Presbyteries to report to their several Synods an account of what they have done at any time before this, or shall hereafter do, in order to forward this pious design; and, particularly, to require an account of the diligence of the several ministers within their bounds in this matter, and record their reports in their books; and would ordain the reverend Synods to take an account of the diligence of their several Presbyteries, and record their reports in their books; and also to report an account of their diligence to the Commission from time to time; and that the Venerable Assembly will do what else they shall see proper for advancing this so pious and charitable an undertaking. This, in name, and by the appointment of the said Committee, is subscribed by

JA. JUSTICE, *I.P.C.*

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the representation of the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, giving a distinct account of the diligence of that society in prosecution of the pious ends of their erection, and the progress they have made in their work, and of the things that hinder the further advancement thereof, they did, and hereby do, again renew the recommendations of former Assemblies, to the several Synods, Presbyteries, Sessions, Ministers, and charitably inclined persons within this Church, desiring that the judicatures above mentioned would exactly observe and follow forth the distinct and orderly method prescribed by the sixth act of the General Assembly held in the year 1709, and the eleventh act of the General Assembly held in the year 1710, in furthering subscriptions and contributions in the several parishes, and reporting the same to the society. And for the better securing of the observation of the said acts and recommendations, the General Assembly strictly enjoins and appoints the several Presbyteries of this Church to report to their Synods a distinct account of what they have done at any time before this, or what they shall hereafter do, in order to forward this pious undertaking; and that in the method prescribed by the said two former acts of Assembly. And, particularly, the General Assembly appoints the several Presbyteries again to require an account of the diligence of all the ministers within their bounds in this matter, and that they record the reports of every minister in their Presbytery books. And the General Assembly likewise ordains the several Synods to take a particular account of the diligence of their respective Presbyteries, and record it in their Synod books. And, further, the General Assembly hereby appoints the several Presbyteries and Synods of this Church to send a full and distinct report of their diligence in this matter, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, in manner prescribed by the foresaid sixth act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1709, and eleventh act of the General Assembly, 1710, to the meeting of the Commission in December next; and that the Commission give in a list of such Presbyteries and Synods as shall omit to send in these accounts to the next General Assembly. And, *lastly*, the General Assembly seriously and earnestly entreats and exhorts persons of all ranks and degrees within this Church, according to their abilities, to contribute to the advancement of this charitable and Christian undertaking.

VI.

Sess. 7, May 8, 1712.—Act concerning the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, considering that by the fifth act of the General Assembly, 1694, appointing the number of representatives for Presbyteries, there is a proportion observed with respect to the number of ministerial charges in each Presbytery, and that the regulation contained in the said act is no further expressed, than to allow five ministers and two ruling elders as the representatives of each Presbytery whose number exceeds twenty-four; therefore, the General Assembly, according to the design of the said act, founding upon a proportion to be observed betwixt the number of ministerial charges in Presbyteries and the number of representatives, doth declare and appoint, that each Presbytery, whose number doth exceed thirty ministerial charges, shall send to the General Assembly six ministers and three ruling elders; and this shall take place at the election to the next General Assembly.

VII.

Sess. 8, May 9, 1712.—Act directing the right Application of the Money granted by her Majesty for defraying the Public Charges of this Church.

The General Assembly, considering that the Assembly held in the year 1709 did, by their act dated the 25th day of April that year, discharge any more precepts to be drawn till all former debts of the Church were paid, and all precepts ordered or drawn before that time were declared payable out of the Equivalent, according to the order of their dates: And the said act appoints that her Majesty's yearly allowance be, in the first place, applied for defraying the charges of the Church for that particular year for which it is given; and, if there be any remains, that the same be applied for payment of the Church's debts for preceding years, according to the order of ranking set down in the act of the commission, dated the 7th day of January 1707: And the Church's receiver is appointed to apply the said money in the manner and order above prescribed; and that so soon as the money comes to his hands he put some thereof yearly in the hands of one of the agents for the Church, to be given out by him for the incidental charges of the Church, for which he shall be accountable to each General Assembly. And the General Assembly, finding it necessary that the said rules be further explained and extended, and that the proper uses to which the public money should be applied be fixed and determined, and that a certain proportion thereof yearly be allotted for the incidental charges of the Church's affairs, and that such other orders be laid down, as that the pressing affairs of the Church may not be retarded for want of money to expedite the same: Therefore, the General Assembly does hereby enact and appoint—*First*, That of her Majesty's yearly allowance for defraying the public charges of the Church's affairs, and the salaries of the Church's public servants, there be always the sum of L.100 sterling money in reserve, for answering any extraordinary emergencies in the Church's affairs. *Secondly*, That no commission of any General Assembly in time coming shall have power, and they are hereby discharged to dispose of any more of the Church's money but of one year's allowance only, reckoning the commencement of the year as the same is fixed by her Majesty's grant, viz., from the 24th day of June in the year preceding: and the commission of this Assembly is hereby allowed only to dispose of what is untouched of this year's allowance, reckoning the commencement from the 24th day of June last bypast, that thereby the next General Assembly, and every subsequent General Assembly of this Church, and their commissions, may have one year's allowance entire, without any anticipations or encroachments by preceding Assemblies or Commissions, to defray the necessary charges of the Church during the time of their administration. *Thirdly*, The General Assembly appoints that each year's allowance be applied, in the first place, for defraying the stated annual charges of the Church quarterly, and the necessary exigencies of each particular year; that is, in

such matters only as, during the time of every Commission's administration shall occur, which do immediately and directly concern the public interest of the whole Church in general, and any arrears of these that shall happen to be resting; and, in the next place, for payment of the other bygone debts of the Church then resting, according to the foresaid order of ranking already established: and the General Assembly discharges any new orders to be given, or precepts to be drawn upon any other accounts, until all the Church's bygone debts be paid; but, after payment of all prior debts, the General Assembly allows the several commissions to bestow that which remains of each year's allowance to such other uses of the Church as they shall judge most proper. *Fourthly*, The General Assembly hereby provides and declares, that no appointments upon the procurator or agents for the Church to manage processes for particular Synods, Presbyteries, or ministers, shall in time coming warrant the agents to lay out any money thereupon, except there be a special order of a General Assembly, agreeably to the present rules, expressly appointing them to that effect. *Fifthly*, The General Assembly appoints that L.12, 10s. sterling money quarterly, as the Church's money comes in, be lodged in the hands of one of the agents for the Church for defraying the said incidental charges, for which they are hereby ordered to make an account at each General Assembly; and, if any balance shall be found due to them, the same shall be paid to them, and the sum of L.12, 10s. sterling further; or, if the balance that shall be found due by them shall not extend to that sum, the said sum shall be made up to them out of the first money that comes in after clearing their accounts, as said is, including this year. And, *Lastly*, The General Assembly appoints the receiver of the Church's money, in his disbursing thereof in time coming, strictly to observe the foresaid rules; and discharges him to make payments in any other manner or order, as he will be answerable to the General Assemblies of this Church.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 9, 1712, ante meridiem.—Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c., to be commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned; with power to the said persons or their quorum. (Powers the same as in three preceding years.)

IX.

Sess. 8, May 9, 1712, ante meridiem.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

1. [Same as in 1711.]
2. [Same as in 1711.]
3. The Commission are appointed to use all proper means to preserve and maintain all the rights and privileges of this Church, and to obtain a redress of what is grievous to us with respect to the same, and to send Commissioners to London for that effect, if they see cause.
4. [Same as in 1711.]
5. The Commission are instructed to use all diligence in getting payment of the money gifted by her Majesty for defraying the public charges of the Church, and to see that the rules and orders laid down in the seventh Act of this Assembly, entitled, "Act directing the right Application of the Money granted by her Majesty for defraying the public Charges of this Church," or established by the Acts of former Assemblies, for the right application of the public money, consistent with the said Act seventh, be punctually observed.

- 6. [Same as No. 7, in 1711.]
- 7. [Same as No. 8, in 1711.]
- 8. [Same as No. 9, in 1711.]
- 9. [Same as No. 10, in 1711.]
- 10. [Same as No. 11, in 1711.]
- 11. [Same as No. 12, in 1711.]
- 12. [Same as No. 13, in 1711.]
- 13. [Same as No. 14, in 1711.]
- 14. [Same as No. 15, in 1711.]
- 15. [Same as No. 16, in 1711.]
- 16. [Same as No. 17, in 1711.]
- 17. [Same as No. 18, in 1711.]

X.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1712.—Act approving of the Representations and Addresses made by the Commission of the late General Assembly to the Queen, concerning the Toleration and Patronages.

The General Assembly having considered the proceedings of the Commission of the late General Assembly, with relation to public affairs, and, in particular, having had produced and read before them the representations made by them to her Majesty, concerning the bill entitled, “A Bill to prevent the disturbing of those of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland, in the exercise of their Religious Worship, and in the Use of the Liturgy of the Church of England, and for repealing an Act against irregular Marriages and Baptisms,” then depending in Parliament; and the “Bill for restoring of Patronages,” which were reserved by them in their approbation of the proceedings of the said Commission: The General Assembly did, by their vote, and hereby do, unanimously approve and ratify the foresaid proceedings of the said Commission in the premises, and particularly the said representations, as having been most faithful and seasonable. And, in token of their said approbation, they hereby ordain the said representations to be here inserted *verbatim*, as follows:—

TO THE QUEEN’S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The most humble Representation and Petition of the Commission of the late General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

The Church of Christ in Scotland, being, as we apprehend, in hazard of sad alterations and innovations, inconsistent with, and contrary to, that happy establishment secured to us by the laws both of God and the realm, from a bill entitled, “A Bill to prevent the disturbing those of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland, in the Exercise of their Religious Worship, and in the Use of the Liturgy of the Church of England, and for repealing the Act against irregular Baptisms and Marriages.” We do, in all duty and humility, flee to your Majesty’s royal protection, so often and so graciously assured to us, both by your royal word and letters.

If the matters in question did only relate to our own ease and better accommodation, we should patiently bear the same; but when we see the glory of God, and the power and purity of our holy religion, and of the ordinances of Jesus Christ, in this Church so much concerned, and the peace and quiet thereof, and of this whole country, so visibly in danger, to the prejudice of your Majesty’s honour and government, we cannot but hope that your Majesty will allow us to plead our just right, with that gracious liberty you are pleased to give the meanest of your subjects.

When, after the great and many hardships, troubles, and vicissitudes, wherewith the Church of Scotland had been tossed, even from its first Reformation from Popery, it pleased our gracious God, at, and by the late happy Revolution, to bless us with a full and complete restitution, and that by the Claim of Right, and the Acts of Par-

liament following, viz., the fifth Act of the Parliament, 1690, entitled, "Act ratifying the Confession of Faith, and settling Presbyterian Church Government;" whereby Presbyterian Church Government is established, ratified, and confirmed, "as the only government of Christ's Church within this kingdom," rescinding, annulling, and making void all Acts of Parliament, statutes and ordinances in the contrary, allowing and declaring the general meeting and representatives of the Presbyterian ministers and elders, in whose hands the exercise of the church government is established, to have power to try and purge out all insufficient, negligent, scandalous, and erroneous ministers, by due course of ecclesiastical process and censure; and, likewise, to redress all other Church disorders. By which act it is evident, that Presbyterian church government being thus established, the ministers and elders of this Church have all the powers committed by our Lord and Master to his ministers and officers, to watch over the flock, and to guard against all usurpers and intruders. *Secondly*, By the twenty-third Act of the Parliament, 1693, entitled, "Act for settling the Quiet and Peace of the Church," whereby it is expressly statute and ordained, That no person be admitted or continued to be a minister or preacher within this Church, unless he first take and subscribe the Oath of Allegiance and Assurance, and also subscribe the Confession of Faith, as the confession of his faith: And likewise, that he owns and acknowledges Presbyterian Church Government to be the only government of this Church. And, further, that he observe the uniformity of worship, and of the administration of all public ordinances, as the same are at present performed and allowed within this Church; and that no minister or preacher be admitted or continued, unless that he subscribe to observe, and do actually observe, the foresaid uniformity. *Thirdly*, By the twenty-second Act of Parliament, 1695, entitled, "Act against intruding into Churches without a legal Call and Admission thereto;" by which act it is statuted and declared, That whoever shall intrude themselves into any church, or shall exercise any part of the ministerial function within any parish, without an orderly call from the heritors and eldership, and legal admission from the Presbytery of the bounds, shall be removed, and also incapable for the space mentioned in the Act. And, *Fourthly*, By the third act of the Parliament, 1702, entitled, "Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Government;" whereby the foresaid Act 1690 is fully ratified. By which acts, and several others to that purpose, which we humbly presume to lay together, for your Majesty's more full information, we, with all submission, conceive, that Presbyterian Church Government is as fully settled and secured as could be devised; and, as the worship, discipline, and government of this Church were complied with, and submitted to, without any separation in all times since the Reformation, when Presbyterian Government was established by law; so there is no reason to doubt, but the same cheerful and universal compliance had been given thereto, at and ever since the late happy Revolution, if it had not been for that woeful seed of disaffection to the Revolution, and your Majesty's Government, as thereby established, and which indeed hath been the principal if not the only cause of these few prosecutions that occasion so loud and unjust a clamour.

But that your Majesty may be further satisfied of the injustice of these calumnies, wherewith we are reproached for excessive rigour, we cannot but lay before your Majesty this pregnant instance of our moderation; that since our late happy establishment, there have been taken in and continued hundreds of dissenting ministers upon the easiest terms; and we are further assured, that when any just trial shall be made, we shall ever be found inclined to all the Christian tenderness that can be expected from such as fear God, and love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Your Majesty, then, by what is here humbly represented, may plainly perceive what security we have for our present settlement before the Union; but then, in order to the Union, and for facilitating thereof, we have the 6th Act of the Parliament, 1707, entitled, "Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Government," whereby the whole acts above set down are ratified and approved. And your Majesty further, with advice and consent of the Estates of Parliament, expressly provides and declares, that the foresaid true Protestant religion, contained in the above-mentioned Confession of Faith, with the form and purity of worship presently in use within this Church,

and its Presbyterian church government and discipline, "all established by the foresaid Acts of Parliament, pursuant to the Claim of Right, shall remain and continue unalterable;" and that the said Presbyterian government shall be the only government of the Church within the kingdom of Scotland. And, further, that after the decease of your Majesty, (whom God long preserve,) the Sovereign succeeding shall, in all time coming, at his or her accession to the Crown, swear and subscribe, "that they shall inviolably maintain and preserve the foresaid settlement of the true Protestant religion, with the government, worship, discipline, rights, and privileges of this Church, as above by law established." And it is further statute and ordained, that this Act of Parliament, with the establishment therein contained, shall be held and observed, in all time coming, as a fundamental and essential condition of any treaty of union to be concluded betwixt the two kingdoms, without any alteration thereof, or derogation thereto, in any sort whatsoever; as, also, that this Act of Parliament, and settlement therein contained, shall be inserted and repeated in any Act of Parliament that should pass for agreeing or concluding the foresaid treaty of union betwixt the two kingdoms; and that the same shall be therein expressly declared to be a fundamental and essential condition of the said treaty of union in all time coming; and, accordingly, and that our Church might have the plenary security above provided, and that, as was then plainly said, and as the acts sufficiently import, our security above-mentioned might be stated and established in a manner even beyond the reach of Parliament; in both Acts of Parliament passed in both kingdoms, ratifying and approving the treaty of union, the foresaid act for securing the Protestant religion, and Presbyterian Church government, is expressly inserted; and it is thereby statute and ordained, that this act, with the Establishment therein contained, shall be held and observed in all time coming, as a fundamental and essential condition of the foresaid treaty of union, without any alteration thereof, or derogation thereto, in any sort, for ever.

This being our great and plenary security in law, that we have for our present Church government and establishment; and we being in danger, on the other hand, of alterations and innovations intended by the foresaid bill, depending before the Honourable House of Commons; wherein, besides the hard reflections contained in the preface, it is proposed to be enacted, That Episcopal Dissenters shall have liberty to meet and assemble, for the exercise of Divine Worship in their own manner, and to use in their congregations the Liturgy of the Church of England, without any disturbance; and that for qualifying such pastors, Episcopal orders, and presenting letters of their orders to the justices of peace, shall be sufficient; and that no person or persons shall incur any penalty whatsoever, upon account of his or their resorting to the said Episcopal meeting: And that it shall be free and lawful for all the subjects in that part of Great Britain called Scotland to assemble and meet for divine service, without any disturbance, and to settle their congregations where they think fit: And for the Episcopal ministers not only to pray and preach in these congregations, but to administer the Sacraments, and marry, without incurring any pain or penalty whatsoever, without any other caveat that appears for their doctrine, save that they shall not deny, in their preaching or writing, the doctrine of the blessed Trinity; and withal, that the Presbyterian clergy are still allowed to inflict ecclesiastical censures upon those of their own communion, which plainly imports an exemption of all who shall disown their communion, we cannot but, in the first place, express our astonishing surprise and deep affliction to hear of such a bill offered for such a large and almost boundless toleration, not only threatening the overthrow of this Church, but giving a large licence almost to all errors and blasphemies, and throwing up all good discipline to the dishonour of God, and the scandal and ruin of the true Christian religion, and the infallible disturbance of the quiet, and to the confusion, of this Church and nation. And, therefore, in the next place, we do, in all humility, but with the greatest earnestness, beseech, nay, obtest your Majesty, by the same mercy of God that restored this Church, and raised your Majesty to the throne, to interpose for the relief of this Church, and the maintenance of the present establishment against such a manifest and ruining encroachment, in such manner as in your royal wisdom and justice you shall think fit.

That the gracious God may ever guide your Majesty with his counsel, till, after a long and happy reign upon earth, he crown you with glory in heaven, shall be the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders, Commissioners of the late General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, and at our appointment, by
(*Sic subscribitur*) WILLIAM MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address and Representation of the Commission of the late General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

Though we cannot forbear to regret the want of success in our endeavours with relation to a bill lately passed into an act, entitled, "An Act for preventing the disturbing of those of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland, in the exercise of their religious Worship, and in the use of the Liturgy of the Church of England;" yet, seeing we must still judge that the form and purity of worship presently within this Church, and its Presbyterian government and discipline, established by the Acts of Parliament pursuant to the Claim of Right, are to remain and continue unalterable, and that the Act of Parliament securing our Presbyterian Church government, and the establishment thereof, are to be held and observed in all time coming as a fundamental and essential condition of the treaty of union concluded betwixt the two kingdoms, without any alteration thereof, or derogation thereto, in any sort, for ever.

We cannot but with all humble duty and submission take notice of another bill presented in the Parliament of Great Britain for restoring of patronages, which we conceive is contrary to our Church constitution, so well secured by the treaty of union, and solemnly ratified by the Acts of Parliament of both kingdoms, and will inevitably obstruct the work of the Gospel, and create great disorder and disquiet in this Church and nation. For the further clearing whereof, we beg leave to represent to your Majesty, that from our first reformation from Popery, patronages have been reckoned a yoke and burden upon the Church of Scotland, as is declared by the First and Second Books of Discipline, published soon after the said Reformation; since which time they were still judged a grievance, till at length they came to be by law abolished.

These patronages having been restored with Prelacy, in the year 1661 and 1662, did indeed continue till the year 1690, that Prelacy was abolished, and Presbyterian government again established; and, though the Act of Parliament, 1690, resettling Presbyterian Church government, was founded upon the Act of Parliament, 1592, which bears a relation to patronages, yet the said Act of Parliament, 1690, doth expressly except that part of the old act, and refer patronages to be afterwards considered; which accordingly followed in the same Parliament, 1690. Whereby your Majesty may plainly perceive that the abolition of patronages was made a part of our Church constitution, enacted by the act 1690, and that this act 1690, with all other acts relative thereto, being expressly ratified, and for ever confirmed by the act securing the Protestant religion, and Presbyterian Church government, and engrossed as an essential condition of the ratifications of the Treaty of Union, passed in the Parliaments of both kingdoms, the said act abolishing patronages must be understood to be a part of our Presbyterian constitution, secured to us by the Treaty of Union for ever.

Yet the same Parliament, 1690, was so tender of the civil rights of patrons, and so sincerely desirous only to restore the Church to its just and primitive liberty in calling ministers, in a way agreeable to the word of God, that they only discharged the patron's power of presenting ministers to churches vacant; but, as to any thing of their civil rights, did better the condition of patrons, not only by reserving to them the right of disposal of vacant stipends for pious uses within the parish, but also giving

to them the heritable right of the tithes restricting the ministers who formerly had the said right to stipends much below the value of the said tithes.

This being, then, the true account of our legal settlement as to this matter, we presume also, in all humble duty, to represent to your Majesty, that the restitution of patronages as to the point of presentation, can only gratify a few, while, on the other hand, it must necessarily disoblige a far greater part of your Majesty's good subjects, that are now freed of that imposition.

Neither can we forbear to suggest to your Majesty, that from what is said, it may easily be gathered what difficulties and hardships presbyteries may be laid under, as to their compliance with this innovation; and what differences, contests, and disorders, may probably ensue betwixt patrons, presbyteries, heritors, and people, besides the known abuses wherewith patronages have been attended, even in their most settled condition; whereof many instances might be given, especially that thereby a foundation was laid for simoniacal pactions betwixt patrons and those presented by them; and likewise ministers were imposed upon parishes by patrons who were utterly strangers to their circumstances, having neither property nor residence therein.

And, therefore, we cannot but most humbly and earnestly obtest your Majesty to consider this affair of restoring patronages in this Church, with all its circumstances and consequences; and since, through the blessing of God, and your Majesty's gracious protection, we have hitherto been at quiet and ease in this matter, that your Majesty would be graciously pleased, in your great wisdom, to use proper means for preventing this encroachment, so evidently prejudicial to the work of the Gospel and the peace of this Church.

That your Majesty may be guided and directed of God, in the great and weighty affairs of your government, and that, after the fulness of earthly blessings here, you may for ever wear a crown of glory that fadeth not away, are the earnest and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders, Commissioners of the late General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM MITCHELL, *Moderator.*

And the General Assembly doth not only approve of the foresaid two Addresses and representations above inserted; but also hereby do further empower the Commission appointed by them to advert carefully to the concerns of this Church, in the matters above mentioned; and ordains them to use all dutiful and proper means for obtaining redress of what is or may be found therein grievous; and to advert to, and lay hold, with all duty and deference, on every fit occasion for that effect.

XI.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1712.—Act appointing the more frequent Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly, considering that the Assemblies of this National Church have, by several acts, appointed the frequent celebration of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in all the congregations of this Church; and judging that the due observation of these acts will greatly tend to the glory of God, and edification of souls; therefore, they do hereby enjoin all Presbyteries to inquire if the said acts be duly observed by all the brethren; and in case any minister shall neglect to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in his parish for a whole year, the Assembly appoints the Presbytery in which the said parish lies to call for an account of the reasons of his omission of that great and solemn duty and ordinance, and to approve or disapprove the same as they shall see cause, and to record their diligence in this matter. And for making this and other acts and recommendations of Assemblies effectual, the

General Assembly enjoins the Synods, at their several meetings, to inquire at the Presbyteries within their bounds, what care they have taken to execute the said act, and other recommendations foresaid; and ordains that their books shall bear an account of their diligence therein: And in order thereto, the Assembly appoints the several Synods to make up a roll of all matters that have been, or shall be recommended by the Assemblies of this Church, to be inquired at Presbyteries; and ordains the said roll to be inserted in their register, and given to the visitors of the Presbytery books, that they may take notice of, and report the diligence of Presbyteries in executing the said acts and recommendations. And in like manner it is agreed, that the Assembly shall make up a roll of all matters appointed to be inquired at Synods; and ordains every new act and recommendation, so soon as they are made, to be added to the said rolls, that thereby the General Assemblies may know how their acts and recommendations are observed by the several Synods and Presbyteries of this Church.

XII.

Sess. 12, May 13, 1712, post meridiem.—Act for the further Encouragement of Students having Irish.

The General Assembly recommends to Synods to admit no more bursars having the Irish language, but so many, to each of whom they are in a condition to pay ten pounds sterling at least; and for that end, appoints the bursaries of more Presbyteries than two or three, if they be small, to be joined together to make up the said sum; and for making this recommendation the more effectual, the Assembly appoints the several Presbyteries to send in to the meeting of the commission of this Assembly, in July next, a particular and distinct account of the quotas of their bursaries, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, and appoints the commission to proportion the said bursaries in the several districts, so as to make ten pounds sterling, at least, to each bursar, out of the half of the bursaries, appropriated by the acts of Assembly for that use. And, considering that there are several hopeful young men unprovided, the Assembly requires the several Synods timeously to fill up their vacant bursaries, in manner above mentioned, and ordains them to examine bursars, at least once every year, at their meetings, in harvest or winter. And the Assembly, understanding that there are many of the students who rely upon these bursaries for their maintenance and encouragement, that are reduced to great straits through not-payment thereof, they do enjoin Presbyteries to pay in punctually their several proportions of the said bursaries; and appoints the names of deficient to be given in to the meetings of the commission that immediately precede each Assembly. And the Assembly instructs their commission to look out for hopeful young men, having the Irish language, in order to be put on trials; and renews the powers given to the last commission to this effect.

XIII.

Sess. 12, May 13, 1712, post meridiem.—Advice concerning Soldiers under Scandals.

The General Assembly, considering that it may prove inconvenient to bring soldiers under scandals back to the parishes where they were delated as guilty, to satisfy church discipline there, after they are removed to places very remote; therefore, in case of scandals among soldiers, the Assembly does advise kirk-sessions to proceed without delay against the delinquents, so soon as the scandal breaks out; and in case the soldiers guilty be removed from their bounds before any scandal breaks out, or during the dependence of the process against them, the Assembly allows that the said scandalous soldiers satisfy church discipline in the parish where they are quartered for the time; and appoints the kirk-session of that parish to report what is done to the kirk-session of the parish in which the scandal broke out, or where the process was commenced, that they may cause intimate the same in their congregation. And

the Assembly advises Church judicatories to proceed with all tenderness and prudence in dealing with strangers, so that the ends of Church discipline may be reached.

XIV.

Sess. 12, May 13, 1712, post meridiem.—Act concerning the Preservation of the Registers of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, judging it sufficient for the preservation of the Records of this Church, that copies thereof be lodged in the Library of each University, according to the Act passed in the Assembly, 1692, and this in place of sending them to each Synod, as was ordered by the General Assembly, 1703: Therefore, they do hereby appoint, that a copy of the proceedings of every Assembly be sent to the Library of each of the Universities in Scotland, to be lodged there, and kept for the use of the Church and Judicatories thereof; and that the Faculties of the several Universities do, upon receipt of the said copies, send in to the Commissions of each General Assembly an extract of an act of their Faculty, under their Clerk's hand, acknowledging the receipt of the said copies; and that they are lodged in their Library only in trust, for the use and behoof of the Church; and obliging them to make them forthcoming to any of the Judicatories of this Church that calls for them, upon their receipt and obligation to return the same: And the Assembly repeals the said Act, 1703, which appoints copies to be sent to each Synod upon the public charges of the Church, but allows the Clerk of Assembly to give copies to such of the Judicatories of this Church as shall call for them, upon their own expenses.

XV.

Sess. 13, May 14, 1712, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers to join with the Presbytery of Lorn for visiting Lochaber, and other Parishes in the Bounds of that Presbytery.

The General Assembly having had under consideration the state of Lochaber, and other parishes within the bounds of the Presbytery of Lorn, the length and breadth thereof, the abounding of Popery therein, and want of schools in those parts, judged it necessary that three ministers from the Lowlands, and as many from the Synod of Argyle, should be sent to join with the said Presbytery of Lorn, to perambulate the said bounds, discourse with the heritors and inhabitants concerning new erections of churches in that country, and settlement of schools therein, and to endeavour to get places condescended on for that effect; and to obtain in writing the consent of the heritors. And the General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr Neill Campbell, minister at Roseneath, Mr Daniel M'Gilchrist at Luss, Mr Alexander Fraser at Croy, Mr Dugald Steuart at Rothesay, Mr Daniel M'Lean at Kilbride, and Mr Duncan Campbell at Kilchrennan, ministers, to join with the said Presbytery of Lorn, for the ends above mentioned; and also for preaching the gospel, visiting of families, and doing other ministerial duties in the said country. And the General Assembly appoints the persons above named, and the foresaid Presbytery of Lorn, to meet for the ends foresaid at Fort-William, the first Wednesday of July next to come, at ten o'clock forenoon; and to continue in that country, in prosecution of the ends of this their commission, such part of this summer as they shall find necessary for the effect foresaid; and report to the next General Assembly.

XVI.

Sess. 13, May 14, 1712, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Oath of Abjuration.

The General Assembly, in pursuance of the reserve made by them in their appro-

bation of the proceedings of the Commission of the last General Assembly of this Church, taking into their more particular consideration the proceedings of the said Commission about the Oath of Abjuration; and, more especially, the humble address and representation of the said Commission, made to the Queen's most excellent Majesty in that matter; they do approve and ratify the foresaid proceedings, and, more especially, the foresaid humble address and representation, judging the same to have been true, dutiful, faithful, and most seasonable; and, in token of their said approbation, have ordained, and hereby ordain, the said humble address and representation to be here inserted *verbatim*, as follows:—

UNTO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address and Representation of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, met by appointment of the said Assembly at Edinburgh, the 5th of March 1712 years.

May it please your Majesty,

Upon notice we had of a bill depending in Parliament, entitled, "A Bill to prevent the Disturbing of those of the Episcopal Communion in Scotland in the Exercise of their religious Worship, and in the Use of the Liturgy of the Church of England;" we, in all humility, presumed to address your Majesty for the preservation of our present establishment as secured to us by law, and for preventing the inconveniences that might ensue on the foresaid toleration, at the passing whereof thereafter in both Houses of Parliament we cannot but be deeply affected.

But now, that by the foresaid bill, the Oath of Abjuration, enacted for the better security of your Majesty's person and government, and establishment of the succession to the crown in the Protestant line, is appointed to be taken by all ministers; we do, in most humble duty, truly and sincerely own and acknowledge that your Majesty is lawful and rightful Queen of this realm, and of all your other dominions and countries thereunto belonging: And do solemnly and sincerely declare, that we do believe the person pretended to be the Prince of Wales, during the life of the late King James, and since his decease pretending to be, and taking upon himself the style and title of King of England, by the name of James the Third, or of Scotland, by the name of James the Eighth, or the style and title of King of Great Britain, hath not any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm, or any other of the dominions thereunto belonging; and we do most heartily renounce and refuse any allegiance or obedience to him; and we, withal, solemnly and sincerely profess that we will bear faith and true allegiance to your Majesty in all duties and occasions whatsoever that can be incumbent on us: And, further, we do faithfully promise, to the utmost of our power, to support, maintain, and defend the succession of the crown in the Protestant line against the said Pretender, and all other persons whatsoever, understanding the foresaid Oath of Abjuration in the fullest sense, wherein it can be understood to renounce and disclaim any right that the said Pretender can claim to your foresaid dominions; and, in the plain sense of the words, in so far as the said oath, and the acts to which it refers, settles and entails the succession of the crown of these dominions, for default of issue of your Majesty, on the Princess Sophia, Electoress Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants.

But seeing we cannot dissemble with your Majesty, that there remains a scruple with many, as if the conditions mentioned in the acts of Parliament establishing the succession, referred to by the said oath, were to be understood as a part thereof, and that to swear to something in these conditions seems not consistent with our known principles: And that it is expressly declared and statuted by the Treaty and Articles of Union, and the acts of Parliament of both kingdoms ratifying the same, that none of the subjects of Scotland shall be liable to, but all and every one of them for ever free of any oath, test, or subscription within Scotland, contrary to or inconsistent with our present Presbyterian Church Establishment; we, in the most humble and dutiful manner, most earnestly beseech and obtest, that this our address and representation, and most sincere declarations therein contained, may be graciously accepted by your Majesty, without respect to the foresaid conditions scrupled at, as the just

and true signification of our allegiance and duty, and our sense of the foresaid oath and engagement, to prevent all mistakes and misrepresentations that possibly we may be liable to in this matter.

That the Lord may eminently bless your Majesty, and, after a long and happy reign upon earth, receive you into everlasting glory, is, and shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders, Commissioners of the late General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILLIAM MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

And the Assembly farther considering, that it hath pleased her Majesty, in her gracious letter to this Assembly, to declare that the said address of the commission presented to her by those therewith entrusted, did so much manifest their loyalty and good affection to her royal person and government, and their true concern for the succession in the Protestant line by law established, that it could not but be acceptable, as giving her Majesty good ground to expect that there will be nothing in the procedure of this Assembly but what shall be dutiful; and, withal, considering that such of this Church as have taken, or may be clear to take, the foresaid Oath of Abjuration, and such as are not clear, do all equally profess that they heartily agree to all the points of loyalty and duty above asserted, the security whereof appears to be intended by the said oath, as fully witnessed by her Majesty's foresaid gracious acceptance; and that such as are not clear to take the said oath as it is proposed, do differ, as being apprehensive that the oath, as it stands, *in terminis*, doth contain, or may be interpreted to imply, some further engagement not agreeable to our principles, and such as can be only cleared by the legislature, which such as are clear (if they did not judge groundless) would be as careful to avoid; therefore the Assembly, for a full and unanimous manifestation of their loyalty and duty in the premises to all concerned, and, withal, to establish a right and good understanding among themselves, and all the members of this Church, in the matters wherein they are agreed, and to prevent, as much as possible, all mistakes upon the foresaid difficulties, and different practices that may thereon ensue, to the prejudice of true Christian and mutual charity, have thought fit to declare, and do hereby solemnly declare and ascertain their allegiance to her Majesty, Queen Anne, as only lawful and rightful Queen of this realm, and all other her Majesty's dominions and countries thereunto belonging; and their disowning and disclaiming of the foresaid Pretender, his having any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm, or any other of the dominions thereunto belonging; and, therefore, renouncing and refusing all allegiance and obedience to him; and that they will bear faith and true allegiance to her Majesty, in all duties and occasions whatsoever that can be incumbent on them; and, further, that they do promise faithfully, to the utmost of their power, to support, maintain, and defend the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, settled and entailed, for default of issue of her Majesty's body, on the Princess Sophia, Electoress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants, against the said Pretender, and all other persons whatsoever. Which being the obligations and duties contained in the said oath, wherein we are all agreed, the General Assembly doth most seriously obtest all the ministers and members of this Church, whatever may happen to be their different practice, to entertain a good understanding herein, in all mutual forbearance; firmly hoping, through the grace of God, that if they continue in the same good mind, seeking and serving the Lord in sincerity, and bearing with one another in mutual love and charity, our gracious God will extricate us out of all these difficulties.

XVII.

May 14, 1712.—An Address to the Queen concerning the Oath of Abjuration.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

The Commission of the last General Assembly of this Church, being informed that the Oath of Abjuration was to be enjoined to all the ministers thereof, did enter into an humble address and representation to your Majesty, for declaring and ascertaining their loyalty to your Majesty, their disowning and disclaiming of the Pretender, and their faithful promising, to the utmost of their power, to support, maintain, and defend the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, settled and entailed on the Princess Sophia, Electoress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants, against the said pretender, and all other persons whatsoever; but withal, did humbly suggest to your Majesty, that a scruple remained with many, as if the conditions mentioned in the Acts of Parliament, establishing the succession, referred to by the said oath, were to be understood as a part thereof, which is judged not to be consistent with our known principles; and, therefore, did plead to be relieved in the terms of the Treaty and Articles of the Union. And your Majesty has been pleased, in your gracious letter to this Assembly, to declare, that the said address did so much manifest their loyalty and good affection to your royal person and government, and their true concern for the succession in the Protestant line, that it could not but be acceptable. We, at present met in this Assembly, finding that the foresaid scruples do still remain with many of us, thought fit, in pursuance of our most humble duty, and for further manifestation of our loyalty in the premises, and for establishing a right and good understanding among the ministers and members of this Church, to renew the foresaid declaration and assertion of our loyalty to your Majesty, as our only lawful and rightful sovereign; and of our true and zealous concern for the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, against the said Pretender, and all other persons whatsoever. But seeing that the aforesaid scruples, as to the said oath, do still remain with many of us, and that your Majesty may plainly perceive how that all the ministers of this Church do, notwithstanding of the foresaid scruples, fully agree in their asserting their loyalty to your Majesty, and disowning any right or title in the Pretender, or any other, and their dutiful and zealous concern for the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, all which points we are willing to affirm by our great oath, if thereto required. We cannot but, in all humble duty to your Majesty, and Christian charity to one another, and for preserving the unity, peace, and quiet of this Church, most humbly and earnestly address your Majesty, that such of us as may remain unclear as to the taking of the said oath, may yet be favourably regarded by your Majesty as your most loyal and dutiful subjects; and that your Majesty would be graciously pleased to interpose for their relief, in such manner as in your royal wisdom you shall judge expedient. And this most humble address we, with all submission, are moved to make with the greater earnestness, that we are all of us most seriously desirous to keep the ministers of this Church, and all under their charge, in the greatest unanimity as to the points of loyalty and duty to your Majesty, and in peace and concord among themselves, for the advancing of your Majesty's service, and the honour and interest of your government.

That your Majesty's reign may be long and prosperous, and that you may be guided and directed of God in the great and weighty affairs of your government, and that your councils and undertakings may be still successful for preserving and de-

fending the reformed Protestant interest at home and abroad, are the earnest and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

XVIII.

Sess. 15, May 15, 1712, ante meridiem.—An Address to the Queen concerning the Representations made to Her Majesty by the late Commission.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

Having taken liberty in another address, humbly to represent to your Majesty what may tend to the full declaration of our duty and loyalty to your Majesty, and our sincere concern for the succession in the Protestant line, and for procuring relief and ease to such of us as may find ourselves straitened as to the taking of the Oath of Abjuration, in the manner appointed: We being met in the General Assembly of this Church, do, in all humble duty, beg leave to put your Majesty further in mind of the things which were laid before your Majesty by the Commission of the last General Assembly, as grievous and prejudicial to this Church; and, indeed, the late occurrences that have happened do so nearly affect our well settled and secured Church establishment, that we cannot possibly be silent. That the inconveniences and troubles that we thence apprehend may never be found amongst us, is our most serious wish. But since your Majesty, in your gracious letter to this Assembly, hath been pleased not only to assure us of your firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland as established by law, but also that you will employ your utmost care to protect us, and redress our just complaints, we most humbly beg leave to acquaint your Majesty, that we have instructed and empowered the Commission appointed by this Assembly, to advert carefully to all good opportunities, and to use all proper and dutiful means and methods whereby these our grievances may be happily redressed.

And, therefore, we do, in all humble duty, address your Majesty, that according to your wonted goodness and the gracious condescendence wherewith you have favoured us on the like occasions, your Majesty would be pleased to give such countenance to the addresses that may happen to be made to your Majesty by our said Commission, for relief in the premises, and to interpose your royal authority in such sort for a just redress, that this Church may still have the comfort of your Majesty's protection, with the benefit of the royal assurances that have been so often confirmed to us.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the good of all your people, and the protection and comfort of all the churches of Christ, and that, after a prosperous reign upon earth, you may enjoy an eternal crown in heaven, is, and shall be, the sincere prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

XIX.

Sess. 13 et ult., May 15, 1712.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the last Thursday of April next, 1713.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, APRIL 30, 1713.

I.

Sess. 1, April 30, 1713.—Act appointing the Queen's Commission to his Grace John Duke of Atholl to be Recorded.

The General Assembly being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by his Grace John Duke of Atholl, her Majesty's commission, sealed at Edinburgh the 29th day of April current, with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union of the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, and of the same tenor with former commissions, constituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is, by order of this Assembly, recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

The Queen's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them the last day of April 1713.

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. We have had so many proofs of your good and prudent management in former Assemblies, and particularly the last, that we have cheerfully countenanced, by our authority, this your meeting; and we doubt not but you will take it as a particular mark of our regard to you, that we have appointed our right trusty, and right entirely beloved cousin and counsellor, John Duke of Atholl, to be our Commissioner, who, we persuade ourselves, will be acceptable to you. Our concern for promoting true piety and godliness, the great ends of the Gospel, is such, that you may be fully satisfied it shall be our care to employ such as shall be faithful in executing the laws, in punishing all such practices as are a scandal to the Christian profession, and against which we have signified our displeasure in our proclamations. We are sensible, that a pious and learned ministry is, under God, the great support and ornament of Christianity; and, therefore, we are resolved to countenance you in your endeavours to promote it, and to employ our power and authority for the advancing of it to your just satisfaction. We take this solemn occasion to renew the assurances we have formerly given you, of our firm

purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland as established by law. The address of the late General Assembly did so much manifest their loyalty and good affection to our royal person and government, and their true concern for the succession in the Protestant line of the House of Hanover, as established by law, that it could not but be very acceptable to us: And your moderation and unanimity amongst yourselves is not more for your own good, than it will be for our satisfaction. And we assure ourselves, that there will be nothing in your procedure but what shall be dutiful to us, and shall manifest the wisdom of your conduct; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 15th day of April 1713, in the twelfth year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

DARTMOUTH.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of that part of our Kingdom of Great Britain called Scotland.

III.

May 2, 1713.—The General Assembly's Answer to her Majesty's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty hath been pleased to honour us doth manifest so great goodness, and so much concern for our happiness under your auspicious government, that we bless God for his having given us such a sovereign to reign over us: And we judge it our duty to offer to your Majesty our humble and hearty thanks, for all the favour you have been pleased to show to this Church; and more particularly, for the expressions of your Majesty's satisfaction with the proceedings of the last, as well as of former General Assemblies, which cannot but be a strong tie upon us, to be careful that there be nothing in our management that may be unanswerable to what your Majesty hath just reason to expect from us.

That your Majesty hath been pleased to make choice again of so noble a person as the Duke of Atholl to represent your Majesty in our Assembly, after the evidence of his fidelity to your Majesty, and the experience we have had of his good affection towards this Church, is not only most acceptable to us, but is such a very particular and obliging proof of your Majesty's regard to all our concerns, as cannot but engage us to pay him all that respect and duty that we owe to the high character he bears.

It gives this Church real comfort, and will be the perpetual glory of your reign and memory, that your Majesty is so zealously concerned for the promoting of piety, and that you are graciously pleased to give us your royal promise, that you will take care that none shall be employed but such as shall be faithful in executing the laws, in punishing all such practices as are a scandal to the Christian profession, and against which your Majesty hath testified your displeasure in your proclamations.

We do, with the greatest thankfulness, acknowledge that your Majesty hath been pleased to signify to us your gracious purpose to countenance us in our endeavours to promote a pious and learned ministry, (being, under God, the great support and ornament of Christianity,) by employing your royal power and authority for the advancement of it to our just satisfaction. This great favour, together with the renewed assurances your Majesty is pleased to give us of your firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland, as established by law, do oblige us to give all suitable returns of duty and gratitude, and encourage us to hope that your Majesty, in your great wisdom and goodness, will find a fit opportunity to remedy what we have formerly humbly laid before your Majesty, for the ease and quiet of this Church.

It gives us no small satisfaction, that the address of the late General Assembly,

manifesting their loyalty and good affection to your royal person and government, and their true concern for the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, upon which it is established by law, was so acceptable to your Majesty; and we crave leave to assure your Majesty, that there are none in your dominions more firm in their resolutions steadily to continue in both these, against all Pretenders whatsoever, and their adherents, than the ministers and members of the Church of Scotland, as established by law.

We also beg leave to testify to your Majesty, how much it did rejoice us to be acquainted by your Commissioner from the throne, with the great care that your Majesty has been pleased so conspicuously to show for the Protestant religion, and the continuation of it to succeeding generations in your own dominions; and that your Majesty has further extended the same pious care to the Protestant Churches abroad, and that God has blessed your endeavours for obtaining the release of those who are in the French galleys for their religion; and also the consent of France to redress the hardships to which the Protestant Churches in Germany were liable.

It is a very convincing proof of your Majesty's concern for us, that you are graciously pleased to recommend to us moderation and unanimity. We should be wanting to the duty we owe to God, and to so excellent a Queen, if we did not proceed with all calmness, temper, and concord, amongst ourselves, and all dutiful respect to your Majesty.

That the God of heaven may present your Majesty with the best blessings of His goodness, and ever guide your Majesty by His counsel, till after a long and happy reign upon earth, He crown you with glory in heaven, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. WISHART, *Moderator.*

IV.

May 2, 1713.—Act containing Directions to the Visitors of Synod Books.

The General Assembly, considering that, by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1712, entitled, "Act appointing the more frequent Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," it is ordained, that the Assembly shall make up a roll of all matters appointed to be inquired at Synods, and that every new recommendation, so soon as it is made, be added to the said rolls, that thereby the Assemblies may know how their acts and recommendations are observed by the several Synods and Presbyteries of this Church; and finding, that the matters following have been by former Assemblies recommended, and the observation thereof enjoined to Synods and Presbyteries; therefore, it is appointed that the following roll or list of the said matters be put in the hands of the revisers of Synod books at each Assembly, for their direction and assistance in visiting the said books; and the Assembly do appoint the said visitors, in their going through the said Synod books, carefully to advert,

1. If the advices marked in the former attestations of Synod books be observed.
2. If the Synod books be completely filled up, and signed by the moderator and clerk, as is enjoined by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1693, and be produced yearly, according to the 3d Act of the General Assembly, 1702.
3. If the Synod's proceedings be agreeable to the constitutions of this Church, and acts of the General Assembly; and if the register be correctly written, and spelled without contractions; and when there is any thing written on the margin which should have been in the body, if it be signed by the clerk; and where words are blotted out as superfluous, if it be marked on the margin how many words or lines are blotted out, and that it was done by authority, and if the said marginal writing be signed by the moderator and clerk; and also observe if there be any blottings or interlinings in the register. See 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1706.

4. If Synods do call their Presbyteries to an account, as to their care about ministers reading and expounding a large portion of Scripture in their congregations every Lord's Day, according to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1694, 5th Act of Assembly, 1704, and 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1706; and as to their preaching catechetical doctrine, according to the 18th Act of the General Assembly, 1695.

5. If care be taken that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be administered in each parish at least once every year, and where any ministers neglect the same, if they be called to an account, and if their excuses be either approved or disapproved, as is enjoined by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1712.

6. If Synods inquire concerning Presbyteries holding parochial visitations, and ministers' visiting of families, according to the 16th Act of the General Assembly, 1706; the buying and reading of the acts and overtures of the General Assembly, according to the 16th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, and 18th Act of the General Assembly, 1705; and concerning their diligence in observing the Acts against profanity, particularly the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1699, and inquire after mortifications for pious uses, as enjoined by the 22d Act of the General Assembly, 1700.

7. If Synods call their Presbyteries to an account as to the pains they take to get a school settled in every parish, and provided with a sufficient master and maintenance according to law, and take care that the school be visited conform to the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1705, and 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1707; and if Presbyteries contribute for bursars having Irish, according to the 13th Act of the General Assembly, 1706; and if the Synod's advice be taken anent licensing probationers, according to the 10th Act of the Assembly, 1711.

8. If Synods inquire at Presbyteries concerning the increase and decrease of Popery, and other errors, and the pains taken to reclaim erroneous persons. See 8th Act of the General Assembly, 1707, &c.

9. If Synods take care to have the Acts of the General Assembly, particularly the 5th Act of the late Assembly, "Concerning a Contribution for promoting Christian Knowledge," observed; and if the account of their diligence in these matters be recorded, conform to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1710, &c.

10. If Presbytery books be punctually produced, revised, and attested, and if Presbyteries undergo their privy censures every Synod, and if there be a roll made up of matters recommended by the General Assembly to Synods, and if the said roll be recorded, and a copy thereof given to the visitors, according to the 18th Act of the General Assembly, 1712.

11. That the visitors of Synod books communicate all their remarks on these books to some of the Synod, and hear them thereupon, before they bring in the same to the General Assembly, as has been frequently enjoined by former Assemblies.

V.

May 5, 1713.—Act and Recommendation for furthering Contributions and Subscriptions towards promoting of Christian Knowledge.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered a representation and petition given in to them by the committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with the opinion of the committee for bills thereupon, and heard several members of the said society, who are also members of this Assembly, give an account of the state of their matters, and success of their work; they found that the care and diligence of the society and their committee is very commendable, and they earnestly recommend to all ministers and elders, and charitably inclined persons, in their several stations, cheerfully to concur in this so good a work; and they did, and hereby do, again renew the recommendations of the last and preceding General Assemblies to the several Synods and Presbyteries of this Church, and particular ministers, entreating them carefully to observe the methods prescribed by these acts, for furthering subscriptions and contributions in the several parishes, and to transmit

them to the society : And also, the Assembly do require and appoint the several Presbyteries to call for an account of the diligence of the ministers and sessions within their bounds in the said matter, at their privy censures and parochial visitations, and record their reports in their Presbytery books ; and ordains Synods, at their privy censures, to take a particular account of the diligence of their Presbyteries, and record the reports of Presbyteries in their books ; and Synods and Presbyteries to send a full and distinct report of their diligence in this matter, subscribed by the moderator and clerk, in manner prescribed by former acts, to the Commission of this Assembly, at their meeting in November next. And the Assembly appoints and instructs their Commission to call for the foresaid accounts, and see to the due observation of this and former recommendations made for the furthering of this pious and charitable work ; and that they lay before the next General Assembly an account of such Synods and Presbyteries as shall neglect to send in to them the reports of their diligence in this matter.

VI.

May 8, 1713.—Act for Maintaining the Unity and Peace of this Church.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that, by the 16th Act of the late Assembly, entitled, “ Act concerning the Oath of Abjuration,” mutual forbearance, love, and charity, notwithstanding of different sentiments and practices with respect to the said oath, was seriously recommended to all ministers and members of this Church ; and being informed that the said recommendation hath not been duly observed by some ministers and people, and that there are appearances of division in divers parts, upon occasion of the said different sentiments and practices ; and the Assembly being unanimously agreed, that these differences are no ground of separation from the judicatories presently established, and ordinances of Christ as they are now dispensed in this Church, seeing the ministers on both hands do own their firm adherence (notwithstanding the said differences) to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, and to their duty and loyalty to the Queen, and good affection to the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover : And further, the General Assembly, being deeply touched with the sense of danger there is to this Church under her present circumstances, by divisions, which tend to weaken our interest, and to expose us to our enemies ; and it being incumbent to the supreme judicatory of this Church to take care of her safety, and apply proper remedies to the disorders that happen, and not knowing to what height these evils may grow, unless withstood in the beginning, do therefore not only renew the foresaid recommendation, but most seriously obtest all ministers and people, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, charging them, as they regard his honour, and the peace and quiet of this Church, that they abstain from all divisive courses upon occasion of different sentiments and practices about the said oath ; and that they would, notwithstanding thereof, live in love and Christian communion together ; that ministers study to strengthen one another’s hands by a conscientious and close attendance upon the several judicatories of this Church ; that they use all prudent and gaining methods, as they have access, to keep the people in due subjection and love to their own pastors : That they do not encourage their withdrawing from them ; and that all judge charitably one of another, as having acted according to the light of their conscience in this matter ; and, therefore, that they carefully abstain from reproaching one another on account of the said different sentiments and practices. And the General Assembly doth seriously exhort all the ministers and members of this Church, as they would not mar and obstruct the success of the Gospel, the serious exercise of practical godliness, and the comely order of the house of God, that they endeavour, by the observation of the foresaid injunctions, to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 8, 1713.—Act and Recommendation for Teaching the Common Tunes.

The General Assembly, for the more decent performance of the public praises of God, do recommend to Presbyteries to use endeavours to have such schoolmasters chosen as are capable to teach the common tunes; and that Presbyteries take care that children be taught to sing the said common tunes; and that the said schoolmasters not only pray with their scholars, but also sing a part of a psalm with them, at least once every day.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 9, 1713.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake; do therefore nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Wishart, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of the General Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, or their quorum, (powers the same as in 1709, &c.)

IX.

Sess. 8, May 9, 1713.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

1. [Same as in the two preceding years.]
2. [Same as in the two preceding years.]
3. The Commission are appointed to use all proper means to preserve and maintain all the rights and privileges of this Church, and to obtain a redress of what is grievous with respect to the same, and to send commissioners to London for that effect, if they see cause; and to lose no opportunity of applying for redress of the Church's grievances.
4. [Same as in the two preceding years.]
5. [Same as in 1712.]
6. The Commission are empowered to cognosce and finally determine in all references already made, or to be made, by this Assembly; and in all references and appeals for transporting ministers to the North, the Highlands and Islands, which shall be brought before them, according to the overtures made thereanent, *anno* 1699; and transportations to any parish in these places, whether privileged by former acts of Assembly or not, are to be carried on in the most expeditious way, providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods, excepting causes particularly referred to them; but this restriction is not to be extended to ministers having the Irish language.
7. [Same as in 1711 and 1712.]
8. [Same as in 1712.]
9. [Same as in 1712.]
10. The Commission are appointed to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially among the ministers thereof, and to gain such as do separate therefrom; and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto, as is by a former act recommended to Presbyteries; and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies, or Commissions of the same, have carried, and to proceed to further censure as the Commission shall see cause: And further, this General Assembly does hereby renew the first paragraph of the 18th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1706, concerning schism and disorders, and appoints the same to stand as an instruction to this Commission, and empowers them

to send Committees to any part of this Church for that effect, as they shall find cause.

11. [Same as in 1712.]

12. The said Commission are to endeavour to make effectual whatever hath been by this, or preceding Assemblies, agreed upon, concerning the erecting of schools in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places; and to keep a correspondence with the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge and their committee, and to give them all suitable assistance and encouragement, according to the Acts of the General Assembly, in the years 1710, 1711, and 1712, thereanent, which are hereby renewed, and Acts of this Assembly.

13. [Same as in 1712.]

14. The Commission are appointed to have a special respect, so far as the present circumstances do require, to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1703, "Concerning the Planting Vacant Churches in the North, the Highlands and Islands, and Supplying thereof with Ministers and Probationers:" And the Commission are hereby empowered to proceed according to the said act, in so far as they shall find it needful, particularly as to the bounds of Ross and Sutherland; and to consider if any method can be fallen upon to support probationers having the Irish language, now when the twenty merks formerly allowed them by law is taken away.

15. [Same as in 1712.]

16. [Same as in 1712.]

17. [Same as in 1712.]

X.

Sess. 10, May 11, 1713.—Advice concerning Recommendations in favour of Students to be entered on Trials.

The General Assembly having heard and considered a reference from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, for explication of the tenth Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1711, entitled, "Act concerning Probationers, and settling Ministers, with Questions to be proposed to, and Engagements to be taken of them," did, and hereby do, declare, that they judge it fit, that before the said Presbytery grant a recommendation, or desire to another Presbytery for entering any student of divinity on trials, they take the usual private trial appointed by the said act to be taken of such students, as if they were to pass before themselves, and that all other Presbyteries take the same course in the like cases.

XL

Sess. ult., May 11, 1713.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the first Thursday of May next, 1714 years, being the 6th day of that month.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 6, 1714.

I.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1714.—Act appointing the Queen's Commission to his Grace John Duke of Atholl to be Recorded.

The General Assembly being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by his Grace John Duke of Atholl, her Majesty's Commission, sealed with the seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the great seal of Scotland, of the same tenor with former Commissions, constituting him her Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly; which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, it is, by order of this Assembly, recorded in their books, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

The Queen's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them the 6th day of May 1714.

ANNE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. We are so well satisfied with the accounts we have had of your prudent conduct in the last Assembly, we very willingly countenance, by our authority, your meeting at this time.

We have again made choice of our right trusty, and right entirely-beloved cousin and counsellor, John Duke of Atholl, keeper of our privy seal for Scotland, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly; believing that none could be more acceptable to you than he, who has already more than once so well discharged that trust to our satisfaction.

We are very sensible how much the promoting of true piety and godliness, the great ends of the Gospel, depends upon the due execution of the laws against profaneness and immorality; and, therefore, it will be always our chief care to employ such persons as shall be faithful in executing the laws, and in punishing all such practices as are a scandal to our holy religion, and against which we have so often signified our just displeasure in our proclamations.

And as nothing can more effectually contribute to the propagating of the Gospel than the example of a pious and learned clergy, so we are resolved to use our endeavours, as we doubt not you will do yours, that vacant churches be supplied with pastors of an exemplary life and conversation.

We readily embrace this opportunity to renew the assurances we have formerly given you of our firm purpose to maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established. The frequent proofs you have given us of your loyalty and good affection to our royal person and government, and of your concern for the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, as by law established, as they could not but be very acceptable to us, so we doubt not of your continuing in the same dutiful dispositions.

Our concern for the good and peace of our subjects makes us take this opportunity earnestly to recommend to you moderation and unanimity in your present meeting, and that, at your return to your respective congregations, you would use your utmost endeavours for quieting the minds of the people, and to remove any jealousies and fears which have, without any just grounds, been suggested to them by persons of factious and turbulent spirits, and to make them sensible of the present blessings they

enjoy, and of the bad consequences any kind of disturbance would have to the present tranquillity, as well as to their future happiness; all which we expect from you as faithful ministers of the Gospel of peace, which you profess, and who wish well to the present establishment in Church and State. So we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James', the 14th day of April 1714, in the thirteenth year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's Command,

MAR.

Directed thus,—To our Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

May 8, 1714.—The General Assembly's Answer to her Majesty's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's continuing to give your protection and countenance to our annual Assemblies is a favour which we do with all thankfulness acknowledge; and that our conduct in the last Assembly hath been acceptable to your Majesty, is what but cannot give us great satisfaction, and oblige us to manage ourselves so as we may not lose the honour and comfort of the good opinion your Majesty is pleased to have of us.

The choice that your Majesty hath again made of his Grace the Duke of Atholl, keeper of your privy seal for Scotland, to represent your royal person in this Assembly, is such a signal mark of your Majesty's goodness to us, as we cannot but be very thankful for. His fidelity to your Majesty, the prudence of his conduct when formerly clothed with the high character that he now again bears, the experience we have had of his favour to this Church, and his zeal for suppressing all profaneness and immorality where he hath authority or influence, cannot but make us have a high value for him, and engage us to contribute what is in our power to his being easy in the discharge of that high trust which your Majesty hath honoured him with.

It is a great comfort to us that your Majesty is pleased to give us renewed assurances, that it will be your royal care to promote true piety and godliness, by employing such persons as shall be faithful in duly executing the laws against profaneness and immorality, without which true religion must greatly decay; and we humbly presume to persuade ourselves that your Majesty will, in your royal wisdom, find out such means as shall be most proper for making your religious purposes more effectual than to our deep regret they have hitherto been.

We should be very unworthy of the character we bear of ministers of Christ, if we should not, to the utmost of our power, contribute to the supplying vacant churches with pious and learned men, especially while your Majesty hath the goodness to encourage us, by declaring your purpose to use your royal endeavours for that end.

We cheerfully embrace and lay hold upon the assurance your Majesty gives us, of your firm purpose to maintain Presbyterian Government in the Church of Scotland, as established by law, and do presume to hope that these things which are grievous to us may come in due time and manner to be redressed, and that all the vain confidences of enemies to our constitution shall at last be brought to nought.

It shall, Madam, be our constant care not only to be steadily loyal ourselves to your Majesty, and fixed in our concern for the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, but it shall also be our endeavour, that all who join in communion with us be duly possessed with principles of true loyalty and affection to your Majesty as our only rightful sovereign, and firmness to the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover, upon both which, under God, the security of our religion and liberties does entirely depend.

Moderation and unanimity in our present meeting, so earnestly recommended to us

by your Majesty, are so much both our duty and interest, that we should be greatly wanting to ourselves, and unanswerable to the duty we owe to God, and the regard we ought to have to what your Majesty exhorts us to, should we not be seriously concerned that nothing opposite to these be found among us.

However bold and unaccountable the proceedings of such as are enemies to your Majesty's government, and friends of the Pretender, have of late been, and whatever grounds they may have given for fears and jealousies amongst your faithful subjects, we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that as it has been, so it ever shall be, our care to make all we have influence upon deeply sensible of the blessings they enjoy under your Majesty's Government, and of the bad consequences that anything tending to disturb the same, or endanger the Protestant succession, would have to the present tranquillity, as well as to their future happiness.

That your Majesty may be always highly favoured of God for the comfort of the Protestant churches, and the happiness of your people as to their religious and civil concerns; and after a very long and happy reign here upon earth, be at last crowned with glory, honour, and immortality, leaving a peaceable access to the throne to the Protestant heirs of the illustrious Family of Hanover, are and shall be the fervent and constant prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

IV.

May 8, 1714.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the Queen, upon her Majesty's Recovery from her late Indisposition.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, think it our duty to embrace the first opportunity in our meeting of this General Assembly, to acquaint your Majesty, that as your late indisposition did justly grieve and alarm us, we do now, with the greatest joy and thankfulness to Almighty God, congratulate your Majesty's happy recovery and perfect health, of which we had the most agreeable confirmation by your Majesty's High Commissioner from the throne.

It hath been, and ever shall be. our fervent prayer, that the infinitely good God may preserve your Majesty in firm health and prosperity, and enable you to defeat the designs of the Pretender, and all his adherents, against your Majesty's just title; and that, after a very long, happy, quiet, and peaceable reign on earth, you may be crowned with glory and immortality; and that the peaceable possession of the throne of these nations may be conveyed to a Protestant of the most illustrious House of Hanover; our firm zeal for which your Majesty hath frequently declared to be acceptable to you.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 3, May 8, 1714.—Act for the better Execution of the Laws against Profaneness.

The General Assembly finding, that albeit there have been many excellent acts, both of Parliaments and General Assemblies, made for suppressing of immorality and vice; and that the Queen's Majesty, by her royal proclamation, dated 18th August

1708 years, hath required the punctual execution of the good laws made for encouragement of piety and virtue, and punishing of vice and immorality, and hath appointed her said proclamation to be read from the pulpits, at such times as shall be found needful by the Presbyteries and Synods of the bounds; yet all manner of immorality does abound through this nation, to the dishonour of God and the scandal of our holy religion, which threatens us with severe strokes and judgments; do therefore appoint that her Majesty's proclamation of the date foresaid, with the abbreviate of the laws subjoined thereto; as also the 13th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1694; 7th and 11th Acts of the General Assemblies, 1697; and 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1699, be reprinted in a small volume; and that a copy thereof be sent to every parish and Kirk-session, Presbytery, and Synod in Scotland; and do appoint the said proclamation and abbreviate to be read from the pulpits of all the churches in Scotland, upon the third Lord's day of August next to come, before pronouncing of the blessing; and the General Assembly recommends to ministers on that day to preach a sermon suited to the occasion; and do seriously exhort all the members of this Church, in their several stations, to do what is required of them by the said acts and her Majesty's foresaid proclamation: But because that the too frequent reading of the foresaid proclamation and abbreviate has been found inconvenient; therefore, the General Assembly leaves it to the several Synods and Presbyteries, after the first reading thereof, to give orders about the time of reading it afterward, as often, and at such times, as they shall judge it needful and convenient; and ordains Synods and Presbyteries to record their diligence in this matter in their books.

VI.

Sess. 5, May 11, 1714.—Act for further regulating the Trials of Probationers.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary it is, especially at this juncture, that Presbyteries be very cautious in admitting persons to trials in order to their being licensed to preach, and that they be exact in the said trials; do, therefore, seriously recommend to all the Professors of Divinity and Presbyteries within this national Church, the strict observation of the 5th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1705, and 10th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1711, concerning young men to be entered on trials, and other Acts of the General Assembly about trying and licensing probationers; and further do recommend to Presbyteries, that they cause read to the young men about to be tried, the engagements required by the said Act 10th, *anno* 1711, of such as are to be licensed; and that they take the said young men their promise that they will subscribe to and punctually observe the same, in case the Presbytery shall see cause to license them; and Presbyteries are desired to record this their promise in their books, and to cause all this to be done before any part of the public trials be prescribed; and, in the case of students, their bringing testimonials from their professors, and from the Presbyteries wherein they have for the most part resided, in the terms of the foresaid Act 5th, *anno* 1705, and Act 10th, 1711, in order to their passing trials in some other Presbytery; such Presbyteries, to whom they shall come so recommended, are not to begin their trials until they have resided at least half a year immediately before in their bounds. And, lastly, the visitors of the Presbytery books are appointed to report to their Synods an account of the diligence of the several Presbyteries in this matter; provided always, that what is herein contained be not extended to students having the Irish language.

VII.

Sess. 5, May 11, 1714.—Act for discouraging unworthy Bursars.

The General Assembly, considering that bursaries have been conferred upon some young men that are found very unworthy of any encouragement from this Church;

for remeid whereof, the General Assembly recommends to Synods and Presbyteries to make particular and exact inquiry into the education, piety, literature, principles and conversation of those whom they recommend to bursaries; and that they recommend none of whom they have not ground to believe that they will be useful, and who are firm to the interests of this Church: And, further, the General Assembly appoints such Presbyteries as shall discover any just ground of suspicion in young men having these bursaries, with respect to these things, to acquaint the General Assemblies of this Church, or Commissions thereof; and also the Presbyteries or Synods whose bursars they are, that if they be found unworthy, the encouragement they enjoy may be taken from them, and bestowed on persons having the qualifications required by the acts of Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. 5, May 11, 1714.—Act for restoring and preserving Unity in this Church.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that by the 6th act of the last General Assembly, 1713, it is strictly and seriously enjoined, that all the ministers and members of this Church live in love and Christian communion together; and that ministers study to strengthen one another's hands by a close and conscientious attendance on the judicatures of this Church, notwithstanding of different sentiments and practices about the Oath of Abjuration, all being of the same mind in owning and adhering to that pitch of reformation to which the Lord had happily raised this Church; and being deeply concerned that nothing contrary to these great and necessary duties should be found amongst the ministers or members of this Church at this time especially, when our circumstances call upon us to watch against any appearances of division; doth therefore renew the exhortations contained in the foresaid act, seriously obtesting all, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, whether ministers or people, that they lay to heart these important duties, and that there be no distinguishing courses taken contrary thereunto, on occasion of celebrating the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which ought to be the bond of love and unity among Christians. And, in regard it appeareth unto this Assembly, from the records of the late Commission, that representations have been sent to them from judicatures in the bounds of Dumfries, concerning the practices of some brethren in that Synod, who are said to have separated from their Synod and Presbyteries, and to have baptized and married irregularly, and admitted persons to the Lord's Supper without certificates from their own ministers, and to have gone out of their own parishes, and preached and baptized without the appointment of any judicatory, and that both in vacant and planted congregations; and these practices, if true, being very disorderly, and contrary to the great and necessary duties enjoined in the said act, and portending much danger to this Church; therefore, the General Assembly, being on the one hand deeply concerned for the preventing of schism, and preserving the peace and unity of this Church, and, on the other hand, much inclined to show all tenderness to these brethren, so far as is consistent with the safety of the Church, and their fidelity to the trust reposed in them, doth appoint Mr William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, Messrs William Carstares, William Wishart, William Hamilton, John Flint, and James Hart, *Ministers* there; Messrs James Hog at Carnock, William Moncrieff at Largo, John Schaw at Leith, Robert Livingston at Biggar, Patrick Cuming at Ormiston, John Currie at Haddington, John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, John Muirhead at Cambusnethan, James Ramsay at Kelso, and Samuel Nairn at Errol, the Right Honourable the Earl of Buchan, the Lord Ormiston, the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, John Aird, Provost of Glasgow, Lieutenant-Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Lieutenant-Colonel John Blackadder, Lieutenant-Colonel William Maxwell of Cardoness, and John Martin of Arries, *Ruling Elders*, thirteen of whom to be a quorum, whereof nine are always to be ministers, to be a committee to consider the representations, or any others that may be offered to them concerning those or other brethren that may follow the like courses, to

deal with them in order to remove their scruples, and reclaim them to their duty; and for that end to meet at Edinburgh the fourth Wednesday of June next to come, with power to choose their own moderator and clerk, and to adjourn themselves from time to time; and that either at Edinburgh, or to Glasgow or Ayr, as they shall see cause; and the General Assembly appoints these brethren to attend that committee at that diet, and any other to which the said committee shall require them to come; and ordains letters to be written advertising them hereof, and requiring their attendance; and also requiring them to keep within their own parishes as to their ministerial duties; and the Assembly empowers this committee also to call any other brethren that may be represented to follow the like disorderly courses, and appoints them to report their diligence to the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly: And the said Commission is hereby empowered from time to time to give to the said committee instructions and directions as to their procedure, and to cognosce and finally determine in what concerns the said affair.

IX.

Sess. 8, May 14, 1714.—Act approving the Proceedings of the Commission of the late General Assembly, and particularly the Seasonable Warning concerning the Danger of Popery.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the report of those appointed to revise the register of the actings and proceedings of the Commission of the late General Assembly, and having had the said register produced before them, did find that the said Commission have proceeded according to their commission and instructions, and have been diligent and faithful in the work committed to them, for which the Assembly gave them thanks, and particularly for their zeal against Popery, and seasonably impressing the minds of the people with loyalty to her Majesty, firmness to the Protestant succession in the illustrious Family of Hanover, and just aversion to the Pretender, all fully expressed in their Seasonable Warning.

X.

Sess. 8, May 14, 1714.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do, therefore, nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of the General Assembly to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, &c.; (their powers are the same as in the corresponding act of the immediately preceding years.)

XI.

Sess. 8, May 14, 1714.—Act for procuring the better Execution of former Acts against Popery, and for preventing the Growth thereof.

The General Assembly, for preventing the growth of Popery, do enjoin ministers and members of kirk-sessions to keep a watchful eye over Papists, and deal with them for their conviction, according to the 8th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1707, and carefully to give in yearly to the Presbytery lists of their names and designations, particularly of Popish bishops, priests, Jesuits, and other traffickers, who go about to pervert people from the truth, and of apostates from the true religion, with an account of their Popish meetings, times, and places thereof, and witnesses for proving

the same, with the names of children under Popish parents, tutors, curators, or governors, and of the nearest Protestant relations of such children; and likewise of all Papists who keep schools, or teach any science, art, or exercise, and also of Protestants who keep Popish servants, and of all Papists who have succeeded to lands or heritages within their bounds, since the year 1700, and of all other contraveners of the 3d Act of the Parliament held that year, entitled, "Act for preventing the Growth of Popery;" and Presbyteries are strictly enjoined to give in yearly, upon the 21st day of February, full informations of these things, subscribed by their moderator and clerk, to the Justices of the Peace in the several shires within which the said Presbyteries do lie, and Papists reside or haunt, at their quarter sessions or meetings, and to the other Judges Ordinary within the bounds of the said Presbyteries, in order to due trial: And appoints Presbyteries to send another authentic copy of the said informations, subscribed, as said is, to the procurator or agent for the Church, to be by them laid before the Lords Justice General, or Justice Clerk, or her Majesty's Advocate or Solicitors; and the Assembly further appoints Presbyteries to give in also copies of the said informations to their Synods, according to former Acts of Assembly, and ordains Synods to call for the same from Presbyteries, and record their diligence herein in their books, that the General Assembly may see it, and give such orders thereanent as they shall judge proper.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1714.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's known zeal for the true reformed Protestant religion, and the renewed gracious assurances we have from your Majesty, to maintain and protect the Presbyterian government of this Church, as by law established, do encourage us in pursuance of those Christian ends, recommended to us by your most gracious letter to this Assembly, to lay before your Majesty, in all humble duty, these things that so nearly concern the interest of religion and of this Church.

It is our extreme sorrow, that we find ourselves obliged to represent to your Majesty the extraordinary growth of Popery, and bold and insolent carriage of Popish bishops, priests, Jesuits, and other trafficking Papists in several parts of this nation, and that not only by secret practices, but by avowed keeping of mass meetings and chapels, to which people do openly resort, by whose artifices, several hundreds have of late been perverted in a few parishes, and that their bishops do presume, at stated times, to confirm great multitudes as in a Popish country, to the great dishonour of God, the violation of your Majesty's good laws, the increase of disaffection to your royal government, and the grief and disquiet of the hearts of your faithful subjects; a more full and particular account whereof shall be sent to your Majesty's Secretaries of State, to be laid before your Majesty.

Though we own ourselves, both as Christians and as ministers, indispensably bound to exercise charity towards Protestants that differ from us, yet we cannot forbear to represent to your Majesty the disorders of some of the Episcopal persuasion, who transgress your laws by possessing themselves of parish churches, and introducing therein a way of worship never allowed in this Church, and manifestly contrary to the act for securing Presbyterian government, declared to be a fundamental act of the Union, of which we have a pregnant instance, by the late violent and tumultuary invasion of the Church of Old Aberdeen; and however fond some of that way appear to be of the Liturgy of the Church of England, they do either altogether omit the prayers for your Majesty, or make such alterations of these prayers as render them equally applicable to the Pretender as to your Majesty: Nor can we omit this opportunity to regret to your Majesty the disturbance Mr David Anderson, Profes-

sor of Divinity in your College of Old Aberdeen, has met with in the peaceable possession of his office: On this occasion, also, we are constrained in all humility to acquaint your Majesty how much we are astonished and grieved, that some of late have had the boldness to represent the ministers of this Church, and those of our communion, as disloyal and seditious; and we know no reason why they thus express their hatred and malice against us, but because, on all occasions, we assert and maintain your Majesty's undoubted title to the Crown, and use our utmost endeavours to confirm the people in their affection and loyalty to your Majesty's person and government, their zeal for the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, and their just aversion to the Pretender, which we conceive to be the true cause, that in a late address from Fife, the reasons of a fast appointed by the Synod of that province, which contain becoming expressions of duty and loyalty to your Majesty, and affectionate zeal to the Protestant succession, are so grossly misrepresented; and we cannot but observe, that those who in their addresses do insinuate anything against us and our constitution, make no mention of the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover, being equally, and for the same reasons, disaffected to both.

We must also crave leave deeply to regret the abounding of error, and profaneness of all sorts, notwithstanding the clear light of the Gospel, and the many excellent laws, and your Majesty's royal proclamations to restrain them.

These being the heads of our grievances, wherein your Majesty cannot but perceive how much the glory of God, the purity of religion, the obedience to your laws, the honour of your government, and the peace and welfare of this nation are concerned—we do, in all humility, and most earnestly entreat that your Majesty will be pleased, in your royal wisdom and goodness, to appoint, that the laws against Popery and profaneness may be executed with all vigour, and that all unwarrantable and illegal practices and attempts against our most holy religion, and present happy establishment of this Church, may be prevented, and punished according to law.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the defence of the true Protestant religion, the comfort of all the churches of Christ, and the welfare and prosperity of this Church in particular, shall be the constant and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1714.—Act and Recommendation in favour of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

Upon the 10th day of May current, there was produced to, and read in presence of, the General Assembly, a representation and petition, the tenor whereof follows, viz.

“Unto the Right Reverend and Honourable the Moderator, and remanent Ministers and Ruling Elders, members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Representation and Petition of the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, humbly sheweth,

That her Majesty having been graciously pleased to erect a Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the General Assemblies of this Church have, ever since the erecting of that Society, showed a great zeal to promote the pious design thereof, not only by instructing their commissions to keep a correspondence with the Society, but also by recommending to Synods, Presbyteries, ministers, members of sessions, and persons of all ranks, to contribute towards that excellent design, as is fully expressed in the several acts made to that purpose—these have been very encouraging to the members of the Society and their committee, to bestow part of their time and pains to forward, as far as they could, so good a work. It has been the study of the Society to follow the directions laid down in her Majesty's Letters Patent, and to avoid every thing

that might justly be ground of offence to any serious Christian, and for the satisfaction of contributors, have been, and still are, willing to consider any proposals that may be made to them for furthering the design of the Society, so far as the annual rent of the stock will allow, agreeably to her Majesty's Letters Patent; and whatever have been the secret whispers, groundless and false reports of some, who are either enemies to this promising undertaking, or ignorant of this pious design, and unwilling to give any assistance thereto, yet the Society's management has been such, that they are always ready to expose it to any person who desires to understand the same, for they keep their books and accounts distinct and open, that any contributor who pleases may have access thereto; and this has been not only published in the printed newspapers, but a public intimation thereof has been given by the committee of the Society, and the same was sent to the several Synods and Presbyteries, by order of the last Assembly, to be read from all the pulpits in Scotland. The Society cannot but bless God for the great zeal and charity that many Presbyteries, ministers, elders, and other well disposed persons, have showed in this matter; for by their liberality, the Society's stock laid out, preceding the 7th of January last, does amount to the sum of L.5087 sterling, upon the interest of which there are maintained, one who officiates as minister and schoolmaster in Hirta, *alias* St Kilda, and schoolmasters at Snizort, in the Isle of Skye—Glenelg, in the remote Highlands—Abertarff, in the shire of Inverness—Lairg and Kildonan in Sutherland—Duirness in Strathnaver—Harray in the Continent, and Shapinshay in the North Isles of Orkney—Walls in Zetland—Tomnamvillian, in the Duke of Gordon's country—Tombelly and Castletown in Aberdeenshire—Lochearnside, Glenlednoch, and Glenarchnae, in Perthshire—and one in Gairloch, in the bounds of the Synod of Ross—in all seventeen schools; and some of the masters have allowance for maintaining assistants, where their schools are numerous, and there is a considerable sum given out yearly for books to these schools, and transporting thereof to them; and each scholar taught gratis at the Society's schools is allowed a new Bible, the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, with Vincent's or Hall's Exposition of the Catechism, and Guthrie's Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ, so soon as it is attested that they are in case to read the Bible distinctly. There are comfortable accounts of the usefulness of these schools, and of their great success and number of the scholars, for there are 118 scholars at one school, at others 70, 67, 50, 40, 39, 36, &c., where they have for any time been settled, and many of the scholars can read the Bible pointedly, repeat the Shorter Catechism in the church, are learning to write, and to understand arithmetic, and to sing the common tunes used in the churches; and such care is taken in the choice of masters, as to their piety, learning, prudence, and other qualifications, that in remote places where ministers have large parishes, or more kirks than one, they, by the minister's allowance and direction, do help to supply his absence, by convening the scholars, and such others as are pleased to attend on the Lord's Day, and reading the Holy Scriptures to them, and a sermon out of a book, praying, singing Psalms in the forenoon, and catechising in the afternoon, and by the example of the scholars, there is an emulation begot in those of riper years, whereas before, the Lord's Day was little regarded in such places when the ministers were absent. But though the Society must acknowledge the great and laudable zeal of some persons of quality, gentlemen, ministers, and other well disposed persons, particularly in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Dumfries, and other places, who have contributed liberally for advancing the Christian and noble design of her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent, and that the success of the schools already erected hath been very encouraging—yet we must beg leave again to represent, that some Presbyteries and ministers have never to this day made any return of their having intimated the Acts of Assembly that concerned the Society, although the same were timeously sent to them, so that in some places the pious design of the said Society is wholly concealed and unknown, and people have not had an opportunity to contribute toward so Christian and excellent a work, who would cordially do it. Other ministers have satisfied themselves in that they have contributed or subscribed for their own part, though they have used little or no diligence to promote contributions among their people, apprehending that their endeavours would be without success, whereas it is certain, that some who have been under

these apprehensions, before they attempted to collect, have, after their setting about the work, by reading the foresaid papers sent to them, and giving suitable exhortations to their people, found them cheerful and liberal in their contributions, beyond their expectations; for they have found even children and servants show a zeal to and concern for this pious undertaking, and desirous to forward the same, and that the small mites thrown in by the poorer sort, when laid together, have amounted to a considerable sum. Other ministers have extended their endeavours no further than by making a collection at the church doors, (as in the case of common charity,) and in such parishes, what has been collected has come to a very small account; whereas others who have been at the pains to go from house to house to obtain the contribution of each particular person, as is prescribed by the Acts of Assembly, have got together very considerable sums, and people have declared, that their hearts never gave them so much to any collection as to this, which is for such an excellent and glorious design; and there are some who, though they have collected, yet delay to transmit the money to the Society's Treasurer, upon pretence either of waiting till they get more, or that they want an account how the money already raised is employed, (notwithstanding of the distinct accounts transmitted to them of the Society's progress from time to time.) If others had been thus backward and careless, this Christian and pious design, proposed after maturest deliberation, by the Commission of the General Assembly, and authorised by royal authority, had been frustrated, and such delays and neglect of what is so seriously recommended by her Majesty and the General Assembly, do greatly obstruct the progress of the Society, for the money must first come to their hands, and then be laid out on interest, and the interest be raised before they can supply the schools; seeing, by the Letters Patent, it is only the interest of their stock that can be employed for that end. The Society is not willing, at this time, to condescend upon particular Synods, Presbyteries, and parishes thus deficient, or persons who have not paid in the money they subscribed for, or collected from others, but is rather desirous that such deficient have some longer time allowed them to exonerate their consciences in such an important trust, according to former Acts of the General Assembly, Letters from their Commissions, and from the Society and their committees; and for the further satisfaction of the Assembly, the Committee is willing to meet with such as shall be named by them, and to lay the Society's accounts and books before them.

May it therefore please this Venerable Assembly to consider the premises, and to cause read the 5th Act of the late General Assembly, and renew the recommendations and orders therein contained in all points, and, further, to recommend to Presbyteries to look out for fit persons, duly qualified in the terms of her Majesty's Letters Patent, who are willing to serve the Society, and send an account of them with certificates in their favour to the Society or their Committee.

This, at the appointment, and in name of the said Committee, is subscribed by Jo. Duncan, Pr. Com., Jo. Dundas, Sec. Soc."

Which Representation and Petition being considered by the General Assembly, with the deliverance of the Committee of Bills thereupon, they caused read the 5th Act of the late General Assembly, *anno* 1713, and did, and hereby do, renew the recommendations and injunctions therein contained in all points; and, further, recommend to Presbyteries to look out for persons, duly qualified in the terms of her Majesty's Letters Patent, who are willing to serve the Society, and to send an account of them with certificates in their favour to the Society or their committee. And the General Assembly did give the said Society their hearty thanks for their great care and diligence in carrying on the excellent design of her Majesty's Letters Patent for Propagating Christian Knowledge; and several members of the Society present in the Assembly, having desired that they would appoint a committee of their number to meet with the committee of the Society, to discourse with them, and by joint counsel to advise what further may be proposed to the General Assembly, to be done for the benefit of the said Society, and by the Society, for fully satisfying, not only the members of this Assembly, but all others, as to the exactness and fairness of their management. The General Assembly appointed their committee already named,

being some out of the several Synods, for revising the commission book, when they have done with the said book, to meet with the committee of the Society for the ends foresaid, and report.

And this day the committee of the General Assembly appointed to meet with the committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, reported that they had discoursed with that committee at length, and had all their books laid before them, and were fully satisfied of the groundlessness of all the objections that were moved against them, and they saw that the Society can give clear and satisfying documents of all the particulars contained in their representation to this Assembly; and, therefore, the Committee give it as their opinion, that the nature and constitution of that Society is such, that it is as well secured against the danger of future events as any Society can be, and they thought that the Assembly should empower their Commission to appoint public intimations in all the congregations of this Church, of an additional representation of the further progress and success of the Society, which they are preparing. The General Assembly having heard and considered the said report, they were well satisfied therewith, and approved of their committee's opinion, and did empower their Commission to the effect above mentioned.

XIV.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1714.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the fourth day of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1715 years.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Registers of the General Assembly, by
Jo. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 4, 1715.

L

Sess. 1, May 4, 1715.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Rothes produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this national Church, being convened and constituted, there was produced to them by the Right Honourable John Earl of Rothes his Majesty's Commission, sealed with the seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, appointing him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly; which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordered the same to be recorded in their Registers, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—

GEORGIVS, &c.

II.

May 4, 1715.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. We are so well satisfied with the proofs the Church of Scotland have given of their steady adherence to the Protestant succession in our family, the loyalty and affection they have shown to our person and government, and their constant zeal for the Protestant interest, that we very willingly countenance with our authority this first Assembly of our reign. We have made choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, John Earl of Rothes, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly, believing that none can be more acceptable to you than he, who, upon all occasions, has eminently distinguished himself for the interest of the Protestant succession and of the established Church of Scotland. We cheerfully embrace this opportunity of assuring you that we will inviolably maintain the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, her rights and privileges, as we engaged to do upon our accession to the crown, and will protect her from any illegal insults and encroachments being made upon her of what kind soever.

Nothing can be more acceptable to us than the promoting of true piety, suppressing of vice and immorality, and preventing the growth of Popery, as we have declared in our royal proclamation; and we doubt not but you, on your parts, will do every thing that can contribute thereto.

We earnestly wish that the vacant churches may be supplied with men of learning and probity; and we recommend to you to take effectual care, on your parts, to do every thing that may tend to so good and pious an end; and, in all your actings, to study unanimity and charity, and make our people sensible of the blessings they enjoy, and of the bad consequences any kind of divisions would have to the present tranquillity as well as to their future happiness.

We have had such satisfactory accounts of your former good conduct, us gives us full confidence that you will act in such a manner as we shall have reason to be satisfied with you. So we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 23d April 1715, in the first year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

MONTROSE.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

 III.

May 6, 1715.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

It was with a particular joy and satisfaction that we received the gracious letter with which your Majesty was pleased to honour us. We esteemed your peaceable accession to the throne of these nations, upon the demise of our late Sovereign Queen Anne, so great a blessing, that we were fervent in our prayers to God for it; and we can never be thankful enough for the merciful return he hath given to our requests; for it is to your Majesty, under God, we owe the preservation both of our holy religion and our valuable civil liberties; and we must have been betrayers of both if we had not been zealously concerned for the succession in your Royal Family; and though your Majesty, in your great goodness, is pleased to express a kind resentment of our

firm adherence to it, yet we presume not to plead merit upon the account of that, to which both duty and interest did oblige us; but your Majesty's countenancing us with your authority gives us no small comfort, and engageth us to thankful acknowledgments of your royal favour to us, and to be concerned to manage ourselves so as not to lose the happiness of the good opinion your Majesty is pleased to have of us.

We cannot but look upon it as a signal proof of your Majesty's favour to us, that you honour us with such a noble person as the Earl of Rothes to represent your Majesty in our Assembly. None could have been more acceptable to us than he, who, in all turns and changes of affairs, did, with a peculiar zeal, stand up for the Protestant succession as the true interest of his country, and who was never either afraid or ashamed to manifest his unbiassed affection to our Church; and we hope that there shall be nothing in our management that shall give him the least uneasiness in the discharge of the duties of his high trust.

The solemn engagement your Majesty did cheerfully come under at your first accession to the crown, to maintain inviolably the rights and privileges of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, of which you have the goodness to give us renewed assurances, as also protecting us against all illegal insults and encroachments being made upon us, of what kind soever, leaves us no place for doubts and fears as to any success that our enemies may have in their designs against us, under your Majesty's happy government; and obligeth us to all the returns of gratitude and duty that we are capable of.

Your Majesty's pious concern for suppressing vice and immorality, and preventing the growth of Popery, cannot but endear your royal person and government to all truly wise and good men; and, we hope, shall bring down blessings from heaven upon your Majesty and your Royal Family, and prevent judgments from God upon your people. And we have good grounds to be assured, that, under your Majesty's auspicious reign, such shall be employed as shall faithfully execute the laws against Popery, and all such practices as are a stain to the Christian profession, and against which your Majesty hath signified your displeasure in your royal proclamation.

We are deeply sensible of the necessity of a holy and well qualified ministry, for advancing the great ends of the gospel of our Redeemer; and that profane churchmen are one of the greatest plagues that either a church or civil society can have: And we shall not be wanting in using our utmost endeavours to answer what your Majesty can expect of us, in our present circumstances, as to this matter.

We should be unworthy of your Majesty's favour, if we had not a dutiful regard to what you are in your great goodness pleased so kindly to recommend to us, even with a respect to our own interest, as to charity and unanimity. We are, Sir, very sensible that it must be a great unhappiness, especially to religious societies, to be plagued with divisions; and, therefore, we look upon ourselves as under peculiar obligations to be aware of them. And we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that, as we have unanimously at all times witnessed our hearty zeal and affection for the Protestant succession in your royal family, so it is our firm resolution to testify, by all methods proper to be taken by us, the sense that we have of the wonderful goodness of God, in blessing us with so good and wise a Sovereign, and to possess all under our charge with just impressions of the mercy of the overruling God, in bringing your Majesty to the throne, which hath confounded the hopes of enemies to the true interest of these nations, and given a comfortable prospect of great advantages to the Protestant churches at home and abroad; and it shall be our care to manage ourselves so in all our proceedings in this Assembly as it may appear that, next to our duty to God, it is our sincere desire to approve ourselves to your Majesty, in bringing this Assembly to such an issue as shall show our hearty concern for the honour and quiet of your government.

That your Majesty may be always under Divine protection and conduct, and may be long preserved for the defence of the true Protestant religion, the welfare and prosperity of all your dominions, and of this Church in particular, that their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their royal issue, and all your royal family, may be highly favoured of God, and long preserved for public blessings in the world, and that there never may be wanting one of your royal progeny to

sway the sceptre of these nations; and that all designs against our happy settlement under your Majesty, the peace of your government, and the security of the Protestant succession in your royal line, may be brought to nought, is, and shall be, the constant and fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

W. CARSTARES, *Moderator.*

IV.

Eodem die.—Act appointing the Oath taken by his Majesty, for maintaining the Church of Scotland, to be Recorded.

The General Assembly, for the satisfaction and encouragement of the ministers and other members of this Church, thought fit to cause read openly, from the books of the last Commission, where the same stands recorded, the solemn engagement that his Majesty came under upon his first accession to the crown, to maintain inviolably the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, rights, and privileges, of the Church of Scotland; and they ordered the same to be also recorded in the books of Assembly; the tenor whereof follows:—

At the Court of St James', the 22d of September 1714, present, the King's most excellent Majesty, Lord Chancellor, Lord Archbishop of York, Duke of Somerset, Duke of Northumberland, Duke of Bolton, Duke of Devonshire, Duke of Marlborough, Duke of Montrose, Duke of Roxburgh, Duke of Kent, Marquis of Lindsay, Marquis of Dorchester, Marquis of Annandale, Earl of Derby, Earl of Pembroke, Earl of Suffolk, Earl of Northampton, Earl of Manchester, Earl of Stamford, Earl of Sunderland, Earl of Clarendon, Earl of Anglesey, Earl of Carlisle, Earl of Radnor, Earl of Nottingham, Earl of Rochester, Earl of Abingdon, Earl of Wharton, Earl of Cholmondely, Earl of Mar, Earl of Loudon, Earl of Findlater, Earl of Orkney, Earl of Oxford, Earl of Portmore, Earl of Orrery, Viscount of Townshend, Lord Bishop of London, Lord Paget, Lord Berkeley, Lord Guilford, Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, Lord Guernsey, Lord Mansell, Lord Trevor, Lord Lansdown, Lord Bingley, Lord Coningsby, Mr Bromley, Mr Boyle, Mr Coke, Lord Ch. J. Parker, Sir John Holland, Sir Richard Onslow, Mr Smith, Mr Vernon, Mr Erle, Mr Hill.

I, GEORGE, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., do faithfully promise and swear, that I shall inviolably maintain and preserve the settlement of the true Protestant religion, with the government, worship, discipline, right, and privileges, of the Church of Scotland, as established by the laws made there, in prosecution of the Claim of Right, and particularly by an act, entitled, "Act for Securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government," and by the acts passed in the Parliaments of both kingdoms for union of the two kingdoms. So help me God.

GEORGE, R.

On the 22d day of September, in the year of our Lord 1714, at his Majesty's palace at St James', his Majesty, in his first general council, did take and subscribe the oath above written in presence of the Right Honourable the Lords of the Privy Council, hereafter subscribing, viz., Couper, C. Somerset, Northumberland, Devonshire, Bolton, Marlborough, Montrose, Roxburgh, Kent, Lindsay, Dorchester, Annandale, Derby, Pembroke, Suffolk, Northampton, Manchester, Stamford, Sunderland,

Clarendon, Anglesey, Carlisle, Radnor, Rochester, Abingdon, Cholmondely, Mar, London, Findlater, Orkney, Oxford and Mortimer, Portmore, Orrery, Townshend, John London, Paget, Berkeley, Guilford, Somers, Halifax, Guernsey, Mansell, Trevor, Lansdown, Coningsby, Bingley, W. Bromley, H. Boyle, T. Coke, T. Parker, F. Holland, Rich. Onslow, F. Smith, Ja. Vernon, Tho. Erle, F. Hill.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL, *Cler. Concilii.*

Whereas by an act of Parliament made in Scotland, entitled, "Act for Securing the Protestant Religion, and Presbyterian Church Government," which is made part of another act, entitled, "Act Ratifying and Approving the Treaty of Union of the two Kingdoms of Scotland and England;" and of another act passed in England, in the fifth year of the late Queen, entitled, "An Act for the Union of the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland;" it is provided, "That after the decease of her late Majesty, the sovereign succeeding to her in the royal government of the kingdom of Great Britain shall, in all times coming, at his or her accession to the Crown, swear and subscribe that they shall inviolably maintain and preserve the settlement (mentioned in the said act) of the true Protestant religion, with the government, worship, discipline, right, and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as established by the laws of that kingdom, in prosecution of the Claim of Right." And his most sacred Majesty having this day, in his first general council, taken the oath according to the form used by the law of Scotland, and subscribed the same in two several instruments, is pleased to order, as it is hereby ordered, that one of the said instruments which is hereunto annexed, containing the said oath, taken and signed by his Majesty, and witnessed by the Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council then present, be transmitted to the Court of Session to be recorded in the Books of Sederunt, and afterward to be forthwith lodged in the Public Register of Scotland; and that the other of them remain among the records of the Council, and be entered in the Council Book; and that all persons concerned do take notice hereof, and govern themselves accordingly.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL.

V.

Sess. 8, May 12, 1715.—Act for Encouragement of Preachers to be sent to the North, the Highlands, and Islands.

The General Assembly, finding it expedient for the furthering of the Gospel, that the ordinary allowances payable to preachers, sent from time to time by the General Assemblies of this Church, or commissions thereof, to supply vacant churches, or in order to be settled in the North, the Highlands, and Islands, be punctually paid; do therefore appoint, that in all time coming, the ordinary allowances payable by the acts of Assembly to such preachers be paid next to the stated annual charges of the Church, and before any other claim or demand whatsoever that shall be made out of the Church's public money.

VI.

May 12, 1715.—Act for Preventing of Division in the Church.

The General Assembly, considering the representation of the heritors of the parish of Lesmahagow, concerning the irregular and disorderly practices of some elders and people in that parish, in withdrawing from ordinances dispensed by the Reverend Mr Robert Black, one of the ministers of the said parish, and others who have taken the Oath of Abjuration, when appointed by the Presbytery to supply that church: And considering also how inconsistent such a practice is with the rule of God's Word, whereby we are enjoined to exercise mutual love and charity, and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and contrary to the Acts of Assembly of this Church, particularly the sixth act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1713, and the eighth

Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1714 ; and considering how prejudicial this is to the peace and unity of this Church, and how much it obstructs the success of the Gospel, the General Assembly do therefore seriously, and in the bowels of the Lord Jesus Christ, exhort and obtest all concerned in that and other parishes, to forbear and avoid those disorders, which are so prejudicial to peace and unity, and do so much obstruct the success of the Gospel ; and the General Assembly having now transported Mr Black from Lesmahagow, do hereby order and appoint the Presbytery of Lanark to give all brotherly assistance and encouragement to the Reverend Mr Thomas Linnen, under such a weighty charge, and particularly, that they punctually supply the vacancy by members of their Presbytery without distinction, the more effectually to dispose the people to their duty. And the General Assembly further considering, that the distinguishing course taken by ministers in the choice of their assistants at the celebration of the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which ought to be the bond of unity and love among Christians, does exceedingly contribute to the confirming people in their unjust prejudice against ministers, and in their divisive practices—do therefore earnestly obtest all the ministers of this Church carefully to guard against this, as they would not be found to lay a stumbling-block before the people.

VII.

May 13, 1715.—Act for Preferring Students having the Irish Language to Bursaries.

The General Assembly, considering how needful it is to encourage hopeful students having the Irish language, in order to their being useful in the Highlands and Isles, where Popery abounds, do therefore enjoin all the Synods and Presbyteries of this Church, to prefer such students to their bursaries when they vaik, and punctually to pay them their provisions ; and to take trial of their proficiency ; and to mark their diligence herein in their books : And appoints the visitors of Synod and Presbytery books to take particular notice how the Acts of Assembly concerning bursaries are observed, and report the same ; and further, the General Assembly instructs and requires the Commissions of the Assemblies of this Church to see to the observation of the said acts, and to inquire after such students, and recommend them to bursaries ; and they do hereby renew all the powers given to former Commissions in this matter.

VIII.

May 13, 1715.—Act appointing a Committee for preserving the Purity of Doctrine, and for considering the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, for preserving and maintaining the purity of the doctrine of the Church of Scotland, and for bringing the process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson, to an issue, did resolve to appoint a committee of thirty ministers and six ruling elders, twenty-one being a quorum, whereof eighteen to be ministers, to meet at Edinburgh, the third Wednesday of July next to come, and to continue *de die in diem*, and to adjourn themselves to what time and place they think fit, with power to them to make inquiry into whatsoever shall be found necessary for preserving and maintaining the purity of the doctrine of this Church ; and, particularly, to take the foresaid process into their consideration, and to do whatsoever they shall find necessary, to prepare a full and distinct state thereof, to be reported to the next General Assembly, together with the Committee's Overture thereupon, in order to a final decision by the Assembly : And, in order to these ends, the General Assembly appoints the said committee to observe the following instructions, *1mo*, That the committee draw out the libel, representation, and other papers, whatever is found erroneous, or charged by Mr Webster on Mr Simson as error, laying the same down in certain distinct propositions. *2do*, That they class the propositions under distinct heads ; such as, *First*, Those which are contrary to the Word of

God, Confession of Faith, Catechisms of this Church. *Secondly*, Those which are controverted amongst orthodox divines; and not determined by our Confession of Faith and Catechisms. *Thirdly*, Such as are not clearly contained either in the Scriptures or the writings of orthodox divines, and that the committee proceed according to the weight and import of those propositions so classed. *3to*, That the parties being called, Mr Simson be interrogated what of these he acknowledges, what he denies, and what he qualifies: And that Mr Webster be interrogated what evidence by writing, witnesses, or both, he can produce to prove the propositions denied or qualified, which the committee shall think fit to admit to probation. *4to*, That Mr Simson, in the first place, be allowed to adduce witnesses for his exculpation, providing always, that whatever orthodox sense or alleviations it be found he has given of propositions advanced by him, Mr Webster be also allowed to prove that he uttered these propositions charged in a heterodox sense, if he think fit so to do. *5to*, That when any article of the libel or exculpation is circumstantiated with time and place, and persons present, that either party be allowed to cite and examine the whole witnesses present, at that time and place, upon the whole facts and expressions, in so far as they concern the charge and exculpation. *6to*, That in order to a clear representation to the Assembly, the committee be careful to distinguish betwixt those things taught by Mr Simson in the school, and those emitted by him in private conversation. And, *7mo*, The General Assembly hereby empowers their said committee to receive informations against any ministers or teachers of this Church, concerning any thing not agreeable to the doctrine or form of sound words received in this Church, and to examine any books or pamphlets published by any minister or teacher within this Church, containing any thing not agreeable to the said doctrine and form of sound words, and to call those concerned, and in an orderly way make what inquiry is necessary to ripen the same, and prepare an overture thereanent to the next General Assembly. The above overture and instructions being agreed to, the General Assembly did next resolve to remit, and hereby do remit, to their Committee for Overtures, the nomination of the above mentioned committee of thirty ministers and six ruling elders, who are to examine these matters, to be done by them in the manner following, viz., that each member of the foresaid Committee for Overtures give in to it a full list subscribed with his hand of the persons who he thinks should be of that other committee, consisting of any ministers and elders of this Church, who are not either libellers or libelled in this process, especially of such professors of divinity as are ministers, the members of the Presbytery of Glasgow, and the witnesses in this cause, not excluded: And these lists being compared, and the persons therein contained being marked, that the said number of thirty ministers and six ruling elders of those contained in the said lists, who shall be found to have the greatest number of votes, shall be made the members of the above mentioned committee, and be reported as such to the General Assembly at their next meeting.

IX.

Sess. 10, May 14, 1715.—Act concerning the Grievances of this Church from Toleration, Patronages, &c.

The Committees for Instructions and Overtures, having had under consideration the grievances this Church lies under from Patronages, from the Toleration as it stands, the hardships imposed upon Scotsmen in office in England and Ireland, and the prejudice done to this Church by the differences that have arisen about the Oath of Abjuration; and having also considered what the Commission of the late General Assembly had done with respect to these, and particularly a memorial which they had drawn about the same and sent to Members of Parliament: The Committee for Overtures gave it as their opinion, that the said memorial did fully express all that was necessary upon these heads; and, therefore, they laid the said memorial before the General Assembly, with an overture as to the management thereof. And which memorial and overture being heard and considered by the General Assembly, they

did approve thereof and agree thereto, and ordained it to be held as the deed and mind of this Assembly, as follows:—

MEMORIAL FOR THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Church of Scotland being restored at the happy Revolution, was, by the Claim of Right, and acts of Parliament following thereupon, established in its doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and that this legal constitution and establishment might be unalterably secured, it was declared to be a fundamental and essential condition of the Union, and accordingly ratified in the Parliaments of both kingdoms: But the zeal of the Established Church of Scotland for, and their steady adherence to, the Protestant succession, did expose them to the resentments of a disaffected party; and likewise, they account themselves aggrieved by some acts passed in the Parliament of Great Britain; as, *1mo*, By the act granting such a large, and almost boundless, toleration to those of the Episcopal persuasion in Scotland, while the liberty allowed to Protestant Dissenters in England, who had always given the most satisfying proofs of their undoubted zeal and good affection to the Protestant succession, was retrenched: And though the Church of Scotland hath an equal security in a legal establishment with that of England, yet there is a vast inequality as to the toleration of the respective Dissenters. In Scotland, the toleration doth not restrain the disseminating the most dangerous errors, by requiring a Confession of Faith, or subscription to the doctrinal articles of the Established Church, as is required of Dissenters in England; it also weakeneth the discipline of the Church against the scandalous and profane, by withdrawing the concurrence of the civil magistrate. It is also an inequality and hardship upon the Established Church of Scotland, that those of her communion who are employed in his Majesty's service in England or Ireland, should be obliged to join in communion and conformity with the Church of England; whereas conformity to this Church is not required (nor do we plead that it should be) of members of the Church of England, when called to serve his Majesty in Scotland, who here enjoy the full liberty of Dissenters without molestation; and the common and equal privileges of the subjects of the United Kingdom, stipulated by the Union, claim the same liberty to the members of the Church of Scotland, when employed in his Majesty's service in England or Ireland. *2do*, By the act restoring the power of presentations to patrons, the legally established constitution of this Church was altered in a very important point; and while it appears equitable in itself, and agreeable to the liberty of Christians and a free people, to have interest in the choice of those to whom they entrust the care of their souls, it is a hardship to be imposed upon in so tender a point, and that frequently by patrons who have no property nor residence in the parishes; and this, besides the snares of simoniacal pactions, and the many troubles and contests arising from the power of patronages, and the abuses thereof, by disaffected patrons putting their power in other hands, who as effectually serve their purposes, by patrons competing for the right of presentation in the same parish; and by frequently presenting ministers settled in eminent posts to mean and small parishes, to elude the planting thereof; by all which, parishes are often kept long vacant, to the great hinderance of the progress of the Gospel.

The General Assembly, considering the circumstances of the Church of Scotland, with respect to the Oath of Abjuration, as they are fully represented in the humble addresses of the Commission and General Assembly, held *anno* 1712, copies whereof are herewith transmitted, do humbly and earnestly entreat that suitable remedies may be thought of.

W. CARSTARES, *Moderator*.

And the General Assembly recommended to all their members to use their best endeavours with friends at London, that the ends of the addresses of the Commission and General Assembly, 1712, and Act of the General Assembly, the 14th May that year, concerning the Oath of Abjuration, may be obtained; and most humbly desired his Majesty's High Commissioner, that he would be pleased to use his good offices for that end.

The General Assembly did appoint this memorial to be put in the hands of their Commission, and did enjoin them to use all proper and due means to obtain redress, and particularly at their first meeting, to send the same to the Duke of Montrose, principal Secretary of State, most humbly entreating his Grace to take a fit opportunity to acquaint his Majesty thereof.

X.

Sess. 11, May 16, 1715.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for preserving and maintaining Purity of Doctrine, &c.

The which day the Committee for Overtures reported, that they having taken in from each of their members subscribed lists of such as they thought fit to be of the committee for preserving and maintaining the purity of the doctrine of this Church, and examining and considering the process at the instance of Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson; and made an exact scrutiny, in pursuance of the Assembly's appointment upon Friday last, the 13th of May current; they found that the following persons had the majority of votes, and, therefore, they returned them as the members of that committee, viz., the Rev. Mr William Carstares, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Moderator, Mr James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, Mr Thomas Linnen, minister at Lesmahagow, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, Mr Thomas Blackwell, Professor of Divinity in the Marischal College of Aberdeen, Mr David Anderson, Professor of Divinity in the King's College at Aberdeen, Mr William Mitchell, minister at Edinburgh, Mr John Anderson at Dumbarton, Mr Andrew Cameron at Kirkcudbright, Mr James Ramsay at Kelso, Mr John Hunter at Ayr, Mr William Wishart at Edinburgh, Mr James Smith at Cramond, Mr John Currie at Haddington, Mr John Gray at Glasgow, Mr John Ritchie at Old Kilpatrick, Mr Andrew Rodger at Galstoun, Mr Alexander Lauder at Mordington, Mr John Hamilton at Glasgow, Mr Robert Horsburgh at Saltpreston, Mr John Brand at Borrowstounness, Mr George Turnbull at Tynningham, Mr James Alston at Dirlerton, Mr Thomas Black at Perth, Mr James Cuthbert at Culross, Mr William M'George at Pennycook, Mr George Chalmers at Kilwinning, Mr Allan Logan at Torryburn, Mr William Miller, and Mr John Flint, at Edinburgh, *Ministers*; Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North-Berwick, Baronet, Lord President of the Session, Adam Cockburn of Ormistoun, Lord Justice-Clerk, Mr John Clark, one of the Barons of Exchequer, Sir James Stuart of Goodtrees, his Majesty's Solicitor, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, and Dr Alexander Dundas, physician, *Ruling Elders*. The said report being thus made, parties were called and compeared, and Mr James Webster repeated his former declaration, that he would not farther state himself as a pursuer in this matter, having already sufficiently exonerated himself, as he alleged. And Mr John Simson repeated his answers, alleging, that Mr Webster was obliged to make out his charge, under pain of censure; whereupon they were both removed. And the General Assembly having heard and considered the said report and nomination, did approve thereof; and hereby do commission and appoint the thirty ministers and six ruling elders above named, to convene here at Edinburgh, within the Assembly-House, upon the third Wednesday of July next to come, at ten o'clock forenoon, for their first diet, and to proceed according to the powers and instructions formerly agreed upon and approved by this Assembly, the said 13th day of May current, in all points.

XI.

May 16, 1715.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot undertake, do nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Carstares, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, and one of the

ministers of that city, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, &c. (their powers were the same as in the preceding year.)

XII.

May 17, 1715.—Act recommending a Public Collection for the use of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

The which day, there was a petition presented to the General Assembly for the committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, showing, that the said Society had, for the space of six years, been prosecuting the noble design of their erection, and had done what they could to obtain the concurrence and assistance of charitably disposed persons; and that full representations of the state of their affairs had been yearly given in to the venerable General Assemblies of this National Church; letters had been written to the reverend Synods and Presbyteries, to the Justices of Peace at their Quarter Sessions, Sheriffs of Shires, and to the several Royal Burghs in Scotland; and that correspondents had been nominated in the several shires, and also in divers places abroad, by which means the Society had got in, and laid out on interest, as a stock, the sum of L.6000 sterling and upwards; and that the said Society, upon the interest of this stock, had erected twenty-four charity schools, and are about to erect more; but being obliged to furnish books, paper, and other necessaries for these schools, which does amount to a considerable sum, and the rate of annual rents being now reduced by law to five per cent, and some of the Society's annual rents not being punctually paid, the Society are not in case to answer the necessary demands of divers Presbyteries and ministers, with relation to settling of schools and furnishing books; and seeing the Society neither will nor can diminish any of their stock, and that it is hoped many who have already contributed, as well as others, will contribute to enable the Society to furnish their scholars with books, and to settle a greater number of small itinerant schools in remote glens and places in the Highlands and Islands, where Popery and ignorance abounds, and otherwise to carry on this good and hopeful design, which has been already so much countenanced of God in a very signal manner; for in some of these schools already settled there are forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, and in one of them upwards of a hundred scholars. And the said committee have had very satisfying and comfortable accounts of their progress in learning to read and write, and in learning of arithmetic, in so much, that, in some of these places where the schools are settled, the generality of the children, who knew not a letter when they came to these schools, have, within a short time thereafter, read the Bible distinctly, and repeated the Shorter Catechism in the churches, and answered the questions gravely and distinctly, to the great satisfaction of the congregations; and the said committee have had accounts from some of the ministers of those parishes, where these schools are fixed, that their parishes, which were the most ignorant in the country, would become the most knowing, through the blessing of God upon the great pains and care taken by the schoolmasters, (who are under the inspection of the Presbyteries and ministers of the bounds,) and that it is thought the youth trained up in some of these schools, through the same blessing of God, will be among the first that will yield a cordial reception to the Gospel; and that some of these young ones, children of Popish parents, are come to that length that they will by no means hear a Popish priest; that in some of these schools married persons are learning to read, and servants, male and female, were quitting service for a time and attending the school: That in divers of these places where superstition and Popery abounds, there was an earnest desire among people after Christian knowledge; and several other instances could be given, but the said committee were unwilling to take up the venerable Assembly's time, seeing any who desired further information might have the same in an account of the rise and progress of the said Society, printed by itself, and other papers of the Society; and, therefore, craving to the effect after mentioned. The General Assembly having heard and considered the said petition, and the opinion of their committee for bills thereupon, and finding that very satisfy-

ing reports of the Society's diligence had been made to former Assemblies by such as, at the Society's desire, were appointed to inquire into their management, and to inspect their books; the General Assembly did unanimously, and hereby do, recommend a public collection at all the church doors in Scotland, upon such days as the several Presbyteries and magistrates of burghs shall think fit, any time betwixt and the first day of January next to come, for buying books to the Society's scholars, and settling more schools; and appoints that the money so to be collected be sent in timeously to Mr George Watson, merchant in Edinburgh, the Society's treasurer, to be disposed of for the uses mentioned in the above narrated petition, as the Society shall judge most conducive to the furthering the instruction of the poorer sort, who are not in case to board themselves at any distance from the places of their residence, and advancing the other pious ends of their erection. And the General Assembly finding that the recommendations of former Assemblies, in favour of the said Society, have not been duly observed by divers Presbyteries and ministers, they did, and hereby do, renew the same; and do appoint that the said acts and recommendations of former Assemblies in favour of the Society be read in those congregations where the same has not been done; and the Assembly earnestly desires ministers and others, who have subscribed, but have not paid in what they subscribed for, to send in the same with all diligence to the Society's treasurer; and also appoints the account of the diligence and success of the Society in their pious undertaking, as above narrated, to be read at the intimation of this collection from the several pulpits on the Lord's Day. And, lastly, the General Assembly appointed the Rev. Mr William Carstares, their Moderator, Mr William Mitchell, and Mr James Haddow, members of this Assembly, to be present with the said Society at their next general meeting, and give them the Assembly's thanks for their great concern and unwearied diligence in advancing so noble a work, and show them that the Assembly did unanimously grant the desire of their petition.

XIII.

Sess. 12, May 17, 1715.—Act against Popery and Profanity.

The General Assembly appoints that his Majesty's proclamation against profanity, as also the abbeviat of the laws against immorality, be read from the pulpits of all the churches of Scotland, upon the first Lord's Day of August next; and renews the 5th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1714, "For the better Execution of the Laws against Profaneness;" and also the 11th Act of that same General Assembly, entitled, "Act for procuring the better Execution of former Acts against Popery, and for preventing the Growth thereof."

XIV.

May 17, 1715.—Act discharging Prelatical Preachers, and some who profess to be Presbyterians, and separate from this Church, to exercise Church Discipline.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, being informed that Elizabeth Salmon, who was convened before the Presbytery of Kirkaldy for uncleanness, did judicially declare that Mr Colin Mackenzie of Rossend was the father of the child she had brought forth; whereupon the Presbytery ordered the said Mr Colin Mackenzie to be cited to compare before them at their next meeting, the 26th day of this month; and it being farther represented that Mr David Blair and Mr David Middleton, in conjunction with Mr William Duguid, and Mr James Guthrie, prelatical preachers, have taken upon them to convene the said Mr Colin Mackenzie of Rossend three times before them the last week, and have given him an oath of purgation, which was read in the meeting-house of Burntisland, intimating that the said Mr Colin Mackenzie is to swear that oath in the said meeting-house next Lord's Day, for removing the scandal; and considering that this is an illegal encroachment upon the discipline of the Church, which may prove of dangerous consequence, the Gene-

ral Assembly orders the Presbytery of Kirkaldy to proceed against the said Mr Colin Mackenzie of Rossend, according to the rules of this Church, notwithstanding of any thing these prelatical preachers have done, or may do, in that affair. And, further, the General Assembly discharges these prelatical preachers to proceed any further in that matter, as they will be answerable; and appoints this to be intimated to them by the officers of this Assembly, and refers it to the Commission to take care that the Assembly's authority be not contemned in this case. And the Assembly does appoint this method to be observed in the cases of scandal when any others, either Episcopal preachers, or such as pretend to be Presbyterian ministers, but do separate from this Church, take upon them to exercise discipline.

XV.

Sess. 12, May 17, 1715.—Act for prosecuting some, who, professing to be Presbyterians, do separate from this Church; and an appointment concerning Papists and Episcopal Intruders.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration the representations made to them concerning the irregularities of Mr John M'Millan, late minister at Balmaghie, Mr John Taylor, late minister at Wamphray, both now deposed, Mr John M'Neil, and Mr John Adamson, pretended preachers, Mr John Hepburn, minister at Orr, and Mr James Gilchrist, minister at Dunscore; they do refer it to their Commission, at their first meeting, to take the irregularities of the foresaid persons under their consideration; and, if the said Commission think fit, the General Assembly does empower them to summon the said Mr John M'Millan, Mr John Taylor, Mr John M'Neil, and Mr John Adamson, before them, and to proceed to further censure, or apply to the civil magistrate against them, as shall be thought most fit. And as to the said Mr John Hepburn and Mr James Gilchrist, the Assembly appoints the Presbytery of Dumfries forthwith to cause cite them before them, to answer for their irregular practices; and, if need be, to summon witnesses, and take depositions in that matter, and thereafter, either to proceed to sentence, or refer the affair to the said Commission, as they shall see cause; and they empower the Commission to proceed to censure as they shall think fit. And the General Assembly hereby declares that the said Mr John Hepburn and the parish of Orr are under the inspection of the Presbytery of Dumfries; and the Assembly makes void all acts made formerly to the contrary. And the Assembly instructs their Commission, if need be, to apply to the civil government for suppressing the disorders of the said Mr John M'Millan, Mr John Taylor, Mr John M'Neil, Mr John Adamson, Mr John Hepburn, and Mr James Gilchrist, and also for punishing such as are guilty of solemnizing marriages clandestinely, and contrary to law; and appoints Presbyteries to send in timeously full informations to the Commission, that the same may be laid before the Government.

The General Assembly appoints Presbyteries, and the several brethren in those countries where Popery abounds, or where Episcopal preachers do intrude into parishes, churches, manses, or glebes, to send up to the Lord Justice-Clerk, and his Majesty's Advocate and Solicitor, particular informations, containing the facts, parties' names, the circumstances of the transgression, such as time, place, &c., with lists of the witnesses, their names and designations, that can prove the said facts.

XVI.

Sess. 12 et ult., May 17, 1715.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the first Thursday of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1716.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 124th Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by
Jo. DUNDAS, Cts. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 3, 1716.

I.

Sess. 1, May 3, 1716.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of Rothes to be recorded.

The General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this National Church of Scotland being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable John Earl of Rothes, his Majesty's commission, sealed with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, of the same tenor with the commission granted by his Majesty to the foresaid Earl last year, constituting him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, is, by order of this Assembly, recorded in their books, to remain therein *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner, May 3, 1716.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. The fresh proofs you have given us, during the course of the late unhappy and unnatural Rebellion, of your firm adherence to those principles on which the security of our government, and the happiness of our subjects do entirely depend; and the accounts we have from time to time received of your great care to infuse the same into the people under your charge, do engage us to return you our hearty thanks, and to renew to you the assurances we have formerly given you, of our unalterable resolution to maintain the established government of the Church of that part of our kingdom of Great Britain, in the full enjoyment of all just rights and privileges. For this end, we have thought fit to countenance your meeting together at this time, and again to make choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, John Earl of Rothes, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly, whose singular zeal for our service, and the interest of his country, by which he has always distinguished himself, as well as his faithful discharge of the same high trust on the last occasion, will, we doubt not, render him acceptable to you. And as we have nothing more in view than promoting true religion and piety, the restoring the peace and quiet of the country, that all our subjects may have it in their power to be happy under our administration, and easy with regard both to their religious and civil concerns, your concurring on your parts to the carrying on of these laudable ends, and your answering these our just views, for the public tranquillity, both of Church and State, is what we earnestly recommend to you; and the confidence we have in your prudence and moderation is such, as leaves us no room to doubt but that we shall have full satisfaction in your conduct. So we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, this 23d day of April, 1716 years, in the second year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

TOWNSHEND.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

May 5, 1716.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We accept, with the greatest thankfulness, your Majesty's royal favour, in continuing to countenance our Assemblies, and the honour of your gracious letter to us. The notice your Majesty is pleased to take of our behaviour, upon occasion of the late unhappy and unnatural Rebellion, as it greatly heightens our satisfaction in having been enabled, by the Divine assistance, to exert ourselves in any way answerably to our duty to your Majesty, so it puts us under new obligations to lay out ourselves, as we have access, to advance the interest of your Majesty's government, upon the peace and prosperity whereof the preservation of our holy religion and our own safety, under God, do entirely depend; and particularly, we judge ourselves most strictly bound to continue our endeavours to impress the minds of the people under our charge with a sense of their happiness under your Majesty's wise and good administration, and of the strictest ties they are under, by laws divine and human, to all the duties of loyalty and fidelity to your Majesty, their only rightful and lawful Sovereign.

That your Majesty should have, in your great condescension, put so high an honour upon us, as to give us thanks for doing what was our unquestionable duty and interest, is a proof of that distinguishing goodness which makes so bright a part of your Majesty's princely character.

We cannot sufficiently express the grateful sense we have of your Majesty's goodness in giving us repeated assurances of your unalterable resolution to maintain the established government of your Church, in the full enjoyment of all just rights and privileges; which gives us full hopes, that in due time we shall obtain redress of the grievances that we were brought under before your Majesty came to the throne, and which were laid before your Majesty by a memorial from the last Assembly.

Your Majesty's choice of the Earl of Rothes to represent your royal person in this Assembly is a particular instance of your Majesty's royal favour to this Church. The extraordinary zeal he hath shown upon all occasions for the Protestant succession, by the part he acted, both before your Majesty's happy accession to the throne, and in the time of the late Rebellion, and his wise and kind conduct in the last Assembly, render him most acceptable to us.

Your Majesty having nothing more in your view than the promoting of true religion and piety, and making all your people happy under your administration, leaves us utterly inexcusable, should we not on our part concur, as we have access, for advancing those great and noble ends, since we are, in the great goodness of God, by a very peculiar providence, under the influence of a prince, who is so great a pattern and encourager of piety and virtue.

We should be wanting to the duty we owe to God, and to the best of kings, if we did not endeavour, by our deportment, to answer the just expectations your Majesty is pleased to have of our prudence and moderation in this Assembly.

We adore the blessed God, who, in great mercy to us, hath brought your Majesty to the throne, and appeared so gloriously in behalf of your just cause, giving you victory over your unprovoked and ungrateful enemies; and, to our amazement, blessed your councils and arms with such speedy success in restoring peace and tranquillity, that the remotest places and islands are represented in this Assembly. That the same God may long preserve your royal person in health and safety; that he may enrich your Majesty, and your royal family, with all the blessings of His grace and goodness here on earth; and after a long and prosperous reign, crown you with immortal glory, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful, most obedient, and most humble subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 4, May 7, 1716.—Act for furthering the pious Design of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

The which day there was transmitted from the Committee for Bills a petition, the tenor whereof follows:—

“Unto the very reverend the Moderator and others, the reverend and honourable members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, The Petition of the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, humbly sheweth—That we, by our address to the late General Assembly did lay before them a distinct account of the diligence, success, and progress of the Society, and obtained from them a pressing recommendation for a public contribution toward the further advancing of the Christian undertaking of the Society, by furnishing their scholars with necessary books, and settling of more schools in those places that want the same; but the breaking out of the late unnatural Rebellion did put a stop to the prosecuting of that recommendation. We think this late insurrection has given a convincing evidence how hurtful the rudeness and ignorance of the common people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland has proven, and may yet prove, to the commonwealth, if care be not taken to cure it; for it is obvious that this did, and will still make them fit tools in the hands of their Popish and Jacobite chieftains and landlords, for carrying on their rebellious projects of overturning our happy establishment: whereas, were those poor people more impressed with the right notions of a Deity, and were better acquainted with the principles of our holy religion, that teaches obedience, next unto God, unto supreme lawful authority; were they, by being inured to virtue, and by education, in honest employments, freed from the pinching straits of extreme poverty, which occasions their slavish subjection to their masters, they would not so blindly go in to the measures of their imperious landlords or superiors; and the procuring all these advantages is the plain design and palpable tendency, and will be the certain effect of the care of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, if it be duly encouraged: And it is hoped, that all the true lovers of our holy religion, and of their king and country, will need no other argument to induce them cheerfully and liberally to contribute to so noble and Christian an undertaking than this, to make of a poor, rude, and ignorant people, now dangerous and hurtful to the nation, profitable members of the commonwealth. And the Committee does not doubt but as our Church has, in all her Assemblies, shown a great readiness to forward the design of the Society, so now, when, through the mercy and goodness of God, that dangerous Rebellion is suppressed, this venerable Assembly will find themselves called and encouraged to continue the same pious and Christian zeal.

“May it therefore please this Venerable Assembly, to cause read the said Act and Recommendation, and to renew the same, appointing all Presbyteries to cause intimate the foresaid Act from the pulpits within their bounds, and to send in their contributions to the treasurer of the Society; and also a Report of their diligence to the Commission of the General Assembly, betwixt and the first day of January next.

“This, in name of the said Committee, is subscribed by Alexander Dundas, P. C.”

The General Assembly having heard and considered the foresaid petition, and opinion of their Committee for Bills thereupon; and having caused read the said Act and recommendation of the late General Assembly in favour of the foresaid Society, did, and hereby do, renew the same, and did unanimously recommend a public collection at all the church doors within Scotland, (except the churches of Edinburgh,) upon the third Lord's Day of August next; and that the said collection be in Edinburgh at such a time, and in such a manner, as shall be thought most proper by the magistrates of the said city, and committee of the Society. And the General Assembly appoints the money thus collected to be forthwith lodged by the several ministers in the hands of the moderators of their Presbyteries, who are

desired to keep an exact account of what they receive, and from whom, and when; and the said moderators are desired to send up the said money as it comes to their hands, together with a copy of the said accounts, to Mr George Watson, merchant, the Society's treasurer, with all convenient diligence, to be disposed of for the uses expressed in the said Act and recommendation of the late General Assembly; and appoints that Act, together with these presents, to be read at the intimation of this collection, from the pulpits, on the Lord's Day preceding the said collection. And the General Assembly earnestly desires all ministers and others who have subscribed, and have not paid in what they subscribed for, to send in the same to the Society's treasurer; and appoints the several Presbyteries to see to the effectual prosecution of this recommendation within their respective bounds, and to report their diligence herein to their Synods, and also to the Commission of this Assembly, betwixt and the first day of January next. And, further, the General Assembly appoints their Moderator, and others of their number, who are members of the foresaid Society, at their first general meeting, to give them the hearty thanks of this Assembly, for their great concern and unwearied diligence in advancing so noble an undertaking, and to show them that this Assembly did most unanimously and cordially grant the desire of the foresaid petition.

V.

May 14, 1716, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into their consideration, that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, &c. (Powers the same as in the immediately preceding years.)

VI.

Sess. 12, May 15, 1716.—A congratulatory Address to the King, upon suppressing the Rebellion.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, cannot look upon ourselves as sitting again under your Majesty's most auspicious protection, after the late wicked Rebellion, which threatened us with the loss of so dear a blessing, without expressing our unfeigned thanks to the Almighty, and declaring to the world our inward joy for your Majesty's successes and our own deliverance.

Safe under your Majesty's happy government—we can look back on the blackest scenes of the late unnatural treason—we can see Rome, in league with the enemy of our Church and State, sowing the seeds of rebellion, souring the minds of heedless people with groundless jealousies, plotting the destruction of your Royal person, on which our happiness, with that of all the Protestant Churches, under God, doth depend, and breaking out at length into open war, with such multitudes of armed traitors as seemed for a season irresistible—and at the same time, we can view, with pleasure, heaven interposing in your Majesty's behalf and in ours, seating your Majesty so seasonably upon the throne, early disclosing the hidden treason, guiding your Majesty's steady councils, leading your victorious General, the Duke of Argyle, to the unexpected overthrow of such unequal numbers, and conducting him in the pursuit of the Pretender to your Crown, till, by an inglorious flight, he left our country free from the great dangers we were in by the Rebellion, and his deluded friends filled with confusion. Upon all which, we cannot but, with thankful hearts, acknow-

ledge our deep sense of your Majesty's wise and fatherly care for your loyal subjects, which neither the extraordinary rigour of the season, nor the fallacious proposals of the rebels, could divert from the necessary means of their speedy relief.

Great Sir, it is to us matter of particular thankfulness and joy, that, amidst so great difficulties and dangers, the ministers and members of this Church have, through the Divine favour, been helped to a firm and zealous adherence to your Majesty's person and government; and it is our firm resolution to persevere in our duty and loyalty to your Majesty, and to make it our constant and earnest request to our gracious God, that He may unite the hearts of all your subjects into a sense of their great happiness under the government of the best of kings.

May the same kind Providence that hath so signally watched over, and eminently blessed your royal person, continue to preserve your Majesty, bless your royal family, direct your councils, and make your reign over us long and prosperous; and, after your Majesty, may the crown of these kingdoms, and the defence of the Protestant religion, descend to your royal issue to latest posterity.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

VII.

May 15, 1716.—Act renewing the Commission and Powers given by the late General Assembly to their Committee for preserving and maintaining the Purity of Doctrine, and for considering the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson.

The General Assembly, considering that they have not now time fully and deliberately to consider the points charged by Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson as error, and that it is necessary, for preserving the purity of doctrine and peace of this Church, that the same be thoroughly examined, and that the Assembly do what is proper for them at this time to hinder the spreading of error in this Church; therefore, the General Assembly do hereby enjoin the said Mr John Simson, and all others whatsoever, to forbear teaching, or any way venting the propositions charged by the said Mr James Webster against the said Mr Simson as error, and given in to this Assembly, until they be cognosed and determined by the judicatures of this Church. And the Committee appointed by the last Assembly having made some progress in their work, which they had not time to finish, being hindered therein by the late Rebellion; therefore, to the end that this affair may be fully tried and examined, the General Assembly does hereby renew the commission and instructions given by the late General Assembly to the ministers and ruling elders therein named; and do not only appoint such of the said persons as are yet alive to proceed according to the said commission and instructions, in examining the points remitted to them by the said last Assembly; but they do now also refer to their consideration the positions that have been laid before this said Assembly by the said Mr James Webster, and Mr Simson's answers thereto, and all other things relating to this affair; particularly they remit to the consideration of the said committee the following points that were reserved by them to be determined after the finishing of the principal cause, viz., that as to Mr Simson's publishing copies of the printed process, and the manner in which Mr Webster brought in the cause before this Assembly, by publishing in print his charge of error, in a postscript to the printed copies of Mr Simson's letters to the deceased Mr Robert Rowan, and Mr Webster's answers to this Assembly, when they desired him to class his propositions, and specify the articles of the Confession of Faith to which they were opposite. And the General Assembly do hereby empower the said Committee to give such directions to the said Mr Simson as they shall think necessary; and, in the mean time, until the matter be fully tried and examined by this Church, and the said Mr John Simson be convicted, the Assembly discharges all the ministers of this Church, either in preaching or by printing, to charge the said Mr Simson as guilty of error; but prejudice always to them to state the same propositions that are charged against him, and to refute the same by as

strong arguments as they shall think fit. And the General Assembly appoints the said committee to meet for the ends above mentioned, and expressed in their former commission and instructions, at Edinburgh, upon Friday the tenth day of August next to come, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, in the Assembly-House, and to sit *de die in diem*, until they have finished their work. And the Assembly do peremptorily require all the members of the said committee to give punctual attendance at all the diets of their meetings, as they would not be chargeable by this Church with all the bad consequences that may follow the delaying of this affair; and to the end they may have no excuse, the Assembly appoints the clerk to advertise all the members of the said committee by letters or otherwise, of the time appointed for their meeting, four weeks before the same approach; and do appoint the several Presbyteries, to which the ministers, members of the said Committee, do belong, to supply their churches by preaching during all the time that they are waiting upon the business hereby committed to them. And the Assembly appoints the said Committee to prepare and lay before the next ensuing Assembly a full and distinct report of their proceedings in the matter above committed to them. The Assembly having called parties to intimate the premises to them, Mr Simson compeared, and protested, That all these errors contained in Mr Webster's libel that are contrary to the Scriptures, and our Confession of Faith or Catechism, he has never taught them as his opinion, or as truth, but has, on the contrary, refuted them, and is resolved, through the grace of God, still to forbear the teaching such errors; and, therefore, he did look upon the foresaid injunction only to import that he is not to teach such errors as several members of this Church have (by wrong reports that have gone through the land) imagined had been taught by him, for which the former part of this his declaration, he hoped, would give sufficient satisfaction until the process be duly tried; for he was persuaded the venerable Assembly would not do any thing so contrary to the common rules of equity and justice, as to lay on him an injunction which did insinuate that he had taught any error before they had heard the cause, and found him guilty; and he protested further, That Mr Webster had succumbed in the probation of his printed libel, viz., his postscript to the printed copy of the letters to Mr Robert Rowan; and that, in case if this Assembly do not publish in their minutes what may clear this to the world, he protested, that he might have liberty to publish his own vindication. The General Assembly having heard this protest, they do hereby empower the said committee to suspend the said Mr Simson for such time as they shall think fit, in case it be found that he contravene the injunctions hereby given to him; and they remitted the consideration thereof to the committee appointed to consider the whole process.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 14, 1716.—Act for facilitating the Planting of the Highlands.

The General Assembly, considering the many vacancies that are now in the North and Highlands, they do discharge the planting in Lowland congregations preachers having the Irish language, especially such as have been educated upon the Highland bursaries, or the transporting to the Lowlands ministers planted in the Highlands without a particular allowance of the General Assembly.

IX.

May 16, 1716.—Act empowering the Commission to send Committees to the Highlands, &c.

The General Assembly empowers their Commission to send committees to the North and Highlands, to visit the churches there, and consider the state thereof, and to purge and plant kirks; and which committees are to join the Presbyteries of the bounds they are sent to, and to assist them in their work.

X.

Sess. ult., May 16, 1716.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the first Thursday of May next to come, being the second day of that month, in the year of our Lord 1717.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 124th Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 2, 1717.

I.

Sess. 1, May 2, 1717.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of Rothes to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this National Church of Scotland being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable John Earl of Rothes, his Majesty's Commission, sealed with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, of the same tenor with the Commission granted by his Majesty to the foresaid Earl the last year, and also in the year 1715, constituting him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this Assembly; which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, is ordered by this Assembly to be recorded in their books, to remain therein, *ad futuram rei memoriam*.

II.

The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner, May 2, 1717.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 4, 1717.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 7, May 8, 1717.—Act and Recommendation for the further Encouragement of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and bringing in the Collections for buying Books, &c.

The which day there was presented and read a representation from the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, showing that the said Society are very sensible of the care and concern which this Church and her Assemblies have shown for the success of their Christian undertaking, and that the kind assistance given by this Church to the said Society has much advanced their work, particularly the recommendation of the late General Assembly for a contribution to buy books has taken very good effect in some places; for divers charitable persons in many parishes have contributed very liberally, though there are still some few Presbyteries, and several parishes, deficient in this late collection, as there are some who either have not yet collected or contributed, or at least have not sent in the money recommended by the General Assembly, 1709; wherefore, the Committee took this occasion, in name of the Society, to acknowledge the assistance given to them by this Church from time to time, particularly by the recommendation of the late collection, and earnestly to entreat that they would cause the diligence of Synods, Presbyteries, and ministers, in making the foresaid collections effectual, to be noticed in the revising of the Synod books, and to be otherwise inquired into, and would again pressingly recommend both to ministers and people, deficient in both or either of the foresaid collections, to send in the same to the Society's treasurer as soon as possible, and also to recommend to Synods, Presbyteries, and ministers, who have failed in observing what has been enjoined by former Assemblies as to such contributions, that with all diligence they set about what is required of them in that matter. The Committee did not trouble the Assembly with a particular account of the progress and success of the Society's undertaking, having done that so often before; but for the encouragement of all well-wishers to that charitable design, they did notify that the Society had erected as many schools, in such places of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland which did most need the same, as their revenue can support, and that their said schools do flourish extraordinarily, as would appear from the records of the Society and Committee, which are patent to all the contributors that please to inspect them; and the Committee did, in their said representation, invite all such of them as desired to be satisfied as to the management and success of the Society, to call for the secretary or clerks of the said Society, who will communicate to them the Society's said registers and books, for their information in the premises.

The General Assembly having heard and considered this representation, and the deliverance of their Committee for Bills thereupon, bearing, that the desire thereof should be granted; and having further heard some of the members of the said Society upon the subject, they enjoined the visitors of their Synod books, in their going through the same, to take special notice what care Synods have taken in calling Presbyteries to an account of their diligence in promoting the collections for Christian knowledge in the several parishes of their bounds, according to the recommendations of former Assemblies, and to lay a full and distinct account hereof before the General Assembly. And the General Assembly again seriously and earnestly recommended both to ministers and people, deficient in both, or either of the foresaid collections, yet to collect and contribute with all cheerfulness, and to send in their money to George Watson, merchant in Edinburgh, the Society's treasurer, as soon as they can; and further, recommended earnestly to all Synods, Presbyteries, and particular ministers, who have failed in what has been enjoined by former Assemblies, as to such contributions, to set about with all diligence what is recommended to them in that matter. And because it is probable that there are several ministers who have entered to their charges since the respective dates of the foresaid recommendations, and so have neither contributed themselves nor collected from their people; therefore, the General Assembly did earnestly desire the said intrant ministers both to contribute

themselves, and to set about collecting in their parishes, in the method prescribed by the Acts of former Assemblies, and that with all diligence. And, *lastly*, the General Assembly did most seriously recommend to all the ministers and members of this Church, that they would give all manner of encouragement to this so pious and charitable an undertaking.

V.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1717.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders, for discussing divers Matters referred to them.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and afterward, the second Wednesday of August, November, and March, and oftener, when or where they shall think needful and convenient, with power to the said Commissioners to choose their own Moderator; and suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commission, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally to determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this General Assembly, and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, them by this Assembly, and to advert to the interests of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable, providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes, before Presbyteries or Synods, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon this whole Church. And it is declared and appointed, that what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved by the General Assembly; and the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed or referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed, and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the seventeenth Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1706. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for meetings of the Commission, and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof, and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

VI.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1717.—Instructions by the General Assembly to their Commission.

1. The Commission are empowered and appointed to take care that what is

enacted and ordered by this and preceding Assemblies be duly observed by all concerned.

2. The Commission, as often as they see cause, are empowered to apply to his Majesty, or any inferior magistrate, for the countenancing of and concurring with the judicatories of the Church, in what the law allows, and for putting in execution the laws against Popery and profaneness, and seeking redress of grievances and abuses, committed contrary to the established doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, the contempt of the censures of the judicatories thereof, inflicted on scandalous persons, and to assist Presbyteries and Synods in planting vacant kirks, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

3. The Commission are empowered and appointed to use all proper means to preserve and maintain all the rights and privileges of this Church, and to lose no opportunity of applying to obtain a redress of what is grievous, with respect to the same, and to send commissioners to London for that effect, if they see cause.

4. The said Commission are empowered to appoint fasts and thanksgivings, as they shall see occasion, and specify the causes thereof, and apply to his Majesty for the civil sanction thereto.

5. The Commission are empowered to give advice and assistance to any Synod or Presbytery in difficult cases, as they shall be applied unto by them for that effect.

6. The Commission are empowered to take special care to keep and maintain unity in the Church upon all emergencies, especially among the ministers thereof; and to gain such as separate therefrom; and to suppress error and schism in this Church, and prosecute the authors and spreaders of books and pamphlets tending thereto; and to take notice how any who have been censured by preceding Assemblies, or Commissions of the same, have carried; and to proceed to further censure, as the Commission shall see cause.

7. The Commission are to take notice of what misrepresentations shall be made, either at home or abroad, of the doctrine, worship, discipline, or constitution of this Church, and to take all proper methods for the vindication thereof.

8. The said Commission are appointed to use their best endeavours to obtain a fund for erecting schools in the Highlands and Islands, and to get the same rightly proportioned, and to do what else may tend to the advancement of religion and reformation in these places; and to keep a correspondence with the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee, and to give them all suitable assistance and encouragement, according to the acts of this and former Assemblies; and to use all proper means in their power for extirpating idolatrous and superstitious practices; and to observe the instructions given by former Assemblies to their Commissions, concerning Libraries, Irish Bibles, Psalm Books, and Catechisms, a school in every parish, according to the fifth Act of the General Assembly, 1707; also to hold hand to the execution of the eighth Act of that Assembly, for "Suppressing Popery, and Preventing the Growth thereof;" and likewise, the fifteenth Act of that Assembly against "Innovations in the Worship of God."

9. The Commission are empowered to send ministers and probationers as need requires, to the North, the Highlands and Islands, and to remove them from one place to another there, as they shall see cause.

10. The Commission are empowered to cognosce and finally determine in all references and appeals about planting vacant churches in the North, the Highlands and Islands, which shall be brought before them, and that in the most expeditious manner, providing that the Commission do not meddle with sentences of Synods in such cases, excepting causes particularly referred to them; but this restriction is not to be extended to ministers or probationers having Irish.

11. The said Commission are empowered to receive any representations or references that shall be made to them by Presbyteries, and others concerned, about large and spacious parishes; and to use all means proper for them for obtaining, and also rendering effectual and preserving new erections in such parishes, or stipends to collegiate ministers.

12. The said Commission are empowered to give all due assistance to the several universities and colleges, when any minister is called to any office therein; and to re-

ceive appeals and references in these cases, and finally to determine in the same ; and they are appointed to consider the state of the said universities and colleges, and to observe the 14th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1711, and as they shall see cause, to apply for a visitation thereof ; as likewise, to inquire whether Synods and Presbyteries do maintain bursars, according to the Acts of the General Assembly, and to take care to provide hopeful youths having the Irish tongue, and take the usual obligations of them ; and when students having that language are found fit to be entered on trials, that they recommend them to Presbyteries for that effect ; and when they shall be licensed, to send them to the North, the Highlands and Islands.

13. To inquire how the tenth Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1711, concerning probationers, and settling ministers, with questions to be proposed to, and engagements to be taken of them, are observed, and to advert that masters in colleges, and all schoolmasters, do subscribe and engage according to the Act of Parliament, *anno* 1707.

14. That the Commission use their best endeavours for further reformation of manners, and the more effectual curbing and suppressing of profaneness and vice, and promoting true religion and godliness, and think on some effectual way to excite to and recommend family worship, in pursuance of the Acts of Assembly, particularly the thirteenth Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1694, and seventh and eleventh Acts of the General Assembly, *anno* 1697, and others, and to inquire if his Majesty's pious proclamation against immorality has been read from the pulpits, according to former orders.

15. The Commission are appointed to take the most effectual course to get the printing, vending, or importing, of incorrect copies of the Holy Scriptures, and of our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, stopped and prevented.

VII.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1717, ante meridiem.—Act concerning the Trial of Students having Irish, who shall be preferred to Bursaries, and licensed.

The General Assembly, considering that divers Students have been recommended to bursaries, as persons having the Irish language, who, after they have been educated, are found not capable to serve in Highland countries, for want of sufficient knowledge of that tongue ; and that sundry probationers have been entered upon trials for the ministry, upon view that they might be useful in the Highlands, who yet, when they are passed and licensed, can do no service, for want of sufficient skill in the said language, do, for preventing these inconveniences in time coming, appoint, that such as crave the benefit of Highland bursaries, or who are to be admitted to trials for the ministry, in order to be sent to the Highlands, be first examined upon their knowledge in the Irish language, by persons having a competent measure of knowledge in that language, bearing that they have so much knowledge of that language as that they may be useful in a Highland congregation. And do ordain that the names of the said examiners, together with their report, be recorded in the books of the judicatory that employs them in the said trials.

VIII.

Sess. 11, May 13, 1717.—Act for suppressing of Popery.

The General Assembly, having considered the complaints from Presbyteries of the growth of Popery, do find, that the laws against the same are very full ; and, therefore, in order to the execution of them, the General Assembly instructs their Commission to apply to the Lord Justice-Clerk, the Lord Advocate, and his Majesty's Solicitor, in order to obtain a vigorous execution of the laws against Popery ; and as to Popish schoolmasters and mistresses, and Popish factors and chamberlains, the Assembly appoints informations about them to be sent to the Procurator and Agents for the Church, that they may be presented according to law ; and because it is

necessary that the informations to be given be regular, and the means of probation such as the law requires: Therefore, the General Assembly appoints the informers, in framing the said informations, to observe exactly the directions given in this matter, in the 15th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1714.

IX.

Sess. 12, May 14, 1717.—Act for maintaining the Purity of the Doctrine of this Church, and determining the Process, Mr James Webster against Mr John Simson.

The General Assembly, considering that much of their time has been spent upon the process pursued by Mr James Webster, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, against Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow, laid before them by the report of the committee for purity of doctrine; and that they cannot overtake the whole, by discussing particularly every article—it being, nevertheless, expedient and requisite that this affair be brought to some issue, that may testify the zeal and concern of this Assembly for the preservation of truth and peace in this Church, and preventing what may tend to the hurt and prejudice thereof; therefore, although Professor Simson does declare his adherence to our Confession of Faith, and doctrines therein contained, as his judgment, and his disowning the errors opposite thereto, wherewith he was charged; yet, considering that, by his printed answers, and the letters written by him to the now deceased Mr Robert Rowan, some time minister at Penninghame, and his letter to the foresaid committee for purity of doctrine, dated the 14th of April 1716 years, he hath given offence, and that it is judged that therein he hath vented some opinions not necessary to be taught in divinity, and that have given more occasion to strife than to the promoting of edification; that he hath used some expressions that bear and are used by adversaries in a bad and unsound sense, though he doth disown that unsound sense; and for answering more satisfiably (as he supposeth) the cavils and objections of adversaries, he hath adopted some hypotheses different from what are commonly used among orthodox divines, that are not evidently founded on Scripture, and tend to attribute too much to natural reason and the power of corrupt nature,—which undue advancement of reason and nature is always to the disparagement of revelation and efficacious free grace. The General Assembly, for the reasons above mentioned, prohibits and discharges the said Mr John Simson to use such expressions, or to teach, preach, or otherwise vent such opinions, propositions, or hypotheses as aforesaid; and as concerning the parties in this process, whatever complaints have been made as to the manner of raising or managing this process on either hand, the General Assembly, for peace's sake, do overlook and pass these without further insisting thereon, and do discharge any prosecution on either side on these accounts; and further, for the more effectual preserving the purity of doctrine and peace of this Church, and preventing strife and contentious debates, which are prejudicial to truth, brotherly love, and the life of serious religion, the General Assembly extends the foresaid prohibition to all professors of divinity, ministers, and preachers, and all others in this Church; and, particularly, the General Assembly discharges them to vent any doctrines not agreeable to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, especially such opinions as either ascribe too much to corrupt nature, or tend to encourage sloth among Christians, or slacken people's obligation unto gospel holiness. And, moreover, the General Assembly recommends to all Faculties in Universities, and to all Presbyteries within this Church, to see this Act observed by all the persons foresaid, within their several jurisdictions, and to censure the contraveners, as they shall see cause. And the General Assembly empowers their Commission to give advice to Presbyteries, and to judge in causes and cases of that kind that shall be brought before them; and when any such cases shall happen, the General Assembly hereby appoints Presbyteries to acquaint the Commission before they proceed to any sentence of suspension or deposition, against any person that shall come to be tried in prosecution of this Act.

X.

Sess. 13, May 14, 1717.—Act discharging Presbyteries to use any Formula in licensing Probationers, and ordaining or admitting Ministers, but such as is or shall be agreed unto by the General Assembly, with a Reference to the Commission of the Presbytery of Auchterarder's carriage in that matter.

The Committee for Bills having transmitted to the Assembly an appeal entered by Mr William Craig against the Presbytery of Auchterarder, for their refusing to give him an extract of his licence to preach the Gospel, notwithstanding that he was approved by them in all the steps of his trials, and was actually licensed—the opinion of the Committee for Bills in this matter was read; and the said Mr William Craig, and the commissioners from the Presbytery of Auchterarder, being called, the said Mr Craig, pursuer of this appeal, and Mr Andrew Burgh, one of the commissioners from the Presbytery, compeared; and the moderator of the Committee for Bills gave a distinct account of the whole matter, as the same was laid before the said committee; particularly, that the said Presbytery had refused Mr Craig the extract of his licence, because he did not satisfy them as to some articles of faith required of him by them, whereof this was one, viz. “And farther, That I believe that it is not sound and orthodox to teach that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God.” Parties being heard and removed, the Assembly, after discoursing upon the subject of the said appeal, and answers made thereto by the commissioners from the Presbytery, did agree that the foresaid Presbytery of Auchterarder be forthwith appointed, and the General Assembly hereby appoints the said Presbytery, to give the said Mr William Craig an extract of his licence to preach the Gospel, and do instruct their Commission to see this appointment obeyed. And the General Assembly discharges the Presbytery of Auchterarder, or any other Presbytery within this National Church, to require subscriptions of any young men to be licensed to preach the Gospel, or ordained to the office of the ministry, to any formula but such as is or shall be agreed to and approved by the Assemblies of this Church. And further, the General Assembly did declare their abhorrence of the foresaid proposition, as unsound and most detestable, as it stands, and was offered by the said Presbytery to be subscribed by Mr Craig; but in regard the ministers of the said Presbytery of Auchterarder were not present to answer for themselves, what they could design by such a proposition, the Assembly agreed that they should be called to an account upon this head. But a question arising, Whether this should be done before the Synod of Perth and Stirling or the Commission of the General Assembly? a vote was stated, Synod or Commission; and before calling of the rolls, it was resolved, that in case the vote should carry for the Synod, then the Synod shall report to the Commission. After this, the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Commission; wherefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint the Presbytery of Auchterarder to be cited to compear before the Commission of the General Assembly at Edinburgh, in the Assembly-House, the second Wednesday of August next, with continuation of days, to answer to them in the matter above written, with certification, &c. And the Assembly did, and hereby do, empower their Commission to cognosce and determine in this matter as they shall find just.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 15, 1717.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the 14th day of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1718.

This Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1718.

I.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1718.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of Rothes to be Recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner, 14th May 1718.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1718.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 19, 1718.—Act and Recommendation concerning a Fund for maintaining the Indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers.

The General Assembly, finding that it often falls out that many of the widows and orphans of the ministers of this Church are brought into great straits, do judge it necessary and laudable that some way be fallen upon for relief of such, they, in order thereunto, did, and hereby do, seriously recommend to every minister in Scotland to give and dedicate the tenth part of his stipend for one year, for the end foresaid, and do appoint the same to be paid in, in money, and no otherwise, to the moderator of each Presbytery, betwixt and the 15th day of May 1719 years, or betwixt and the 15th day of May 1721 years, with the ordinary annual rent thereof, from the said 15th day of May 1719 to the time that the same shall be paid; and if ministers do not pay in their tenth part of their stipends for one year, at the times and in the terms above mentioned, they discharge the Presbyteries and Synods to receive the same, though afterwards offered; and appoints every Synod to nominate a responsible person within their bounds, for receiving the same from the moderators of the Presbyteries. 2do, The General Assembly farther recommends to every minister hereafter to be ordained or admitted within the bounds of any Synod, that he, within the space of two years after his admission, pay in, in manner foresaid, the tenth part of one year's stipend he is entitled to, by that admission, if he has not already paid into another Synod; and the Assembly declares, that his relict and children shall be entitled to a share of the fund in that Synod where the said minister paid, and not in that where he last served, except he have contributed in that Synod also, which it is hereby declared he is at liberty to do or not as he pleases. 3tio, The Assembly appoints that the money collected in every Synod be turned into a stock, and that it be lent out upon good security, and that only the yearly interest thereof be distributed, and that the stock be kept entire; and if the annual rent shall at any time happen to do more than serve the exigencies of the widows and children in the Synod, they appoint

the said superplus annual rent to be added to the stock, in order to increase the fund. 4^{to}, The Assembly appoints that the contributors in every Synod shall have the management of what sums shall be collected and given for the ends foresaid, to the widows and children of ministers who have served and contributed within their bounds, and that none other shall have right thereto. 5^{to}, That no ministers' widows and children shall have any benefit from this fund, except their husband or father have actually paid in the tenth part of their stipend for one year, and do instruct the same. 6^{to}, That no minister's widow shall have any title to this fund after they shall be married to another husband, or children after their marriage, or being in case to do for themselves, or be known to have a competency to subsist upon, or shall be found unworthy thereof, by any unsuitable carriage; of all which, the contributors within the bounds of every Synod are to be the judges. 7^{mo}, That no widow or child, entitled to a share of this fund, shall be allowed above ten pounds sterling yearly thereof; and the Assembly hereby allows the contributors to give less, and in such proportions as the fund will bear, and the circumstances of the persons require. 8^{vo}, If any other charitably disposed person, besides ministers, shall think fit to contribute to this pious design, the Assembly hereby resolve and declare that they shall have a vote and power in the management and distribution of the foresaid funds; provided always, that their said contribution be not under ten pounds sterling money. 9^{no}, The Assembly hereby enacts and declares, that none shall have a vote or power in the management and distribution of this fund, but such as have contributed thereto; and for that end, they appoint that there be a meeting of those persons every Synod, for ordering what concerns this matter; and the moderator of the Synod shall preside in that meeting, and the clerk of the Synod shall be clerk thereto, if they have contributed; but if not, the General Assembly appoints others to be chosen preses and clerk to the said meeting: And the Assembly hereby warrants and allows the said contributors to appoint a committee of their own number to manage the concerns of this fund, in the intervals of the Synod's meetings; but it is hereby provided and declared, that the said committee shall have no power to dispose of any part of the money; and they are hereby ordained to report an account of their actings to the next meeting at the Synod. 10^{mo}, The General Assembly hereby prohibit and discharge any distribution to be made but at the ordinary diets of the Synod; and do appoint and declare, that the plurality of the meeting shall, by their vote, determine any difference that may arise about the matter. 11^{mo}, The Assembly hereby declares, that such Presbyteries as have already settled a fund for their widows and children, shall be at liberty either to keep and manage the same by themselves, or to join with the Synod, as they shall think best, provided that the *quota* of the Presbytery's said fund do extend to a tenth part of the whole stipends within the said Presbytery, and that they declare their resolution at the meeting of their Synod preceding the year 1719. And, *lastly*, It is hereby provided and declared, that if any event unforeseen shall fall in, that may stop and hinder the execution of the above articles in the manner that they are proposed, the premises shall be ordered and managed according to further rules and directions, to be given by the subsequent General Assemblies of this Church.

V.

Sess. 12, May 23, 1718, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for discussing divers Matters referred to them.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Wisheart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of the General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said persons, &c. (The powers are the same as those given to the Commission of last year; and a clause is inserted renewing the instructions of 1717, and appointing them to stand in full force.)

VI.

Sess. 15, May 26, 1718.—Act discontinuing the extraordinary Correspondence with the Synod of Angus and Mearns.

The General Assembly, finding that the Assembly, held *anno* 1701, by their 7th Act did appoint the Synods of Lothian and Tweeddale, Perth and Stirling, Fife and Aberdeen, to send correspondents to the Synod of Angus and Mearns; and that the said correspondence is, by the said act, appointed to continue until the Assembly shall see cause to alter it: And the Assembly considering, that now, in the good Providence of God, the churches within the said Synod are generally planted, so that the reasons which moved the Assembly to enjoin the said extraordinary correspondence have thereby ceased: Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, continue the extraordinary correspondence appointed by the said act only for one year next ensuing, declaring, that thenceforth the said extraordinary correspondence shall cease, and the foresaid four Synods shall be freed of the burden thereof, unless, upon application from the Synod of Angus and Mearns to subsequent Assemblies, they shall see cause to continue or renew the same.

VII.

Sess. 15, May 26, 1718.—Act for the better dispatching the Business of Assemblies.

The General Assembly, finding that their business is much retarded by parties having references, appeals, and complaints, to lay before the Assembly, their not giving them timeously in to the Committee for Bills; and that by such delays the Assembly is often necessarily obliged to commit several of their weighty affairs to their Commission, which were more proper to be judged by themselves: Therefore, they do hereby appoint and ordain all references, appeals, and complaints, that shall be made in time coming to the General Assemblies of this Church, to be lodged in the clerk's hands on or before the second or third days of the Assembly's meetings, that thereby they may timeously have a full view of all their work, and may be able to judge what things are of the greatest weight, and are necessary to be dispatched by themselves, if they cannot overtake the whole; with certification, that all appeals or complaints not lodged in the clerk's hands within the time foresaid, shall be held as deserted and fallen from, and shall not thereafter be received, unless upon the first opportunity the parties concerned make it appear to the Assembly, that insuperable difficulties did withhold them from lodging the same in manner above set down. And the General Assembly enjoins the clerks of the several judicatories to transmit to the clerk of Assembly within the time foresaid, all references made by the respective judicatures to the General Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1718.—Act concerning the Presbytery of Auchterarder.

The General Assembly, finding that the Assembly, held *anno* 1717, did condemn a proposition emitted by the Presbytery of Auchterarder, and referred to their Commission, to call the brethren of that Presbytery before them, to give an account what they meant by the said proposition; and that they having compared before the Commission, and represented what they intended by it, the Commission agreed to accept of the sense they offered, declaring always, that however sound and orthodox they were in their meaning, and what they intended by that proposition, yet they had expressed it in words very unwarrantable and exceptionable; and the Commission did admonish them and discharge them to use that expression in time coming;

and the brethren of Auchterarder did engage to observe this their prohibition. The General Assembly approves of the actings of the said Commission in this matter; and, for the vindication of the brethren of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, they appointed these presents to be printed among their public acts.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1718.—Act Regulating Elections of Members of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, finding it necessary, for the good and safety of the Church, that the General Assemblies be rightly constituted, do, therefore, resolve and appoint, that in all time coming no commission from any Presbytery, burgh, or university, to their representatives in the General Assemblies of this Church, shall be sustained, but such as are in the terms of the Acts of the General Assembly, made for regulating elections of members of Assemblies, particularly the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1694, entitled, "Act anent the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assemblies;" Act 6th of the General Assembly, 1698, entitled, "Act for punctual sending of Commissioners to the General Assemblies, and their Attendance during the Sitting thereof;" and the 6th Act of the General Assembly, 1704, entitled, "Act anent Commissions to the General Assembly, and their subscribing the Confession of Faith, which are hereby renewed." And the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries not only to elect their full number of commissioners, but also to be careful to choose such persons as probably can attend. And the Assembly appoints that Presbyteries who send not up their full number of commissioners, and persons commissioned, who either come not up, or are absent from any of the diets of Assembly, be censured, unless relevant excuses for them be laid before and be admitted by the General Assembly: And further, the General Assembly does resolve, and peremptorily enact and appoint, that in all time coming, no commission whatsoever, for any ruling elder, or ruling elders, to sit as members of the General Assemblies of this Church, be sustained, but such as shall bear particularly that they have signed the formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1694, unless the said elders do either instantly subscribe it in presence of the Assembly, or a committee appointed by them, or do instruct that they have already subscribed the same; and to prevent all inconveniences of this sort in time coming, the General Assembly appoints that all Commissions after they are written out and extracted, and before they be put in the hands of the commissioners, be first read in the presence of the Presbytery, and be revised by them, and that it be attested by the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery upon the said Commissions that this was so done: And suchlike, the General Assembly has resolved, until the matter concerning commissions from burghs be further thought upon, and hereby do resolve, appoint, and ordain, that, in the meantime, no commissions from royal burghs to their representatives in Assembly shall be sustained, but such as shall be consented to and approved, not only by the ministry and kirk-sessions of the burgh, as is resolved by the Act of Assembly, July 15, 1647, but also by the Presbytery of the bounds within which the burgh lies; and upon which it shall be attested, both by the Kirk-session and Presbytery foresaid, that the person or persons therein named are elders lawfully ordained, and have signed the formula above mentioned; and likewise, that they are either residents in the burgh, or heritors in the burgh, or in the bounds of the Presbytery where the burgh lies, or that they have formerly resided and officiated as elders in the said burgh or Presbytery. And, *lastly*, The General Assembly extends the time limited by the foresaid 6th Act of the General Assembly, 1698, for choosing commissioners from Presbyteries, to those that shall hereafter be sent from royal burghs.

X.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1718.—Act concerning the larger Overtures for Discipline.

The General Assembly, considering the necessity of having a complete system of rules for the procedure of the judicatures of this Church in matters of discipline, and that the framing of this is one of the most proper works of the General Assemblies of this Church, from which they have been long diverted by other incidental things, and not having time now to overtake this necessary work, the General Assembly do revive the 17th Act of Assembly, 1707, and the 16th Act of Assembly, 1710, and again appoints the several Presbyteries who have not sent up their remarks upon the larger overtures, to transmit them to the Clerk of the Commission, betwixt and their meeting in August next, or November at farthest; and they appoint letters to be written by their Commission, at their first meeting, to each Presbytery for this effect; and ordains their Commission, at their said first meeting, to appoint a committee to class and put in order the remarks upon those overtures which are already come up, and those which shall be sent up; that upon the report of this Commission, the next General Assembly may be ready to enter upon this necessary work. And the General Assembly recommends it to the several Presbyteries to send up such members to the next General Assembly as may be most in case to help forward this important work.

 XL

Sess. ult., May 27, 1718.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the second Thursday of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1719, being the 14th day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 122d Psalm, from verse 6th to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1719.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 14, 1719.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of
Rothes to be Recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

 II.

*The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his
Majesty's Commissioner, 14th May 1719.*

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Under the full assurance of the constant zeal and affection of the Church of Scotland to our person and go-

vernment, we do, with great willingness, countenance your General Assembly at this time, being confident that you will now meet with the same good disposition, and conduct yourselves with that temper and unanimity as you have hitherto done.

You may most firmly assure yourselves of our ready and cheerful concurrence in whatever methods shall be taken for the promoting true religion and piety, the discouraging profaneness and immorality, and for the preventing the growth of Popery.

The differences which have for some time been among you on account of the oaths, I hope, shall now be happily removed, and I must recommend it to you to be upon your guard against the practices of such as would endeavour to raise unhappy divisions among you, there being nothing that can tend more to your honour and welfare than concord and brotherly love.

We have again made choice of our right trusty and well-beloved cousin, John Earl of Rothes, to represent our person in this Assembly, whose known abilities to discharge that trust, together with his former services therein, will, we doubt not, make him acceptable to you. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court, at St James's, the 23d April 1719, in the fifth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

ROXBURGH.

Directed to the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1719.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The great honour done us by your Majesty's most gracious Letter, and your royal goodness in condescending to signify your satisfaction with former General Assemblies, adds new life and vigour to that constant zeal and affection to your Majesty's person and government, which the members of this Church reckon their duty and their glory, and lays us under the strongest obligations to conduct ourselves with that temper and unanimity that becomes us; and to endeavour, in the best manner we are able, to approve ourselves to God and to your Majesty.

The great encouragement we have, by your Majesty's assuring us of your ready and cheerful concurrence in whatever methods shall be taken for promoting true religion and piety, the discouraging profaneness and immorality, and preventing the growth of Popery, renders us inexcusable, should we be wanting on our part to exert ourselves to the utmost towards obtaining these good ends.

Your Majesty's extraordinary condescension in taking care to have the differences amongst us, on account of the oaths, happily removed, is an unparalleled instance of royal goodness, for which we can never be sufficiently thankful; and as it gives us the comfortable prospect of happy effects to follow upon it, so it calls us to guard ourselves, with the strictest care and watchfulness, against the practices of such as would endeavour to raise unhappy divisions amongst us, and whatever may lessen that concord and brotherly love, which tends so much to the honour and welfare of this Church.

The Earl of Rothes his steady adherence at all times to the interest of the happy Revolution and Protestant succession, his great zeal for your Majesty's service, his good affection to the Church of Scotland, the proof he has formerly given, of his eminent abilities for discharging the high trust wherewith he is now clothed, render your Majesty's choice of him to represent your Royal person in this Assembly most acceptable to us.

That Almighty God may plentifully enrich your Majesty with his best blessings, and advance your glorious designs for the happiness of your own people, and the good of the whole Protestant interest; that his watchful Providence may be your protection, and return you in safety to Great Britain; that he may eminently bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, their Royal offspring, and all your Royal Family; that as He has signally appeared in defeating the attempts of your Majesty's enemies, so He would continue his goodness in supporting your righteous cause, bless and direct your councils, and prosper your arms for preserving the quiet of your dominions, and restoring the peace of Europe; and that, after a long and prosperous reign on earth, your Majesty may be crowned with immortal glory in Heaven, are the most fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

JAMES GRIERSON, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 4, May 18, 1719.—Act for preventing the Growth of Popery, for Encouragement of Ministers, and the Settlement and Provision of Schools.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the extraordinary growth of Popery in several places of Scotland, do, for preventing thereof, exhort and enjoin all Presbyteries and particular ministers, and Kirk-sessions, to have a watchful eye on the Papists within their bounds, and to take up lists of their names, and to send the same to the Commission of the General Assembly, to be laid before his Majesty's Advocate, or to be otherwise used by the Commission as they shall see cause; and that the said Presbyteries, ministers, and Kirk-sessions, be at all pains to reclaim Papists, and that they observe what is enjoined for that end, by the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1707; and suchlike, that Presbyteries, in whose bounds there are Papists, do give in informations against them, according to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1714; and the General Assembly likewise appoints Presbyteries to hold visitations in those parishes where Popery abounds, and inquire into the circumstances thereof, the number of catechisable persons therein, how many of them are Protestants, and how many Papists, and who of them are apostates; as also, what is the length and breadth of such parishes, and what the real rent, and also the valued rent of each heritor extends to, that so it may be known where new erections are practicable, and how much each parish may afford toward the maintenance of schools, conform to law. And, further, the General Assembly appoints that at these visitations the churches and manse be also inspected by tradesmen in a legal manner; and that where ministers do want glebes, grass, or other accommodations, the course prescribed by law be followed; and that an extract of what is done in the premises be sent to the procurator and agent for the Church, that diligence may be taken out thereon, according to law. And, in like manner, where schools are wanting in any parish, the General Assembly hereby appoints that Presbyteries make legal intimation to the heritors and parishioners to meet on a certain day, and at a certain place, to stent themselves for a salary to a schoolmaster, and for the needful accommodations for him, as is appointed by 5th Act Parliament 1st, Charles I. *anno* 1633, and 26th Act, Sess. 2d, Parliament King William, *anno* 1696, and that they appoint a committee to meet with them; and if the heritors and parishioners, and, failing the heritors, the most part of the parishioners, do meet, they may proceed to stent, and also to proportion the money laid on; but if they either meet not, or, being met, do fail in settling a salary and providing a house for the schoolmaster, then, and in that case, the Assembly appoints the Presbytery to present a petition to the Commissioners of Supply, or any five or more of them, with an extract of the valued rent of the parish, and crave that the

Commissioners may, in the terms of the foresaid Acts of Parliament, settle a school; and if the Commissioners refuse or shift the doing of it, that instruments be taken against them, and thereupon a process be commenced before the Lords of Council and Session, who have already, in the like cases, provided salaries and houses for schoolmasters. And if, when all this is done, the heritors will not call a qualified schoolmaster, the General Assembly appoints and requires the Presbytery, after the expiring of one year, to order intimation to be made from the pulpit to the heritors and parishioners to meet upon a certain day, in order to elect and present one to be schoolmaster; and if at that time they do it not, the Presbytery is appointed to present one; and, after edicts duly published with respect to him, to admit and settle him. And, lastly, where competent stipends are not provided in parishes where Popery abounds, or where the stipends are paid in small parcels, the General Assembly appoints the Presbytery concerned to cause draw up a state of these stipends, how, and by whom they are paid, and also an account of the real rent of each heritor in such parishes, and send the same to the procurator and agent for the Church, who, upon receipt thereof, are ordered to commence processes for settling of competent stipends to the ministers, where the same is not already done; and the Assembly appoints the expenses of processes for settling of stipends and schools in parishes where Popery abounds, to be borne out of the Church's public money.

V.

Sess. 5, May 19, 1719.—Representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with an Act thereupon.

The which day, there was again brought in from the Committee for Bills a representation, the tenor whereof follows:—

“Unto the Right Reverend and Honourable, the Moderator and remanent Members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge humbly represents—That the venerable Assemblies, and other judicatures of this Church, having all along showed so much zeal for the advancement of the Society's undertaking, they find themselves bound in duty, in the Society's name, to make a public acknowledgment of it; and for the encouragement of the Church to continue her kind assistance to the Society in their work, to lay before this venerable Assembly a short account of the success with which it has pleased God to bless their endeavours, and to show them, that not only did a multitude of charitable people, of all ranks, contribute liberally in the ordinary public collections, but divers persons have, beside their first donations in common with others, mortified considerable sums to the Society's stock, whereby it is now increased to upwards of L.7000 sterling; and the Society and their committee have not only taken care to lay out this on good and unquestionable security, but have, upon the yearly annual rent thereof, erected, and have determined instantly to erect, to the number of forty-two, schools in such places of the Highlands and Islands as appeared to them, from the best informations, to stand most in need of their assistance, viz., Kintail in Strathnaver, Braccadale in Isle of Skye—this school was formerly at Snizort; Hirta, *alias* St Kilda, a far remote island, where the Society maintains a minister, who is also schoolmaster; Glenmuick in Braemar; Monaltry there; Harray in Orkney; Abertarff in the Shire of Inverness; Tomnavillan in Banffshire; Shapinshay in Orkney—an Island; Westray there; Kildonan in the Shire of Sutherland; Mull—an Island; Laggan in Badenoch; Strowan in Atholl; Kilmorack in Ross; Lochearn in Perthshire; Glenladnoch there; Glenarchna there; Tillichon in the Shire of Moray; Culphern there; Drummoyne there; Tillidivie there; Brae of Balquhider in Perthshire; Strathyre there; Lochearn there; South Ronaldshay in Orkney—an Island; North Ronaldshay there; Bracklaine in Perthshire; Collintogle there; Bridge of Turk there; Evie in Orkney; Orphire there; Rivan in Banffshire; Hoy in Orkney; Gremsay—an Island there; Tombowie in Dunbartonshire; Ardlewig there; Coverlet there; Clashmore there; Port in Stirlingshire; Firth in Orkney; Auldearn in Moray: From the greater part of all which places, the Society

do from time to time receive most encouraging accounts of a multitude of scholars, and almost surprising advances in their learning.

“But there being applications made in favour of a great many other places beside these above mentioned, that greatly want the means of Christian education, the Society are earnestly solicitous to have them as speedily supplied as may be; but their present stock being capable to sustain no more schools than they have already established; and the committee being informed that there will be a balance remaining in the hands of the General Assembly of the money that was due to the Church, upon the fund of the equivalent, after payment of all the Church's debts stated upon that fund, which was set apart by the last Assembly for advancing the knowledge of God in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, they do, with the greatest submission, propose to this venerable Assembly, that the foresaid balance may be employed toward the erecting and maintaining charity schools in those places where Popery does most abound.

“The committee do own, that they were likewise informed, that the late Assembly had in view to maintain probationers as catechists, with the said money in such places; but their main design being the promoting of the knowledge of Christ, this present Assembly will still find themselves at liberty to follow those means that are most likely to reach that end; and the committee are very hopeful that the venerable Assembly will soon be of the mind that the erecting of charity schools, where not only the first foundations of the knowledge of the principles of the reformed Protestant religion will be firmly and solidly laid, and at leisure inculcated in the minds of the rude and ignorant, especially the younger sort; but the seeds of knowledge thus sown will be preserved by the scholars, their being taught to read the Holy Scriptures, the fountain of all truth, will be a much more probable way to advance the knowledge of Christ, and root out the Popish errors, than the overly instruction of an itinerant catechist, who cannot be supposed to have time enough to make his scholars understand distinctly the full meaning of the very terms in which the mysteries of our holy religion are expressed, without which his teaching can be of little use; especially if it be considered that the teachers of the charity schools do really perform all the work that such catechists can do, except it be to ease the minister of some diets of preaching; for the charity schools being commonly set up in places remote from the parish church, these schoolmasters do upon the Lord's Days, by the minister's direction, read the Holy Scriptures, and other good and pious books to the people, do sing Psalms and pray with them, and catechise them; and in the summer time, when the parents are obliged to remove their children from the schools to their sheilings, for herding their cattle, the schoolmaster may be enjoined to travel to and fro amongst those sheilings, and instruct the people.

“The venerable Assembly will please further to consider what difficulties occur in getting preachers having the Irish language, sufficiently qualified to be catechists, according to the scheme set forth in the act of the late Assembly, when, notwithstanding all the encouragements given by the Assemblies of this Church to students having that language, there cannot be as many found as to supply the vacancies in Highland congregations, when the same fall out.

“And, to persuade the venerable Assembly to give all encouragement to the Society's undertaking, the committee lays hold on this occasion to inform them a little of their constitution and method of management; for, besides five general meetings of the whole Society yearly, their committee of fifteen, which by their patent is obliged to meet monthly, meets for the most part every week; and matters are so ordered by the Society, that this committee, upon any necessary emergency, is always convened upon half an hour's advertisement; so that the Society and their committees have more frequent occasions to inquire into the state of their schools, and diligence of their schoolmasters, than any Church judicatory can have to oversee their catechists; and for the Society's better direction, and more exact management, they keep a close and constant correspondence with the ministers of the parishes, and Presbyteries of the bounds within which their schools are settled; and when they find their schools do not prosper in one place, they, by the Presbytery's advice, do transport them to another. Many other instances could be here given to show the exactness of the Society's administration; but the same is so well known

to a great number of the reverend and honourable members of this Assembly, that the committee forbears to give the Assembly the trouble now to mention them.

“May it therefore please this venerable Assembly to renew the recommendations of former Assemblies to Presbyteries and particular ministers, to deal seriously with well disposed persons, who have not yet contributed, to extend their charity for advancing the pious ends of the Society’s erection, that they may be soon enabled to establish schools in those countries where Popery prevails, that do yet want the same; and, if the Assembly shall find any occasion for the Society’s assistance in the way that they shall think fit to bestow the foresaid balance, the Committee does, in the name of the said Society, freely offer their service to the Assembly.

“This, in name of the said Committee, and by their appointment, is signed by William Hamilton, Pr. Co.”

The General Assembly having discoursed fully upon the matter of the said representation, they did, and hereby do, appoint the excrescence of the Church’s money upon the fund of the equivalent, that shall remain after payment of the Church’s debts stated upon that fund, to be lodged with the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, for erecting schools in the Highlands and Islands; and they declare that the receipt of the treasurer of the said Society to the procurator for the Church for the said remains, shall be a sufficient exoneration to him at his accounting for the said monies. And, further, the General Assembly renews all recommendations given by former General Assemblies in favour of the said Society, and do give the said Society and their committee hearty thanks for their great care and faithful management of the trust reposed in them.

VI.

Sess. 5, May 19, 1719.—Act concerning the Qualification of Members of the Commission.

The General Assembly do resolve and appoint that all the members of the Commissions of this and subsequent Assemblies be qualified according to the Acts of Assembly, particularly the 9th Act of the last General Assembly, before they vote or act as such.

VII.

Sess. 5, May 19, 1719.—Recommendation concerning Deacons.

The General Assembly recommends to all the ministers of this Church to take care that deacons as well as elders be ordained in such congregations where deacons are wanting; but declares that deacons, as such, shall have no decisive voice in calling of ministers, or in the exercise of Church discipline.

VIII.

Sess. 7, May 21, 1719, ante meridiem.—Act for the right Management of the Church’s Public Money.

The General Assembly, considering how unsuitable it is for the Church to engage their credit beyond what their funds are able to answer, therefore, to prevent this inconvenience in time coming, the General Assembly do hereby prohibit and discharge the applying of any of the said money toward the payment of the expenses of processes for stipends, except in parishes where Popery abounds, or such as shall be recommended both by the Presbytery and Synod to which the parish belongs, and the case laid before the Assembly, and their particular order given for that effect before the commencement of the process: And the General Assembly does re-

solve and declare, that for hereafter no new warrants or orders shall be granted for payment of any money to any person whatsoever, except to preachers sent to supply in the North for their allowances; and they hereby strictly prohibit and discharge the clerk of Assembly, or sub-clerk, to write out, or the moderator of this or subsequent Assemblies to subscribe, any orders or warrants for payment of any new grants out of the Church's yearly allowance, until all former debts already contracted by preceding Assemblies or Commissions be first paid. And, further, the General Assembly resolves and declares, that at no time hereafter any warrants for money shall be granted, until it be known that there is as much in the hands of the receiver of the Church's money as will be sufficient to answer the same; and they appoint the 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1712, to be punctually observed, and do require the procurator for the Church, when any demands for money come before the General Assembly or Commissions thereof, to acquaint them with the state of their funds, and to read the foresaid act, *anno* 1712, and this present act to them. And the Assembly discharges the committee chosen by each Assembly for auditing and revising the Church's public accounts, to propose the giving either of money, or precepts for money, exceeding that part of the year's allowance belonging to that Assembly which is free and unappropriated; and appoints them to bring their report first to the Committee for Overtures, before it be brought into the General Assembly. And the General Assembly also appoints the said committee for the public accounts to cause this present act, and any new regulations that shall be made about money, to be read to them yearly, and to reject all petitions and demands not in the terms thereof; and to report an account of any breaches that shall be made therein to the Assembly.

IX.

Sess. 8, May 22, 1719.—Act showing the Sin and Evil of Running Unentered Goods, and of the Perjuries at the Custom-Houses in Matters of Trade.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the many sins and scandals that are occasioned in this nation, especially upon the sea-coasts thereof, by the running of uncustomed goods, to the great discouragement and detriment of all fair traders; the multiplied perjuries that some shipmasters, merchants, and others, become guilty of in his Majesty's custom-houses, through this unlawful and unwarrantable practice, to the great dishonour of God, the reproach of the Christian name and character, and to the wounding and ruining of precious souls; the dreadful profanation of the Lord's Day that these impious courses do lead seamen, farmers, merchants, and others of their assistants to, in transporting and hiding of their goods on the Sabbath; and that all this is attended with horrid lying and dissimulation, with beastly drunkenness and stealing—the persons who help to carry off these unentered goods, and are disposed, through influence, friendship, and money, to lodge and conceal them, reckoning it a small offence and sin, if any, to take a share of them to themselves; and that such practices are sometimes the occasion of fighting, beating, slaughter, and blood, and do not a little lessen his Majesty's just revenues, that by the laws of God, and laws of the land, his Majesty's trading subjects (under his protection) are obliged to render to him for conscience sake, in obedience to the commands of God's holy Word, "That we should render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's," Matth. xxii. 21; "And to give tribute to whom tribute is due, and custom to whom custom," &c., Rom. xiii. 7; do judge themselves bound, in duty and conscience, to warn all men of the sin, evil, and danger, of such courses; and they strictly enjoin all ministers, especially those whom the providence of God has fixed in sea-trading towns and places, to represent to the people and hearers the great impiety and monstrous wickedness of such methods to gain this world, to the endangering of their souls; and, as they have access, seriously to deal with the consciences of such as they have ground to suspect guilty in this matter, and to show to them the evil of their ways, earnestly beseeching and obtesting them, in the fear of God, and from the consideration of a future judgment, to abstain from such crying

sins and deadly courses, that cannot but justly provoke a holy God to deny them success in their enterprises and undertakings, to lessen their means, and to send heavy judgments upon them; that are so contrary to divine laws, and inconsistent with Christians, their professions and engagements to the most high God; that have so plain a tendency to ruin their souls, and to draw down the wrath of God upon them and theirs; and that serve so palpably to debauch the consciences and morals of so many in the country, and to involve others in guilt with themselves, by bribing and otherwise. And the General Assembly ordains this Act to be once read in all the churches in Scotland, and as often in particular parishes as the prudence of ministers shall direct.

X.

Sess. 8, May 22, 1719.—Recommendation against Abuses at Penny Weddings.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, recommend to Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk-sessions, to see to the execution of the Acts of the General Assembly against abuses at penny weddings, and to apply to the civil magistrate for the execution of the laws against persons guilty of abuses and disorders on these occasions.

XI.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1719, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, having taken into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Messrs James Grierson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said Commission, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon; and afterwards, the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March, next to come, and oftener, when or where they shall think fit and convenient; with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum, above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any act or order of this Assembly; and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by this Assembly; and to advert unto the interests of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed, that what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved by the General Assembly. And the General Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly, anno 1717, to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the Commissioners above named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially therein inserted; and that they inquire how the prohibition has been observed in the bounds of the Presbytery of Auchterarder, or elsewhere, whereby the using of the proposition emitted by that Presbytery, and condemned by the General Assembly, anno 1717, was discharged; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending to the diffusing of that condemned proposition, and promoting a scheme of opinions relative thereto, which are inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of

such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word or print, be called before them to answer for their conduct in such recommendations. And the Commission are empowered to judge in cases of doctrine that shall be brought before them by appeals or references from Synods or Presbyteries; and they are likewise appointed to take care that impressions of the Holy Scriptures, of the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, and of all other books relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, be correct. And the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings, they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this National Church, and to do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed; and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, 1706. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required, all of them, to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof; and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

XII.

Sess. 9, May 23, 1719.—Act for promoting Religion and Learning in Universities and Colleges.

The General Assembly, considering how much it is their duty to do all that is in their power for promoting religion and learning in this Church, do hereby instruct their Commission carefully to advert to everything whereby they may contribute to the flourishing of the sciences and good literature, and to the propagating of religion and loyalty in universities; and, particularly, that they diligently inquire what privileges and interest the judicatories of this Church, or the ministers thereof, have by the constitutions of the several universities and colleges, and by the laws of the land, with respect to the settlement of the masters and professors in them, which the General Assembly hereby appoints their Commission, by all just methods, to maintain inviolably, and improve towards the promoting the foresaid interests of true piety and learning; and that, for this end, they receive and give all due encouragement to whatever applications may be made to them for this effect.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1719.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the second Thursday of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1720.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 12, 1720.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 12, 1720.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of
Rothes to be Recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his
Majesty's Commissioner, 12th May 1720.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 14, 1720.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 6, May 18, 1720.—Act concerning Commissions to Members of the General
Assembly, and Attestations of the same.*

The General Assembly, considering that there have been divers acts passed with respect to the qualifications of the members of Assembly since the Act 8th, Assembly, anno 1695, which prescribes a form of their commissions, particularly the Act 6th, Assembly, anno 1698; Act 6th, Assembly, anno 1704; and Act 9th, Assembly, anno 1718; and that it is expedient, for the direction of Presbyteries, and for procuring, as near as may be, an uniformity amongst them, in granting commissions to their representatives in Assemblies, that an addition be made to the foresaid directory in the Act 1695, with regard to the other posterior acts above mentioned: Therefore, the General Assembly do appoint and ordain, that, in all time coming, there be subjoined and adjoined to the foresaid formula in the Act 1695 the following clause, viz.:—"And the said Presbytery does hereby testify and declare, that all the ministers above named have signed the formula enjoined by the 10th Act of the General Assembly, anno 1711, and all the ruling elders above written have signed the formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694;" but if the Presbytery be uncertain whether the said elders have signed the said formula or not, then the attestation shall bear, that they are either to sign it in presence of the Assembly, or instruct that they have done it before. And further, "That all the said commissioners are every other way qualified to be members of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly. Extracted by Clerk, Presb." And because the said Act, anno 1718, appoints that all commissions, after they are written out and extracted, and before they be put in the hands of the commissioners, be first read in presence of the Presbytery, and be revised by them, and that it be attested by the Moderator and Clerk of the Presbytery upon the said commissions that this was so done: Therefore, the Assembly appoints, that the Presbytery's attestation shall run thus:—"At the day of the Presbytery having had the above written extract of their commission to their representatives

in the ensuing Assembly laid before them, they caused it to be read, and having revised and considered the same, they did approve thereof. Attested by Moderator, or Clerk." And because the foresaid Act 9th, Assembly, 1718, does appoint and ordain, that no commissions from royal burghs to their representatives in Assembly shall be sustained, but such as shall be consented to and approved, not only by the ministry and kirk-sessions of the burghs, but also by the Presbytery of the bounds within which the burghs lie; and upon which it shall be attested both by the Kirk-session and Presbytery foresaid, according to the tenor of the foresaid Act: Therefore, the General Assembly appoints, that the foresaid attestations of the Kirk-session and Presbytery shall be in the terms following:—"At the session of the day of the which day the Kirk- having had laid before them a commission given by the magistrates and town-council of to to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do, in the terms of the Act 9th, Assembly, 1718, testify and declare, that the said is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has signed the formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694; and likewise that he is (a residenter in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of within which the said burgh lies,) or has (formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh,) or (Presbytery of within which the said burgh does lie.)" And that the Presbytery's attestation shall run thus, viz.:—"At the day of the which day the Presbytery of having had produced before them a commission given by the magistrates and town-council of to to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, with an attestation of the Kirk-session of the said burgh, conform to the direction of the Act 9th, Assembly, 1718, and Act 4th, Assembly, 1720, do, in the terms of the foresaid Acts, likewise testify and declare, that," &c., and so forth, precisely in the words of the form above prescribed to the Kirk-sessions. And the General Assembly does resolve and declare, that all commissions not in the terms above mentioned shall be rejected. And it is hereby provided and declared, that if the person elected by the burgh royal be qualified as above, that the ministry and session, and Presbytery, respectively, do attest him when his commission is presented to them.

V.

Sess. 9, May 20, 1720.—Act concerning a Book, entitled, The Marrow of Modern Divinity.

The General Assembly, having had under their consideration the book entitled "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," reprinted at Edinburgh, anno 1718, with an ample recommendation prefixed thereto, which they found was dispersed and come into the hands of many of the people; and having had laid before them the following passages, collected out of the said book by a committee for preserving the purity of doctrine in this Church, appointed by the Commission of the late General Assembly; the tenor whereof follows:—

Concerning the Nature of Faith.

Page 118.—"There is no more for him to do, but only to know and believe that Christ hath done all for him." Page 119.—"This, then, is perfect righteousness,—only to know and believe that Jesus Christ is now gone to the Father, and sitteth at his right hand, not as a judge, but as made unto you of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; wherefore, as Paul and Silas said to the jailor, so say I unto you, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;'—that is, be verily persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours, and that you shall have life and salvation by him; that whatsoever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you." Page 120.—"Forasmuch as the Holy Scripture speaketh

to all in general, none of us ought to distrust himself, but believe that it doth belong particularly to himself." The same is asserted, pages 121, 122, 123, 124, 131, 136, 137, 175, 176, 177, and in many other places of the book. This notion of saving faith appears contrary to Scripture: Isa. l. 10; Rom. viii. 16; 1 John v. 13; and to Confess. Cap. xviii. § 1, 3, 4; and to Larger Catechism, Quest. 81, 172; all which passages show that assurance is not of the essence of faith, whereas the passages cited from "The Marrow," &c., appear to assert the contrary, making that saving faith commanded in the Gospel a man's persuasion that Christ is his, and died for him; and that whoever hath not this persuasion or assurance hath not answered the Gospel call, nor is a true believer.

Of Universal Atonement and Pardon.

Page 108.—"Christ hath taken upon him the sins of all men." Page 119.—"The Father hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all mankind, that whosoever of them all shall believe in his Son shall not perish, &c., (*i. e.* whosoever believes or is persuaded that Christ is his; for this must be the sense according to the former passages.) Hence it was that Christ said to his disciples, 'Go and preach the Gospel to every creature under heaven;'—that is, Go and tell every man, without exception, that here is good news for him; Christ is dead for him. Even so, our good King, the Lord of heaven and earth, hath, for the obedience and desert of our good brother, Jesus Christ, pardoned all our sins." To the same purpose, pages 127 and 128. Here is asserted an universal redemption as to purchase, contrary to John x. 15, 27, 28, 29; and xv. 13 and 17; Titus ii. 14; Confess. Cap. iii. § 6; Cap. viii. § 8; Larger Catechism, Quest. 59.

Holiness not necessary to Salvation.

From page 150 to page 153.—"And if the Law say good works must be done, and the commandment must be kept, if thou wilt obtain salvation, then answer you, and say, I am already saved before thou camest; therefore, I have no need of thy presence—Christ is my righteousness, my treasure, and my work. I confess, O Law! that I am neither godly nor righteous; but this yet I am sure of, that he is godly and righteous for me." Page 185.—"Good works may rather be called a believer's walking in the way of eternal happiness than the way itself." This doctrine tends to slacken people's diligence in the study of holiness, contrary to Heb. xii. 14; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Ephes. ii. 10; Isa. xxxv. 8; James ii. 20; Confess. Cap. xiii. § 1; Larger Catechism, Quest. 32; Confess. Cap. xv. § 2.

Fear of Punishment and Hope of Reward not allowed to be motives of a Believer's Obedience.

Page 181.—"Would you not have believers to eschew evil and do good, for fear of hell or hope of heaven? Answer.—No, indeed; for so far forth as they do so, their obedience is but slavish." A great deal more to this purpose is to be seen, pages 175, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, and appears contrary to Psalms xlv. 11; Psal. cxix. 4, 6; Exod. xx. 2; James i. 25; and ii. 8, 10, 11, 12; 1 Tim. iv. 8; Col. iii. 24; Heb. xi. 6, 26; Rev. ii. 10; 2 Cor. v. 9, 10, 11; Heb. xii. 2, 28, 29; 2 Pet. iii. 14; Confess. Cap. xvi. § 2 and 6.

That the Believer is not under the Law as a Rule of Life.

Page 150.—"As the Law is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether set free from it." And, page 151.—"You are now set free both from the commanding and condemning power of the covenant of works." Page 216.—"You will yield obedience to the law of Christ, not only without respect, either to what the law of works either promiseth or threateneth, but also without having respect to what the law of Christ either promiseth or threateneth; and this is to serve the Lord without fear of any penalty, which either the law of works or the law of Christ threateneth," Luke i.

74. See also pages 5, 153, 180, 156, 157, 163, 199, 209, 210, contrary to Scripture, Exod. xx. 2; Matth. v. 17, &c.; Rom. iii. 21; and xiii. 9; James i. 25; and ii. 8, 10, 11, 12; and Confession, Cap. xix. § 5, 6.

The Six following Antinomian Paradoxes are fenced and defended by applying to them that distinction of the Law of Works, and Law of Christ.

Pages 198 and 199.—“1mo, A believer is not under the law, but is altogether delivered from it. 2do, A believer doth not commit sin. 3tio, The Lord can see no sin in a believer, 4to, The Lord is not angry with a believer for his sins. 5to, The Lord doth not chastise a believer for his sins. 6to, A believer hath no cause, neither to confess his sins, nor to crave pardon at the hand of God for them, neither to fast nor mourn, nor humble himself before the Lord for them.”

Expressions in the Marrow, &c.

Page 192.—“A minister that dares not persuade sinners to believe their sins are pardoned before he see their lives reformed, for fear they should take more liberty to sin, is ignorant of the mystery of faith.” And, page 27.—“Christ undertook to suffer under the penalty that lay upon man to have undergone.” And, page 117.—“The covenant of works was twice made,—first with man, and a second time God was on both sides.” Page 115.—“The law practised his whole tyranny upon the Son of God; and because it did so horribly and cursedly sin against his God, it is cursed and arraigned, and as a thief, and cursed murderer of the Son of God, loseth all his right, and deserveth to be condemned; the law, therefore, is bound, dead, and crucified, to me.” Page 126.—“Whosoever is married to Christ, and so in him by faith, he is as acceptable to God the Father as Christ himself.” Page 127.—“And so shall the love and favour of God be as deeply insinuated into you as it is into Christ himself.” Page 144.—“Whence it must needs follow, that you cannot be damned, except Christ be damned with you, neither can Christ be saved, except ye be saved with him.” Pages 145, 146.—“Say unto Christ, with bold confidence, I give to thee, my dear husband, my unbelief, my mistrust, my pride, my arrogancy, my ambition, my wrath, and anger, my envy, my covetousness, my evil thoughts, affections, and desires. I make one bundle of those, and all my other offences, and give them unto thee.” 2 Cor. v. 21.—“And thus was Christ made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Page 207.—“Nor yet, as touching your justification and eternal salvation, will he love you ever a whit the less, though you commit never so many or great sins.”

These are collected out of many other exceptionable positions contained in that book, which for brevity's sake are omitted.

And the General Assembly having had the said passages, and several others, read to them from the said book, and having compared them with the texts of Holy Scripture, articles of our Confession of Faith, and of the Larger Catechism of this Church, above cited, the General Assembly found, that the said passages and quotations, which relate to the five several heads of doctrine above mentioned, are contrary to the Holy Scriptures, our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; and that the distinction of the law, as it is the law of works, and as it is the law of Christ, as the author applies it, in order to fence and defend the six Antinomian paradoxes above written, is altogether groundless; and that the other expressions above set down, excerpted out of the said book, are exceedingly harsh and offensive; and, therefore, the General Assembly do hereby strictly prohibit and discharge all the ministers of this Church, either by preaching, writing, or printing, to recommend the said book, or, in discourse, to say any thing in favour of it; but, on the contrary, they are hereby enjoined and required to warn and exhort their people, in whose hands the said book is, or may come, not to read or use the same.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1720.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Messrs William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said Commission, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards, the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March, next to come, and oftener, when or where they shall think fit and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by this Assembly; and to advert unto the interests of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church: And it is hereby appointed, that what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved by the General Assembly. And the General Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly, 1717, to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the Commissioners above named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially therein inserted; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending toward the promoting a scheme of opinions inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word or print, be called before them to answer for such recommendations. And the Commission are empowered to judge in cases of doctrine, that shall be brought before them by appeals or references from Synods or Presbyteries; and they are likewise appointed to take care that impressions of the Holy Scriptures, of the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, and of all other books relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, be correct. And the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned, and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this National Church, and to do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed, and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, 1706. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission, and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof, and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 23, 1720, ante meridiem.—Act and Reference against Popery.

The which day, there being brought in from the Committee for Overtures a report concerning the extraordinary increase of Popery in divers places of this nation, together with a large and particular memorial of the instances thereof, and an overture concerning the same; and the General Assembly having considered the said overture and memorial, they, in pursuance thereof, did, and hereby do, instruct and empower their Commission to do what in them lies to prevent the growth of Popery, by directing and assisting ministers in those bounds where Popery prevails, in applying all proper ecclesiastical remedies, particularly those prescribed in the 4th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1719, and former acts. And the General Assembly does appoint all the ministers of this Church, especially in such corners as there are Papists in, to preach against the errors of Popery, and deal seriously with Papists for their conviction. And, farther, the General Assembly does instruct their said Commission to use all suitable endeavours to get the civil remedies that are now under consideration brought to some good issue; and likewise to think upon means to get proper books against Popery put in the hands of the people in those places where Popery prevails, or people are in danger of being perverted. And the General Assembly did approve of the draught of the said memorial against Popery brought in, and appoints the Moderator, in their name, to sign the same, and orders that it be sent to the Secretary of State, to be laid before his Majesty.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 23, 1720.—Act for Preaching Catechetical Doctrine, with Directions therein.

The General Assembly, considering how much it may conduce unto the establishment of people in the Christian faith, and to the promoting of piety in practice, that they be well instructed in the principles of our holy religion; do, therefore, recommend to the several ministers of this Church punctually to observe the acts of former General Assemblies for preaching catechetical doctrine; and that in these their catechetical sermons they more especially insist upon the great and fundamental truths, according to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, such as that of the Being and Providence of God, and the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, the necessary doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity in the unity of the Godhead; particularly, of the eternal deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the satisfaction to Divine Justice made by him who is our only propitiation, of regeneration by efficacious grace, of free justification through our blessed surety the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone, and of the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining of everlasting happiness; and that they be earnest and instant in their prayers to God, that, through his blessing upon their labours, their flocks may be preserved from the infections of dangerous errors, and engaged to maintain a conversation that becomes the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever.

IX.

Sess. 10 et ult., May 23, 1720.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, the second Thursday of May next to come, in the year of our Lord 1721, being the 11th day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by
Jo. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

**OVERTURES CONCERNING PLANTING OF VACANT CHURCHES, ESPECIALLY
TANQUAM JURE DEVOLUTO.***

Considering how necessary it is, that Presbyteries be very tender of giving any ground of complaint in their planting parishes *tanquam jure devoluto*; and that any who judge themselves lesed may have an opportunity of being heard by superior judicatories, and, if wronged, may be redressed; and that there were some overtures concerning this case, transmitted by the General Assembly, in anno 1711, to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they might send their remarks thereupon to the then ensuing General Assembly, before the same should be turned into standing acts; but no returns having been made thereto from Presbyteries, by reason of a law soon after made, restoring to patrons the power of presentation, a grievance which this Church hath always complained of from the Reformation; it is therefore overtured, that when a parish falleth vacant, the Presbytery in whose bounds it lies shall, with all diligence, declare and intimate the vacancy, and, if there be no legal eldership settled therein according to the constitution of this Church, the Presbytery shall not proceed to plant upon the *jus devolutum*, until they first use all proper means to establish an eldership, consisting of such a number as has been usual in the parish; as also, that before they proceed to plant upon the *jus devolutum*, they shall make intimation, from the pulpit of that parish, that the right is devolved upon the Presbytery; but that they desiring to have the vacancy comfortably planted with the consent of all concerned, do advertise and invite heritors and elders, or heritors and heads of families, where there is not a legal eldership settled, to give in lists to the Presbytery of such well qualified persons as they incline to call to the holy ministry. If such lists shall be brought in to the next meeting of the Presbytery, either by the heritors and elders jointly, or by the heritors apart, or the elders apart, or heads of families, where there is no legal eldership, then the Presbytery shall appoint one of their number to preach in that congregation, and moderate in a meeting of the heritors and elders for choosing one out of the said list to be their minister; and the moderator of that meeting shall attest a call to him unto whom the plurality of the meeting have given their suffrages; providing always, that the majority of the heritors who are well affected, and do join in communion with this Church, do concur in the said call; as also, that due and timeous intimation be made of the day of this meeting, that all concerned may be advertised to attend the same. The elders likewise should try the inclinations of the heads of families, and persons of good reputation in that parish, and have regard thereto in their choice of a minister, and where there are no elders, that the Presbytery sound the inclinations of the people; and if it shall happen that there be not a majority of heritors well affected, and joining in communion with this Church, concurring in the said call, then the Presbytery shall not proceed to a settlement on the said call till such heritors be dealt with for their consent and concurrence, or till the advice of the Synod be had in that case; and that Synods, in judging of such cases, shall have special regard to such heritors as are well affected and join in communion with this Church, as now by law established; but if, upon advertisement given, no lists shall be brought in to the Presbytery from the vacant parish, then the Presbytery shall make a list of two or three whom they judge well qualified and fit for undertaking the ministry in that parish, and shall order intimation of their list to be made to the vacant congregation, that any of the congregation may attend the next meeting of the Presbytery, and show which of these in the Presbytery's list they desire to be their minister, or to object against any of the said list, if they have anything of moment to offer, or even to add to the said list any other fit person, which addition the Presbytery shall admit; and the Presbytery shall use means both to know the inclinations of heritors and people, and to obtain their consent unto the person they most incline to, before they give a Presbyterial call to one in the list proposed; and if, after all pains taken, and dealing with the heritors, elders, and people of the vacant parish, in order to their comfortable settlement, with their own good liking and consent, there be no hope of success, then the Presbytery may proceed to the

* In reference to this and the following overture, see Act 5, Assembly 1721.—Ed. 1843. ‡

said settlement; but if any of the heritors, elders, or heads of families, or persons of good reputation in the parish, do compare before the Presbytery, and offer objections against the person to be settled, either as to his orthodoxy, literature, life and conversation, or other ministerial qualifications, the Presbytery, before they proceed to the settlement, shall take trial of the said objections; and if any difficulty occur, or that there appear any heat or division in the parish about a call, the Presbytery shall not proceed until they have the advice and direction of the Synod, and shall acquaint the parish, that they may attend the Synod to hear their determination; or if there be any appeal from the Presbytery's procedure, they shall sist the foresaid settlement till the time appointed for the next meeting of the Synod or the General Assembly appealed to; and if the appellants do not then insist in their appeal, the Presbytery may proceed as if the same had never been made; but if the appellants do insist, then the judicatory appealed to shall discuss the same without delay, and give sentence therein as they shall see cause; and if there be a further appeal from the Synod to the General Assembly, the foresaid settlement shall likewise stop until the time appointed for the meeting of the next General Assembly, unless the appellants do pass from the said appeal: But because some persons, from a litigious and disaffected humour, may oppose the settlement of a vacant church, and appeal, with a design to continue the vacancy for some time longer; therefore, to prevent this, that it be declared, that unless those who do oppose the planting of any vacant parish do timeously give in, in writing, under their hands, objections against the settlement designed, and give in also the reasons of their appeal within ten days after the entering of it, in manner appointed by the Acts of the General Assembly, the same shall not be regarded, nor the appeal received; but the settlement designed shall go on, as if the objections and appeal had never been made; and the judicatory shall intimate this to the objectors or appellants at making the said objections or appeals. Lastly, That in case of vacant kirks in royal burghs, the magistrates and town council, ministers, and elders, of the burgh, be the electors; but where a part of the parish belongs to the landward, the heritors and elders of that part of the vacant parish are to join in the election and calling of the ministers to supply these vacancies, according to use and wont.

Overtures concerning Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries.

The General Assembly, having had under consideration the Overtures concerning Kirk-sessions and Presbyteries, transmitted by the late Commission, with the observations and remarks of several Presbyteries thereupon; but finding that divers Presbyteries had not had time maturely to consider these overtures, the Assembly did, and hereby do, continue the foresaid overtures under the consideration of Presbyteries till the next General Assembly, and appoints Presbyteries to send up their remarks and opinion upon them to the next General Assembly; and because the meaning and intention of divers passages in them hath been mistaken and understood differently from the sense of the Commission and their committee, therefore, to prevent any mistakes which may be entertained, the General Assembly have, from the remarks of Presbyteries, made some amendments and explanations, as follows, viz.:—Page 5, line 13.—That the words (“Foundation of the Presbyterian government”) be transposed to line 7, after “God’s Word.”

Page 8, parag. 4.—The first three lines are to be deleted, and to run thus,—“The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration,” &c.

Page 11, line 3.—These words (“which are hereby allowed to continue”) to be deleted.

Page 11.—In place of paragraph 8, read, “The kirk-sessions are to meet at such times as are most convenient for the well ordering of the affairs of their congregations.”

The ministers and elders ought always to study harmony and unanimity; but if any question fall out in a session in matters of discipline to be executed by the minister, nothing should be concluded, unless it be agreed to by the minister and plu-

rality of elders, till the Presbytery give their advice and direction thereupon. And in a collegiate session, where there are two ministers, one of them agreeing with the majority of the elders, or both, with half of the elders, shall decide a cause; if more ministers than two, then a majority of both ministers and elders, or an equal half of one agreeing with the majority of the other, is necessary for a decisive sentence in matters of discipline, to be executed as above. In matters concerning the relief of the poor, the deacons have an equal vote with the elders.

And the General Assembly, considering that it is but in some few burghs where general sessions are, and that the Presbyteries in whose bounds these burghs lie have most access to know the constitution and practice of the General Sessions; the General Assembly do therefore recommend to the respective Presbyteries in whose bounds these burghs are, to inquire into the constitution and practice of the said General Sessions, and report to the next General Assembly.

Nota.—The foresaid overtures having been already laid before the several Presbyteries in print, it was thought not needful to print them again this year, and send them to Presbyteries a second time.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 11, 1721.

I.

Sess. 1, May 11, 1721.—Act appointing the King's Commission to John Earl of Rothes to be Recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 11, 1721.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

May 13, 1721.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 17, 1721.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Messrs Thomas Black, at Perth, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned, with power to the said Commission, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten of the clock forenoon, and afterwards the

second Wednesdays of August, November, and March, next to come, and oftener, when or where they shall think fit and convenient, with power to the said Commission to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by this Assembly, and to advert to the interests of the Church on every occasion, that the Church, and present establishment thereof, do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing this general clause be not extended to particular affairs, or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed, that what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved by the General Assembly. And the General Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly, 1717, to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the Commissioners above named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially herein inserted; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending toward the promoting a scheme of opinions inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word or print, be called before them, to answer for such recommendations. And, further, the said Commission is hereby empowered to receive any references and appeals that shall be made to them from Synods and Presbyteries in matters of doctrine; and, particularly, to take under consideration the representation presented to this Assembly by Mr James Hog and others, about the book, entitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, and to call the subscribers of that representation before them or their committees, and ripen and prepare these matters concerning doctrine for the next Assembly, but not to give a final decision therein. Likewise, to take care that the impressions of the Holy Scriptures, the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, and such books as are authorised by this Church, relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, be correct, and to give directions about printing the same. They are also appointed at their first meeting to take under consideration all the representations of the growth of Popery within the bounds of this National Church, and of Jacobite meetings therein, which have been brought up to this and former Assemblies or Commissions thereof, or that may be further offered to this Commission, and to apply to the government for a proper remedy and speedy redress. And the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned; and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this National Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause; and this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed, and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1706. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are on the Commission, are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof, and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

V.

Sess. 6 et ult., May 17, 1721.—Act and Resolution about the Overtures concerning Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries, and Planting Vacant Churches.

The General Assembly, finding that the plurality of Presbyteries who have sent their remarks upon the "Overtures concerning the Kirk-Sessions and Presbyteries," and "concerning the Planting of Vacant Churches, *tanquam jure devoluto*," are not for passing them into acts at this time; therefore, this Assembly does unanimously agree and resolve not to pass the foresaid overtures into acts; and further, they declare and appoint that before the foresaid overtures be passed into acts by any subsequent Assembly, they shall be again transmitted by the General Assembly to the several Presbyteries, in order to have their opinion thereupon.

VI.

Sess. 6 et ult., May 17, 1721.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church of Scotland is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May, 1722 years, being the tenth day of that month.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 10, 1722.

I.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1722.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly of the ministers and ruling elders of this National Church being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable Hugh Earl of Loudoun, his Majesty's Commission, sealed with the seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, appointing him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly; which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordered the same to be recorded in their registers, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—

GEORGIUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1722.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well: The Church of Scotland have given us so many proofs of their steady adherence to the Protestant succession in our family, their loyalty and affection to our person and government, and their constant zeal for the Protestant interest in general—which neither the force and violence of our open enemies, nor the artful contrivances of factious and ill-designing men, have been able to alter—that we do, with great cheerfulness, countenance your General Assembly at this time, being fully persuaded, from your prudent and dutiful behaviour upon former occasions, that you will now meet with the same good disposition, and behave yourselves with the same temper and unanimity in this present Assembly.

We take this opportunity of renewing to you the assurances we have so often given heretofore of our unalterable resolution to maintain the established government of the Church of that part of our kingdom of Great Britain in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges.

We have made choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and councillor, Hugh Earl of Loudoun, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this present Assembly, being confident that his known concern for the Church, as well as zeal for our service, will render him acceptable to you.

As we have nothing more at heart than the promoting true religion and piety, the preserving the peace and public tranquillity both in Church and State, and preventing the growth of Popery, you may most firmly assure yourselves of our ready and cheerful concurrence in promoting those good and glorious ends; to which end, I must recommend it to you to be upon your guard against the practices of such as shall endeavour to create unhappy divisions among you; there being nothing that can tend more to your honour and welfare than concord and brotherly love. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 18th day of April 1722, in the 8th year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

CARTERET.

III.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1722.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

This new opportunity we have of meeting in a General Assembly, honoured with the renewed assurances, in so ample a manner, of your Majesty's royal favour, lays us under the strongest ties of gratitude to our gracious God, and the most dutiful sense of your Majesty's great goodness.

The inviolable obligations we are under to do our utmost to preserve our holy religion would have rendered us inexcusable, if we had neglected any opportunity, in the most difficult times, to give proof of our hearty zeal for the Protestant interest, the succession to the crown of those dominions in your Majesty's royal family, and of our most cordial affection to your Majesty's person and government, whose interests are so inseparably connected with those of the reformed churches: And we hope, from the assistance of our God, that neither force and violence of open enemies, nor the artful contrivance of factious and ill-designing men, shall be able to divert us from those principles of loyalty which, by the blessing of God, we have hitherto pursued.

The approbation your Majesty is graciously pleased to give of our behaviour on former occasions, as dutiful and prudent, is an additional engagement to the ties which our interest, and regard to our character bring us under, to behave ourselves in this our present Assembly with the greatest temper and unanimity we are capable of.

We do humbly rely upon your Majesty's most gracious and repeated assurances of your unalterable resolution to maintain the Established Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges; and do esteem your Majesty's royal favour, and the succession to the crown in your royal family, as our greatest security under God.

The Earl of Loudoun's known concern for this Church, in which he follows the example of his noble ancestors, as well as his zeal for your Majesty's service, render your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly most acceptable to us.

The care your Majesty hath showed, in your wise and just administration ever since your happy accession to the crown, for preserving of peace and the public tranquillity, both in Church and State, your Majesty's having so much at heart the promoting true religion, and preventing the growth of Popery, together with your gracious assurances of your royal concern for the advancement of the same good and glorious ends, leave us no ground to doubt that your Majesty will favourably countenance such methods as may tend to the preventing the growth of Popery, the increase of which, we humbly believe, is dangerous to the interests of your Majesty's government, as well as to those of our holy religion.

We are firmly resolved, through the grace of our God, in order to the promoting those great and good ends which your Majesty is pleased to recommend unto us, to be upon our guard against the practices of such as shall endeavour to create unhappy divisions among us; being fully persuaded that nothing can tend more to the welfare and honour of this Church than concord and brotherly love.

That God may eminently bless your Majesty with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and long preserve you to reign over a people sensible of their own happiness, and to be a support to all the Protestant Churches of Europe; that he may plentifully pour out his blessings upon their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their royal issue; that when, after a long and prosperous reign, you shall receive an immortal crown in heaven, you may have successors to the latest posterity, worthy of yourself, and possessed of your royal virtues, to inherit your crown, is the constant, earnest, and fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Ruling Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 14, 1722.—Act for the better Observation of Fasts and Thanksgivings.

The General Assembly, for the more exact observation of the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1710, concerning fasts and thanksgivings, do appoint and ordain the several Presbyteries within this National Church, at their first meeting after every public fast or thanksgiving, whether appointed by the Church or the supreme magistrate, to call the several brethren within their bounds to an account how they have observed the foresaid fasts or thanksgivings, and to record their diligence herein in their books. And the General Assembly does likewise enjoin the several Synods, at their revising of Presbytery books, and at their privy censures, in case the Presbytery book be not brought up to them, or be not so far filled up as their diet after the foresaid fasts or thanksgivings, to take particular notice how the said 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1710, and this present Act, have been observed

by the said Presbyteries, and the several ministers therein: and appoints the Synods likewise to record their diligence herein in their books.

V.

Sess. 7, May 17, 1722.—Act in favour of Lithuanian Students.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the distressed state of the Protestants in the great Duchy of Lithuania, for whom the Church of Scotland hath made lately a liberal contribution; and having also under their consideration a letter to the Assembly from the Protestant Synod in these parts, petitioning them to the effect underwritten; do, for the further support of their Protestant brethren in these parts, appoint and ordain that the bursaries of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, one whereof Synodical and three Presbyterial, that have been employed for maintaining of students having the Irish language, be, at the term of Martinmas 1723, applied for the maintenance of two Lithuanian students, to be educated at the University of Edinburgh; and do appoint Mr James Young of Killicantie to be collector of the said bursaries. And in case any of the Highland bursars, who at present enjoy the said bursaries, their time of four years from the commencement of their bursaries be not run out at the foresaid term of Martinmas 1723, the General Assembly hereby recommend to the Commissions of the Assemblies of this Church to take care that the said Lithuanian students be otherwise provided in the meantime; and, for that end, they hereby discharge the several Synods to supply any of the Highland bursaries that shall happen to fall vacant before that time, to the end that there may be room for providing such as are to give place to the foresaid Lithuanians. And the General Assembly appoints the produce of these four bursaries to be divided betwixt them by equal proportions; providing always, that none shall be received from Lithuania, as bursars, but such as shall be attested and recommended by the Protestant Synod there. And the General Assembly ordains the premises to be intimate to the King of Prussia's resident at the Court of Great Britain, and to the Reverend Mr Boguslaus Kopijewicz, minister of the Gospel at Vilna, in Lithuania, that they may acquaint the foresaid Protestant Synod of Lithuania of this resolution of the General Assembly. And the General Assembly do resolve that no other alteration shall be made at present, as to the bursaries appointed by former Acts of Assembly, to be employed for maintenance of students having the Irish language.

VI.

Sess. 8, May 18, 1722.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

The duty we owe to our merciful God; our concern for the advancement of the kingdom of our blessed Saviour; the regards we have to the interests of your Majesty's government; the just abhorrence we have always maintained of such principles and actions as may tend to the subversion of that happy constitution we now enjoy, bring us under an indispensable necessity of representing to your Majesty the lamentable increase of Popery, and pernicious practices of Romish priests and emissaries, their encouragers and abettors; and, with all humble duty, to beseech your Majesty to apply an effectual and speedy remedy.

It must be matter of inexpressible grief to us, who are office-bearers in the House of God, to observe, that since this nation and Church was delivered in so remarkable a manner by the immediate hand of Divine Providence, in bringing about the glorious Revolution, from the dangers that then threatened them; and even since that blessing was renewed, and the security of our religion and liberties more strongly confirmed

by your Majesty's happy accession to the throne, and the settlement of the crown in your royal Protestant family, the number, not only of Papists, but of Popish bishops, priests, and Jesuits, is so greatly increased in several parts of this nation, who take upon them, notwithstanding of the many good laws made for preventing the growth of Popery, in contempt thereof, and in defiance of your Majesty's authority, openly to assemble in great numbers, for hearing and saying of mass, for dispensing of sacraments in their idolatrous manner; and that those bishops and priests do presume to exercise the functions of their several offices with avowed freedom and insolence; that seminaries are openly erected and maintained in the remoter parts of the kingdom, for educating of youth in the principles of Romish error and superstition; that numbers of those, whose genius and capacity seem to distinguish them from others, are carried abroad to foreign parts, in order to be further confirmed and instructed in those pernicious and damnable doctrines, which are equally dangerous to our holy religion and the foundations of your Majesty's government; and when they are fully poisoned with the principles of idolatry and arbitrary power, and many of them, clothed with the character of priesthood, do return into your Majesty's dominions, and exercise the utmost power and diligence in perverting your Majesty's subjects from the true reformed Protestant faith, and from that loyalty and affection to your Majesty, which love to liberty, and a due regard to the peace of their country, ought to engage them to promote; of which we have transmitted more particular accounts to your principal Secretary of State, in order to be laid before your Majesty.

Those violations of the public laws, and attempts to undermine our constitution in Church and State, seem the more extraordinary, that they appear to be countenanced by persons of considerable power, influence, and distinction, some of whom owe their all to your Majesty's great goodness and clemency; and that they are not only done in the remoter corners of the kingdom, but that very open meetings for idolatrous worship are commonly held within the liberties of this city, where now we have the happiness to meet, under your Majesty's protection and favour.

We cannot presume to lay open all the various causes of these growing evils; but, as the enemies of our constitution must perceive the absolute inconsistency that is betwixt the Romish tenets and those principles upon which our present establishment in Church and State is founded, this, no doubt, hath rendered them more assiduous, since the Revolution and your Majesty's happy accession to the crown, in diffusing their poison; which they have the more easy access to do, by reason of the great extent of the northern country, the small number of churches, the utter inactivity of inferior judges in executing the laws against Popery, and the many defects which yet appear in these laws; which we, with great humility, apprehend does render it necessary that some further laws on that subject should be enacted, and that a more effectual method of executing them be provided than that which the ordinary course of proceedings, as the law now stands, does afford; which we humbly submit to your Majesty's great wisdom.

We embrace this opportunity of laying those particulars before your Majesty, when you have been graciously pleased to declare, that you have repeated and unquestionable advices of the designs of your undutiful subjects, in concert with traitors abroad, to raise a rebellion against your Majesty, in your kingdom of Great Britain; the rather that we apprehend those unnatural and traitorous conspiracies are the native produce of a Popish influence, and of the practices of Romish emissaries, connived at by others, inexcusable Protestants, who cannot but perceive, that as the security of our religion and liberty does, under God, in the strongest manner depend upon the safety of your Majesty's person and government, so the increase of Popery is a proper step towards the endangering of both.

We beg leave, heartily, to declare our thankfulness to our gracious God for this new proof of his goodness towards this Church and nation, in blessing your Majesty's councils and prudent administration with a happy discovery of the wicked designs of your undutiful and ungrateful subjects, and to testify our utter detestation of their horrid and bloody resolutions; and to assure your Majesty that no fear, either of open violence or secret wicked attempts whatsoever, shall, through the blessing of God, be able to divert us from an inviolable loyalty, and from that care and

diligence incumbent upon us to impress the minds of your subjects, according to our several capacities and stations, with the principles of true religion, and of affection to your Majesty's person and interests, and with a due sense of the happiness they are blessed with, under so mild, so prudent, and careful an administration.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the protection of this, and comfort of all Protestant Churches; that he may turn the councils of your enemies into folly, and return their wicked devices upon their own heads; that he may establish the succession to the crown of these dominions in your royal family to the latest ages; and, after a prosperous and easy reign, crown you with eternal blessings, is the most fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator.*

VII.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1722.—Act concerning Doctrine, confirming and explaining the Acts 5th and 8th of the General Assembly, anno 1720.

The General Assembly, having taken under their consideration a representation and petition, signed by twelve ministers of this Church, and craving that the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1720, concerning a book, entitled, "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," might be repealed; and the several heads and articles of the said representation having been read in presence of the Committee of Overtures, where all the members of Assembly were desired to be present and declare their opinion; and the subscribing brethren having been fully heard upon the same before them, find, that the said brethren in their representation do lay a grievous and heavy charge against the General Assembly, *anno* 1720, and load with foul reproaches their 5th Act, wherein they censure some erroneous passages, and harsh and offensive expressions in that book, called "The Marrow of Modern Divinity;" and also their 8th Act, wherein they direct ministers, in preaching catechetical doctrine, to insist upon the great and fundamental truths, according to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms: Such reproaches are these following, viz., "That by the said 5th Act Gospel truth hath suffered: That in finding fault with this doctrine of the Marrow, viz., 'That the believer is not under the law as a rule of life,' from several passages of the said book, the Assembly doth suppose, 'That a man cannot be under the law as a rule of life, unless he be under the covenant of works: That the declaring that distinction of the law, as it is the law of works, and as it is the law of Christ, to be groundless, as the author senses and applies it, page 198, 199, 'is of dismal tendency; and that the Assembly seems to them to have buried divers truths in the ruins of that distinction:' That, when the Assembly cites the Marrow, from page 150 to page 153, to show the erroneous opinion of its author, viz.,—that holiness is not necessary to salvation,—'they have hereby condemned, *in cumulo*, a bundle of sweet and pleasant Gospel truths, and cut off and condemned the believer's plea in the case of justification, in answer to the demands of the law:' That by censuring the Marrow, for making a man's persuasion, that Christ is his, and died for him, to be that saving faith commanded in the Gospel, 'the Assembly hath excluded from the nature of faith its appropriating act, without which there can be no receiving and closing with Christ for salvation; and thereby turned it into that general doubtful faith, abjured in our National Covenant:' That by adducing that passage of the Marrow concerning a deed of gift to all mankind, to prove that its author was for a universal atonement and pardon, 'the Assembly hath encroached upon the Divine warrant unto all to receive Christ, and also upon sovereign grace: That this act of Assembly hath so opened the sluice, unto the turning of religion into mere morality, that, if remedy be not timely provided, this matter must terminate in a confounding of the law and the gospel; and that the Assembly, in this act, hath showed too great con-

cern for binding on the necks of believers in Christ the yoke of the law, as a covenant of 'works.' That in the above mentioned 8th Act, wherein the General Assembly directs ministers, in preaching catechetical sermons, to insist especially upon the necessary doctrine of satisfaction to Divine justice, made by Jesus Christ, who is our only propitiation, and of free justification through our blessed surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone, 'the Assembly hath winded up the great doctrine of justification in such terms as give shelter to the erroneous doctrine of justification for something wrought in or done by the sinner, as his righteousness, or keeping the new and Gospel law.' And that, in the same act, the Assembly's directing ministers to preach the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining everlasting happiness, 'is of very dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free grace.'"

All which, the General Assembly cannot but look upon to be injurious and undutiful aspersions cast upon the supreme judicatory of this Church, who, in these two quarrelled acts, have given an open and evident proof of their true zeal for maintaining the received Gospel truths, and of their sincere concern for preserving this Church from the infection of the opposite errors. And the General Assembly finds, that the said Assembly, 1720, in these acts, had no design to recede from the received doctrine of this Church, nor by them have done injury to truth, nor given countenance to error, as they are charged with; and that the accusers themselves, by the accusations they have advanced, and by standing up in defence of that book, so justly censured, have laid themselves open to be suspected of favouring too much the errors contained in it. And, in vindication of the said two acts of Assembly, and for wiping off the above mentioned injurious aspersions, and for preserving the purity of Gospel truths received in this Church, and in opposition to the Antinomian errors censured in that book called "*The Marrow of Modern Divinity*," (the defence whereof is so keenly espoused by the subscribers of the Representation,) the General Assembly have thought fit to declare, and they hereby do declare, that they own and maintain, agreeable to the holy Scriptures, the received doctrine of this Church contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms; and, particularly, they assert, in the express words of our Confession and Catechisms:—

1. *Concerning the Covenants of Works and of Grace.*—"That the first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam, and, in him, to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience. That man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace, wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith, as the condition to interest them in him, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto life his Holy Spirit, to make them willing and able to believe."—Confess. Chap. vii. § 2, 3; Larger Catechism, Quest. 32.

2. *Concerning the Mediator, and the extent of his purchase.*—"That it pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man. That the Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father, and purchased not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven for all those whom the Father hath given unto him. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same."—Confess. Chap. viii. § 1, 5, 8. "And they are in time, by the Holy Ghost, enabled to believe in Christ, according to the Gospel."—Larger Catechism, Quest. 5.

3. *Concerning Free Justification.*—"That them whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone: Not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness, but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them; they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith alone, which faith they

have, not of themselves, it is the gift of God.”—Confess. Chap. xi. § 1; Larger Catechism, Quest. 70.

4. *Concerning Justifying Faith, and its appropriating act.*—“That the grace of faith, whereby the elect are enable to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts. Its principal acts are,—accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone, for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.”—Confess. Chap. xiv. § 1, 2. “That justifying faith is a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the Spirit and Word of God, whereby, he being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself, and all other creatures, to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth unto the truth of the promise of the Gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon Christ, and his righteousness therein held forth, for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation. That it is an instrument whereby he receiveth and applieth Christ and his righteousness.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 72, 73. “That this faith is different in degrees,—weak or strong,—growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ.”—Confess. Chap. xiv. § 3. “That such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, may, without extraordinary revelation, by faith, grounded upon the truth of God’s promises, and by the Spirit enabling to discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in a state of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation; that this infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be made partaker of it. And that assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it. One who doubteth of his being in Christ may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof.”—Confess. Chap. xviii. § 1, 3; Larger Catechism, Quest. 80, 81, 172.

5. *Concerning the Believer’s plea for acceptance with God, and title to eternal life, against the demands of the law and justice.*—“That Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father’s justice in their behalf.”—Confess. Chap. xi. § 3. “And although Christ, by his obedience and death, did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God’s justice in behalf of them that are justified; yet, inasmuch as God accepteth the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded of them, and did provide this surety, his own only Son, imputing his righteousness to them, and requiring nothing of them, for their justification, but faith, which also is his gift, their justification is to them of free grace. That faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not because of those other graces which do always accompany it, or of good works, that are the fruits of it; nor as if the grace of faith, or any act thereof, were imputed to him for his justification, but only as it is an instrument, by which he receiveth and applieth Christ and his righteousness.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 71, 73. “That repentance is not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof.”—Confess. Chap. xv. § 3. “That we cannot, by our best works, merit pardon of sin or eternal life at the hand of God.”—Confess. Chap. xvi. § 5. “They that are regenerated, and believe in Christ, are delivered from the Moral Law, as a covenant of works, so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 97; Confess. Chap. xix. § 6.

6. *Concerning the standing obligation of the Moral Law in the dispensation of grace, and the necessity of personal holiness and good works, in order to the obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation.*—“That the Law, after man’s fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and as such was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in the Ten Commandments. That the Moral Law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God, the Creator, who gave it. Neither doth Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much

strengthen this obligation.”—Confess. Chap. xix. § 2, 5. “That it is likewise of great use to the regenerate to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God’s approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works; so a man’s doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace. Neither are the forementioned uses of the Law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it.”—*Ibid.* § 6, 7. “That they who are effectually called and regenerated, having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally—and more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, ‘without which no man shall see the Lord.’”—Confess. Chap. xiii. § 1. “That God promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all the elect, to enable them to all holy obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their faith and thankfulness to God, and as the way which he hath appointed them to salvation.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 32. “That good works, done in obedience to God’s commandment, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith, and by them believers manifest their thankfulness. That having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end eternal life.”—Confess. Chap. xvi. § 2.

7. *Concerning the desert of Sin, and necessity of Repentance, in order to remission.*—“That as there is no sin so small but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.”—Confession, Chap. xv. § 4. “That every sin, even the least, being against the sovereignty, goodness, and holiness of God, and against his righteous law, deserveth his wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come, and cannot be expiated but by the blood of Christ.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 152. “That repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ; and it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.”—Confession, Chap. xv. § 1, 3. “That we may escape the wrath and curse of God due to us, by reason of the transgression of the law, he requireth of us repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 153.

8. *Concerning Believers’ Sins, their confessing them, begging pardon, and humbling themselves before the Lord for them.*—“That although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned; yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others, in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives, so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin. And the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law.”—Confession, Chap. xix. § 6. “That every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking them, he shall find mercy.”—Confession, Chap. xv. § 6. “That in the fifth petition, (which is, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,) acknowledging, that we and all others are guilty both of original and actual sin, and thereby become debtors to the justice of God, we pray for ourselves and others, that God, of his free grace, would, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended and applied by faith, acquit us both from the guilt and punishment of sin, accept us in his Beloved, continue his favour and grace to us, pardon our daily failings, and fill us with peace and joy, in giving us daily more and more assurance of forgiveness.”—Larger Catechism, Quest. 194. “That in the fifth petition, we pray that God, for Christ’s sake, would freely pardon all our sins, which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.”—Shorter Catechism, Quest. 105. “That God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God’s Fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his

countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.”—Confess. Chap. xi. § 5.

And whereas, in the two above mentioned acts, it was the true intent and design of the General Assembly to have these precious truths preserved in purity, and maintained and inculcated; and that people might be kept from the infection of the opposite errors, the General Assembly do judge it a very undutiful and uncharitable practice, in any ministers of this Church, to suggest that the Assembly have therein receded from the received doctrine contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

Moreover, that well-meaning people may not be imposed upon by the evil suggestions of the said Representation, its authors and abettors, and for removing mistakes, which the unthinking may fall into, about the true design and import of the 5th Act of Assembly, *anno* 1720, the General Assembly do hereby declare, that the passages cited in the said act, from the book entitled, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, to show it contains the erroneous opinions ascribed to it, are to be taken and understood (as in justice and equity they ought) in the sense and meaning of its author, gathered and appearing from the book itself; and that the said passages are condemned only in so far as they import the said erroneous opinions, or are applied by the author to that purpose: and, particularly,—

1. With respect to the fourth paragraph of the Representation, it is to be observed, that the Assembly, in the first paragraph of the Act, concerning the nature of faith, do blame the Marrow for placing assurance in the essence of faith, and making that saving faith, commanded in the Gospel, to be “A man’s being verily persuaded that Jesus Christ is his; and that he shall have life and salvation by him; and that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for him,”—the brethren, in their Representation, do not disown that the passage here adduced from the book does evince this to be the opinion of its author; but they charge the Assembly, on account of their censuring this doctrine, with excluding from the nature of faith its appropriating act, without which there can be no receiving and closing with Christ for salvation; and with turning it into that general and doubtful faith, abjured in our National Covenant, though most unjustly, seeing the assurance the Assembly doth there blame is that which the author of the Marrow advanceth, when he makes that to be the justifying act of faith, a man’s being persuaded that Jesus Christ is his; that he shall have life and salvation by him; and whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for him; which is contrary to the texts of Scripture, and passages of our Confession and Larger Catechism there cited; the doctrine of which Confession they have solemnly engaged to maintain, defend, and adhere to; and which is altogether different from the general and doubtful faith of the Papists, who allow a man’s believing implicitly as the Church believes, and place true faith in a general assent to revealed truths, without a cordial accepting of Christ as offered in the Gospel for salvation, deny perseverance, and do not own assurance to be attainable by a true believer without extraordinary revelation. The brethren do not, nor can they charge the Assembly with denying, that the assurance of grace and salvation is attainable by a believer, or that it is his duty to endeavour the attaining thereof, seeing these are expressly asserted in the passages of our Confession cited by them. Nor can they charge the Assembly with denying, that a belief and persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ, and of Christ’s ability and willingness to save all that come unto him, is necessary unto justifying faith; but they do, and must maintain, with our Confession and Catechisms, that a true believer is not at all times, even when he is acting faith unto salvation, assured of his present being in a state of grace, and that he shall be saved; but that he may wait long before he obtain this assurance. See Larger Catechism, Quest. 81.

2. With respect to the fifth paragraph of the Representation, it is to be observed, that the Assembly, in the second paragraph of the Act, concerning universal atonement and pardon, doth censure the book for asserting an universal redemption as to purchase, and to show that this opinion is there taught, several passages of the book are quoted, and particularly page 119, “The Father hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all mankind, that whosoever of them all shall believe in his Son, shall not

perish," &c. Here the brethren do not blame the Assembly for condemning the assertion of an universal atonement, but they allege they have condemned that deed of gift and grant extracted out of the Sacred Record, viz., "He that believeth on the Son shall not perish, but have eternal life;" by which, the brethren say, they understand no more but the revelation of the Divine will in the Word, affording a warrant to offer Christ unto all, and a warrant unto all to receive him; which revelation and warrant the Assembly owns. And here the brethren give their gloss upon that text of Scripture, which is not denied by the Assembly, nor to the purpose; but they omit the sense and meaning of the author, which the Assembly evinceth to be an asserting of universal redemption as to purchase, both from what goes before, and from what follows, upon that passage in the book; which is no fair treatment of the Assembly's Act.

3. With respect to the third paragraph of the Representation, it is to be observed, that, in the third paragraph of the Act, the Assembly censures that false opinion, "That holiness is not necessary to salvation;" and, for fixing it upon The Marrow, they cite page 150 to 153. They cite these pages for clearing the author's mind from the connection of purposes, and, particularly, that he is speaking of a person already justified; and then adduce the words from page 153, which plainly bear his rejecting of the law, as it requires good works to be done, and the commandments to be kept, in order to obtain salvation. Which is farther strengthened by the following words, (the omitting whereof by the Assembly is complained of in the Representation,) viz., "For in Christ I have all things at once, neither need I any thing more that is necessary unto salvation." Then personal holiness and good works, and perseverance in holy obedience to the law of God, are not (in his opinion) necessary unto salvation; and a man may have all things necessary to salvation, though he be not yet a godly man; and, therefore, the Assembly have given no just ground of quarrel in this, nor for any who understand the Gospel to be offended, seeing, though good works be excluded from being the ground of justification, yet they are necessary in the justified, in order to their obtaining the enjoyment of eternal salvation; and this doth no way cut off or condemn the believer's only plea, in answer to the law demands of perfect obedience, for justification and title to eternal life, as the Representation alleges.

4. The brethren, in the second part of their Representation, and third instance of the hard treatment of The Marrow, do quarrel the fourth paragraph of the Assembly's Act; and they complain that the Assembly do infer the author's not allowing fear of punishment and hope of reward to be motives of a believer's obedience, from his saying, "That he would not have believers to eschew evil, or do good, for fear of hell or hope of heaven." And their reason against this inference is, that there are other punishments besides hell, and other rewards besides heaven, which, they would insinuate, are not excluded by the author from being motives of the believer's obedience. But, 1. This passage, adduced from page 181, proves the charge against the author, as to the chief reward and punishment, a respect whereunto ought not to be excluded from the believer's obedience; nor does the Assembly make these the only motives, as in the Representation they would allege. 2. This part of the Assembly's Act is unfairly represented, seeing they do not draw that inference from that one passage alone, but cite other passages, as pages 175 and 179, where fear of punishment and hope of reward, in express terms, and in general, without exception, are removed from being motives unto the believer's obedience. To which may be added page 73, where he says of believers under the Old Testament, "That answerably as they believed, answerably they yielded obedience to the law, without fear of punishment or hope of reward;" and page 216, cited in the following paragraph of the Act, where he exhorts the believer "to yield free obedience, without having respect either to what the law of works either promiseth or threateneth; but, also, without having respect to what the law of Christ either promiseth or threateneth." 3. And when they say, they heartily approve of the author's position in this sense, viz., "That believers are not to do good, for hope of obtaining heaven by their own works and doings," (which is a calumnious insinuation against the orthodox doctrine,) they do not declare themselves, whether they allow that a believer may and ought to be moved unto obedience by the hope of heaven, in any other sense than that of a hope of ob-

taining a right and title to it by his own works; or if no regard can be had to the promised reward of the heavenly inheritance by a believer in his obedience, without its being mercenary.

5. And whereas by the Act of Assembly, 1720, this passage, page 150 of *The Marrow*,—"As the law is the covenant of works, you are wholly and altogether set free from it;" and this other passage, page 151, "You are now set free both from the commanding and condemning power of the covenant of works;" are condescended upon as a part of the proof against the author, of his maintaining this erroneous tenet, "That the believer is not under the law as a rule of life." The General Assembly hereby declares, that it was not the meaning or intention of the said Act in the least to insinuate, "That believers in Christ are under the law as a covenant of works, or that they are obliged to seek justification by their own obedience," it being a precious Gospel truth, "That believers are free from the law, as it is a covenant of works." But that these passages are adduced in the said Act as a proof of the author of *The Marrow's* maintaining the foresaid erroneous proposition, "That believers are not under the law as a rule of life," in regard that the Assembly did apprehend that the author understood, by the covenant of works, "the Moral Law, strictly and properly taken," as it appears he does in other places of the book; as, particularly, page 7, he says, "That indeed the law of works signifies the Moral Law; and the Moral Law, strictly and properly taken, signifies the covenant of works." And the General Assembly appoints that these two passages shall not be understood as a proof of the foresaid error in any other sense.

6. With respect to the second paragraph of the Representation, it is to be observed, that the other passages, cited and referred to in this fifth and the following paragraph of the Act, respect his distinction of the law, "as it is the law of works, and as it is the law of Christ;" by which he justifies the six positions, that are either Antinomian, or wrested by the Antinomians into an unsound sense. And as to the law of Christ, pages 209, 210, he will have it to be such as hath not eternal, but temporal rewards and penalties annexed to it, and to be delivered to believers only, page 157. So that unbelieving hearers of the Gospel are under no obligation by it. Moreover, in page 267, he will have a believer to be under no "law which commands any moral duty to be done, either for eschewing of punishment, or upon promise of any reward, temporal or eternal;" and so not under the Moral Law, nor even the law of Christ, in the author's own account of it. And when this is the plain meaning of the author in this his distinction, and is applied by him to justify and fence the foresaid six positions, the brethren, in their Representation, had no ground to quarrel the Assembly for rejecting the "distinction as it is applied by the author," nor so injuriously to charge them, as they do, with "staking down believers under the covenant of works, and with directing them to an obedience upon which they may boast, and with burying several Gospel truths in the ruins of this distinction."

7. The brethren do, in their Representation, advance a charge against the 8th Act of the same Assembly, entitled, "Act for preaching catechetical doctrine, with directions therein," and complain, 1st, That two clauses therein, concerning justification and the necessity of holiness, are not expressed in the form of words used in our Confession and Catechisms. 2dly, That the article of justification is expressed, without mentioning Christ's righteousness imputed to us. And, 3dly, That ministers are directed to preach the necessity of a holy life, in order to the obtaining of everlasting happiness; which they conceive to be of very dangerous consequence unto the doctrine of free grace. But these are unjust exceptions, and afford no strength unto their groundless objections against the former Act: For, 1st, When the Assembly, in that 8th Act, do direct ministers, in their catechetical sermons, more especially to insist upon the great and fundamental truths of our holy religion, expressly according to our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, it was not needful, in their enumerating some special articles, to describe every one of them in the very form of words used in our Confession or Catechisms. 2dly, The article of justification is so expressed in itself, and in conjunction with the preceding article of the satisfaction to Divine justice, made by Christ, who is our only propitiation, that it necessarily

implies our being justified, for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, seeing it is called free justification through our blessed surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone. And, 3dly, The article immediately following, concerning the necessity of holiness, can be accounted of no dangerous consequence, if they truly own personal holiness to be necessary to salvation. And if they quarrel the phrase, "of obtaining everlasting happiness," they may also quarrel the Apostle's expression, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, and Phil. iii. 11, 12. For it relates to the obtaining of enjoyment and possession, and not of right and title to everlasting happiness, which all justified persons have already attained. So that this Act, designedly calculated for maintaining of truth, and preventing the infection of error, gives no shadow of ground for the jealousies the brethren vent against it.

And the General Assembly considering, that, in the above mentioned Representation, the subscribers thereof have vented divers positions, and used several expressions of dangerous tendency, and not agreeable to the form of sound words, contained in the Holy Scripture, and our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, particularly page 2, line 11, "That the law, as to believers, is really divested of its promise of life and threatening of death;" which is contrary to Heb. xii. 28, 29; Matt. x. 28; 1 Cor. ix. ult.; Rev. xxii. 14; and Confess. Chap. xix. § 6; Larger Cat. Quest. 194, if by the law they understand the moral law, the rule of life. Page 7, line 4, "That the Assembly's directing of ministers to preach the necessity of holiness, in order to the obtaining of everlasting happiness, is of very dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free grace." Page 7, line 3, "That the law acknowledgeth no works for obtaining salvation, but such as found a title to it before the Lord." Whereas the law requires good works in order to the obtaining salvation, though they do not found a title to it. "That the Assembly's rejecting the author of The Marrow's definition of justifying faith, viz., 'A man's being verily persuaded in his heart that Christ Jesus is his, and that he shall have life and salvation by him; that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind he did it for him;' excludes from the nature of faith its appropriating act, and turns it into that general and doubtful faith, abjured in our National Covenant."—Page 3, line last, &c. Contrary to Shorter Cat., Quest. 33, which plainly makes "receiving" of Christ the appropriating act of faith; and to Shorter Cat., Quest. 31, which makes that act "embracing."

And, besides other expressions and insinuations to be found in the said Representation, that are of a dangerous tendency, such as that, "The promise of life, or threatening of death, and hope of heaven, and fear of hell, are not to influence a believer's obedience;" which plainly follows from their assertion, "That the moral law as to believers is divested of its promise of life and threatening of death;—that a promise of life and a threatening of death being added to a law or command, makes it a covenant of works."—Page 2, middle. "That the distinction of the law into the law of works and the law of Christ, which are two branches of the tripartite division of the law, as it is explained and applied by the author of The Marrow of Modern Divinity, and condemned by the Act of Assembly, 1720, is to be maintained."

And the Assembly, likewise considering that there have, at this time, been published several positions and expressions of a pernicious and dangerous tendency, such as, "That in the Gospel, properly so taken, there are no precepts, the commands of faith and repentance not excepted;—that holy obedience is not properly a federal or conditional mean, nor has any kind of causality, in order to the obtaining of glory," whereby all usefulness and influence of holy obedience, in order of means towards the possession of heaven, seem to be excluded. "That the law, as a covenant of works, wills us to accept of the non-such Saviour offered to us, of the payment of a responsible surety; and that the law wills that the sinner make full payment himself, or provide good and sufficient payment by a surety." Besides several other positions and expressions of the like nature and tendency, not here mentioned. And although some of those above mentioned positions and expressions may be explained into a sound sense; yet, because, in the obvious meaning of them, they tend to mislead the minds of the less judicious into erroneous notions,—

Therefore, the Assembly did, and hereby do, strictly prohibit and discharge all the ministers of this Church to use, by writing, printing, preaching, catechising, or other-

wise teaching, either publicly or privately, these, or any of these positions above mentioned, or what may be equivalent to them, or of like tendency, under the pain of the censures of this Church, conform to the merit of their offence. And do ordain the several Presbyteries and Synods, and Commissions of the General Assemblies of this Church, to take particular care that the premises be punctually observed by all ministers and members of this Church; and, more especially, the Presbyteries and Synods within whose bounds any of the brethren reside who signed the Representation. And, considering that the brethren's desire that the Act, 1720, should be repealed, is unjust, the Assembly does refuse the same. And because of the injurious reflections contained in their Representation, as above mentioned, the Assembly do appoint their moderator, in their name, to rebuke and admonish them; and though their offence deserves a much higher censure, yet the Assembly forbears it, in hopes that the great lenity used towards them shall engage them to a more dutiful behaviour in time coming.

VIII.

Sess. 11, May 22, 1722.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders, for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs William Mitchell at Edinburgh, their Moderator, Alexander Meikle at Langholm, David Balmain at Westerkirk, William Steel at Lochmaben, Thomas Goldie at Kirkpatrick-juxta, James Armstrong at Ruthwell, John Howie at Morton, Alexander Bain at Keir, James Guthrie at Irongray, John Campbell at Kirkbean, Patrick Cumming at Kirkmahoe, William Boyd at Dalry, John Reid at Carsphairn, Robert Donaldson at Balmaclellan, Robert Seton at Glasserton, William Cowpar at Mochrum, Walter Laurie at Stranraer, John Anderson at Kirkmaiden, Andrew Rodgers at Galston, Henry Osburn at Tarbolton, James Robertson at Craigie, William Coates at Dalmellington, James Laurie, junior, at Kirkmichael, Hugh Falside at New Mills, Andrew Cuming at Largs, James Ruat at Dunlop, Robert Miller at Paisley, Neil Campbell at Renfrew, John Anderson at Port-Glasgow, Alexander Finlater at Hamilton, John Wiseman at New Monkland, John Scot at Stenhouse, Thomas Linning at Lesmahagow, Charles Hunter at Pittinain, Robert Davidson at Crawfordjohn, John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, James Clerk at Glasgow, John Scot there, John Gray there, John Ritchie at Old Kilpatrick, Thomas Leckie at Kilmarnock, James Livingston at Strathblane, Robert Glen at Kingarth, Archibald Gillespie at Strathurd, Charles Stewart at Campbelton, John Campbell in Killarow, in Islay, Alexander Campbell at Inverary, Duncan Campbell at Kilchrenan, Dougal Campbell at Lismore, William Morrison at Tyrie, Daniel M'Aulay at Bracadale, Aulay M'Aulay at Lewis, William Chalmers at Kinloch, Robert Bows at Rattray, Duncan M'Lea at Dull, James Stewart at Mouline, Thomas Black at Perth, William Stewart there, William Moncrieff at Methven, James Fachney at St Martins, Matthew Wallace at Kincardine, Thomas Thomson at Tulliallan, Alexander Hamilton at Airth, Archibald Campbell at Larbert, David Shaw at Auchterarder, Andrew Ure at Fossaway, William Hunter at Gask, Samuel Charters at Inverkeithing, Allan Logan at Culross, John Hepburn at Torry, John Auchinleck at Auchterderran, John Cleghorn at Wemyss, Robert Ponton at Kennoway, William Thomson at Flisk, William Dick at Coupar, William Miles at Moonsie, James Monro at Kettle, James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, William Hardie at St Andrews, John Craigie at St Monance, James Robertson at Leuchars, Joseph Drew, Principal of St Leonard's College in St Andrews, William Lyon at Airlie, Laurence Brown at Lintrathine, Alexander Finlayson at Eassie, Thomas Mitchell at Aberlemno, William Wingate at Kinnettles, Samuel Johnston at Dundee, James Mar at Muirhouse, William Thomson at Strickmartin, Charles Charters at Arbirlot, John Henderson at Kirkden, James Trail at Montrose, John

Dunbar at Menmuir, Robert Gray at Brechin, Andrew Honeyman at Kinneff, James Mitchell at Dunottar, Henry Hamilton at Glenbervie, Thomas Blackwell, Principal of the College of New Aberdeen, David Anderson, Professor of Divinity in the King's College of Aberdeen, Colin Campbell at Aberdeen, James Howie at Newhills, George Chalmers, Principal of the King's College of Aberdeen, Martin Shank at Banchoryterran, John Shepherd at Logie Colston, John Burnet at Clunie, James Gordon at Alford, George Moir at Towie, Thomas Reid at Lochall, Alexander Forbes at Fergie, Thomas Scot at Fyvie, Alexander Irvine at Fordyce, James Innes at Banff, William Watt at Inverury, Gilbert Gerard at Chapel Garioch, Robert Abercromby at Leslie, William Leslie at St Fergus, James Leslie at Crimond, Alexander Auchinleck at Fraserburgh, William Forbes at Tarves, James Burnet at Ellon, Alexander Chalmers at Marnoch, John Gilchrist at Keith, James Stevenson at Rothiemay, James Thomson at Elgin, Charles Primrose there, Francis Grant at Duthill, Alexander Fraser at Inveraven, James Gordon at Kinloss, John Crockat at Dallas, William Stewart at Inverness, Alexander M'Bain there, Lauchlan Shaw at Calder, George Gordon at Cromarty, Hugh Campbell at Kilmuir Wester, Daniel M'Gilligen at Alness, Thomas Chisholm at Kilmorack, Hugh Duff at Ferne, David Ross at Tarbat, Robert Kirk at Dornoch, Robert Robertson at Loth, William Innes at Thurso, Hugh Cross at Bowar, Thomas Baikie at Kirkwall, James Sands at Birsay, William Blaw at Westray, Thomas Covingtree at Sanday, James Grierson at Tingwall, John Hay at Unst, William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, John Wilson at North Leith, James Craig at Edinburgh, James Smith at Crumond, Neil M'Vicar at West Kirk, James Walker at Canongate, Walter Allan at Colinton, William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, John Brand at Borrowstounness, John Wilkie at Strathbrock, Robert Dalgleish at Linlithgow, James Anderson at Falkirk, Robert Livingstone at Biggar, Thomas Henderson at Skirling, James Robertson at Eddleston, Alexander Coupar at Traquair, Daniel Gilchrist at Linton, Patrick Cuming at Ormiston, Thomas Moffat at Newton, William Robertson at Borthwick, Robert Horsburgh at Saltpreston, John Mutter at Tranent, James Witherspoon at Yester, Andrew Brown at Spott, Henry Schaw at Cockburnspath, John Campbell at Cranshaws, James Gilliland at Greenlaw, Thomas Anderson at Ayton, George Ridpath at Ladykirk, James Christie at Simprim, James Ramsay at Kelso, William Baxter at Ednam, Alexander Coulden at Oxnam, Robert Bell at Crailing, George Hall at Abbotsrule, Henry Home at Channelkirk, Thomas Pitcairn at Lauder, Adam Miln at Melrose, and William Bannatyne at Yarrow, *Ministers*; His Grace John Duke of Athol, the Right Honourable David Earl of Buchan, Charles Earl of Lauderdale, Thomas Earl of Haddington, James Earl of Finlater, Patrick Earl of Marchmont, James Earl of Hyndford, David Earl of Glasgow, Archibald Earl of Islay, Alexander Lord Polwarth, Lord Charles Ker, William Lord Ross, James Lord Torphichen, George Lord Reay, Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, Baronet, Lord President of the Session, Mr Robert Dundas, younger of Arniston, His Majesty's Advocate, Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, Sir John Maxwell of Pollock, Baronet, Sir Alexander Ogilvie of Forglen, Baronet, Mr James Erskine of Grange, Sir Francis Grant of Cullen, Baronet, Mr James Hamilton of Pencaitland, Sir Andrew Home of Kimmerghame, Sir Walter Pringle of Newhall, eight of the Senators of the College of Justice, Sir John Clerk of Peunycook, one of the Barons of Exchequer, Mr John Campbell of Mamore, Mr Arthur Forbes of Breda, Mr Francis Montgomery of Giffan, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Mr Charles Erskine of Edenshead, George Baillie of Jarviswood, Sir William Johnston of Westeraw, Baronet, David Murray of Belreadin, Robert M'Gathan of Dalquhat, John Gilchrist, bailie in Dumfries, Captain Samuel M'Clellan of Barclay, Captain John Martin of Airies, Sir Charles Hay of Park, Baronet, Sir Adam Whiteford of Blairchan, Baronet, Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, Sir David Stewart of Cultness, Baronet, Mr Robert Stewart, one of the Regents in the College of Edinburgh, Mr Alexander Finlayson, Clerk of Glasgow, Hugh Montgomery of Hartfield, John Aird, Provost of Glasgow, Sir James Campbell of Ardkinlass, Baronet, John Campbell, late Lord Provost of Edinburgh, George Drummond, bailie there, James Nimmo, treasurer there, Mr Alexander

Campbell, advocate, William M'Leod of Hammir, Alexander Robertson of Straloch, William Austin, late Provost of Perth, Robert Robertson, present Provost there, Sir James Livingstone of Glentirran, Baronet, Mr Alexander Abercrombie of Tillibody, Sir James Campbell of Aberuchil, Baronet, Colonel John Erskine, uncle to Alva, George Balfour of Balbirnie, Mr Patrick Haldane, advocate, Sir Robert Anstruther of Balcaskie, Mr Robert Hay of Naughton, Patrick Drummond of Gairdrum, James Craig

John Donaldson, merchant in Dundee, John Allardice, Provost of Aberbrothwick, Colonel Robert Reid, Mr Arthur Shepherd, Sheriff-depute of Mearns, Robert Stewart, Provost of Aberdeen, James Morison, late bailie there, William Forbes, late bailie there, Mr George Gordon, Professor of Oriental Languages at Aberdeen, George Fordyce of Braidford, Arthur Forbes of Echt, Forbes of Balfug, Mr Alexander Garden of Troup, younger, advocate, Captain John Forbes of Boyndlie, George Sinclair, bailie in Ellon, James Spence of Alveskirton, William Cuming of Craigmill, Mr Duncan Forbes, advocate, Duncan Forbes, bailie of Fortrose, Colonel Robert Monro of Fowlis, George Monro of Culcairn, James Fraser of Auchnagart, William Ross of Aldie, Mr Robert Honeyman of Gremsey, Mr James Mitchell of Girsta, Dr Alexander Dundas, His Majesty's Physician, Robert Craig, late Dean of Guild of Edinburgh, John Osburn, late bailie there, John Wightman of Mauldslie, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Andrew Wardrop, glazier, deacon-convener there, George Dundas of that Ilk, Mr John Dundas of Philipstoun, Mr John Mitchell of Alderstoun, Mr Alexander Menzies of Culterallers, Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, Baronet, Mr John Henderson, merchant, Mr John Hamilton of Pencaitland, William Baillie of Lamington, Sir William Baird of Newbyth, Baronet, Sir James Hall of Dunglass, Baronet, Sir John Stewart of Allankbank, Baronet, Sir Robert Sinclair of Longformacus, Baronet, Sir John Swinton of that Ilk, Archibald Douglas of Cavers, Thomas Haliburton of Newmains, and Sir Walter Riddel of that Ilk, Baronet, *Ruling Elders*; to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned, with power to the said Commission or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said Commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March, next to come, and oftener, when and where they shall think fit and convenient; with power to the said Commissioners to choose their own moderator. And suchlike, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said Commission, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in, and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by this Assembly; and to advert to the interests of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing always, this general clause be not extended to particular affairs, or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed, that what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved by the General Assembly. And the General Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly, 1717, to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the Commissioners above named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially herein inserted; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets, tending towards the promoting of opinions, of whatever kind, inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word, writ, or print, be called before the said Commission to answer for the same. And, further, the said Commission is hereby empowered to receive any references and appeals that shall be made to them from Synods in matters of doctrine, and ripen such affairs for the General Assembly; likewise, to take care that the impressions of the Holy Scriptures,

the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and such books as are authorised by this Church, relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, be correct, and to give directions about printing the same. They are also appointed, at their first meeting, to take under consideration all the representations of the growth of Popery within the bounds of this National Church, and of meeting-houses not authorised by law, which have been brought up to this and former Assemblies, or Commissions thereof, or that may be farther offered to this Commission, and to apply to the government for a proper remedy and speedy redress. And the said Commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them, as above mentioned; and, in all their actings, they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this National Church, and do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause. And this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed; and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, 1706. And for the better securing of a quorum, and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of those Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof; and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

IX.

Sess. 11, May 22, 1722.—Act against Profaneness, and concerning the Duty of Elders and Deacons.

The General Assembly, being deeply affected with the great decay of Christian piety amongst all ranks, and the abounding of vice and immorality, the neglect of public ordinances, and profanation of the Lord's Day; and considering that slackness and partiality in the exercise of discipline, and untenderness in the walk and conversation of the office-bearers of this Church, cannot but greatly contribute to the increase of these evils; therefore, the General Assembly do earnestly beseech, exhort, and require all ministers to take heed to themselves and to their doctrine, and to be exemplary to their people in sobriety, righteousness, and holiness, abstaining from all appearance of evil; and, in like manner, the General Assembly do earnestly beseech, exhort, and require elders and deacons to be faithful in the discharge of their respective offices, tender and circumspect in their walk, and punctual in their attending upon ordinances, and strict in their observation of the Lord's Day, and in regularly keeping up the worship of God in their families; and the General Assembly appoints the judicatures of the Church to take good heed that none be admitted to or continued in these offices, but such as are found qualified, and do behave themselves as above required; and appoints Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, strictly and impartially, without respect of persons, to observe this and former acts of Assembly, relative to office-bearers in this Church; and appoints Presbyteries, at their privy censures, to inquire into the behaviour of their members, and of all the elders and deacons in their bounds, with respect to the premises; and appoints Synods to inquire into the conduct of Presbyteries; and both Synods and Presbyteries to record their diligence herein, that the same may be reported to General Assemblies by the visitors of Synod books. And, *lastly*, the General Assembly appoints this Act to be read in all parish churches, on or before the first Sabbath of August next, and for that end, ordains copies thereof to be printed, and timeously transmitted.

X.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1722.—Act concerning Commissioners from Universities to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly appoints and ordains, that, in all time coming, the commissions given by universities to their representatives in the Assemblies of this Church, as well as those given by Presbyteries to theirs, shall expressly bear, that the commissioners therein named have signed the Confession of Faith, with the Formula, according to the 11th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1720, and acts therein mentioned, under the certification therein specified.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1722.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next to come, 1723 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 9, 1723.

I.

Sess. 1, May 9, 1723.—The King's Commission to Charles Earl of Hopetoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of this National Church being convened and constituted, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Hopetoun, his Majesty's Commission, sealed with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union betwixt the two kingdoms of Scotland and England to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, appointing him his Majesty's High Commissioner and Representative in this National Assembly; which commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, the General Assembly ordered the same to be recorded in their registers, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, the tenor whereof follows:—

GEORGIUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 9, 1723.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 11, 1723.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 11, 1723.—To the King's most Excellent Majesty, the humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

The grateful sense of the goodness of God, in blessing us with such a gracious Sovereign, and the duty and loyalty toward your Majesty, which so justly fill our hearts, oblige us to show the deepest concern for every thing that affects the safety of your Majesty's person and government; and, therefore, though with the greatest satisfaction we do understand that the Commission of the late General Assembly did, according to their duty, present a humble address to your Majesty, upon occasion of the happy discovery of the late horrid conspiracy, which address we heartily approve, as expressing the most sincere thoughts of our minds; yet we cannot omit laying hold of this first opportunity of our meeting in a General Assembly, to declare, in the most public and solemn manner, our utmost detestation of that most wicked and execrable design, and to express our great joy that it hath pleased God to assist your Majesty in making a seasonable discovery thereof.

A design so bloody and detestable in itself, and so pernicious and fatal in its consequences, raises in our hearts the greatest horror and indignation. We have for a long time observed, with astonishment, the restless and impudent malice of your enemies, endeavouring to misrepresent your Majesty's just and gracious administration, in order to diffuse their own disaffection to your person and government into the minds of others of your Majesty's unwary, though well-meaning subjects. With this view have they charged upon your reign those evils to which none but themselves gave rise. They have set forth the most innocent, necessary, and prudent steps of your administration in the falsest and blackest colours, and have even denied and ridiculed your royal goodness and mercy, to which multitudes of themselves, and of their nearest relations, owe their very lives and fortunes. So monstrous is their dissimulation and ingratitude, and such is their unaccountable fondness to have your kingdoms again enthralled under all the miseries of Popery and arbitrary power.

Your enemies are abundantly sensible, that there is no accomplishing this their most wicked desire, so long as the throne is filled by a Prince so wise and steady in all his measures, and so powerful a protector and guardian of the Protestant religion, and the liberties of his people, as your most sacred Majesty. But, how shall we express our amazement and just indignation, that any of your Majesty's subjects, especially such as call themselves Protestants, should have contrived to destroy your Majesty's sacred person and your royal family, and to cut off many of your best servants and subjects, by the complicated wickednesses of perjury, murder, and parricide, in order to set a Popish Pretender upon your throne? This we look on as striking at the root of the religion and liberties of a Protestant and free people, and of all that is valuable and dear to us, both as men and Christians, and as a horrible evidence to what barbarous wickedness an incurable malice can drive men of abandoned spirits.

Had God, for the sins of your kingdoms, permitted this hateful conspiracy to take effect, it must have been attended with such a dismal train of fatal consequences, as makes our hearts to tremble: And, therefore, while, with hearts full of joy and thankfulness, we adore the wisdom and goodness of our gracious God, in discovering and disappointing such an execrable design, permit us, Great Sir, with the greatest loyalty and most dutiful affection, to congratulate your Majesty upon the success of your prudent and watchful administration in this matter.

The opening up so much of this deep-laid plot, and tracing it through so many of its various mazes and windings, the stripping it of those veils of darkness which were

so industriously spread over it by men of the most artful cunning, and the deliverance thereby wrought for your Majesty's sacred person and your royal family, and also for the dearest privileges of all your faithful subjects, and of this Church in particular, will, we hope, be remembered by latest posterity, to the honour of God, and as one of the glories of your Majesty's most auspicious reign.

We humbly presume, upon this occasion, to assure your Majesty of the continuance of our loyalty and affection, and of all that duty and fidelity which is owing from the most faithful subjects to the best of Kings; and that we will use our utmost endeavours to instil into the people among whom we have charge, the same sentiments of duty and loyalty to your Majesty's person and government, and the same zeal for the Protestant succession in your royal family, which we ourselves esteem it our great happiness to entertain.

May the same wise and merciful God, who brought you so seasonably to the throne, and who hath hitherto so graciously preserved your sacred Majesty, continue His watchful care over you. May He lay open to the very bottom, and effectually disappoint, all the dark and malicious designs of your enemies, and turn their counsels into foolishness. May the crown, wherewith He hath adorned your royal head, sit long and easy and flourishing upon it. And may all your subjects be made sensible of the valuable blessings which they enjoy under your happy government. May He eminently bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their offspring, and make them the happy instruments of much good to the world, and to the Church in their day. May Protestant Sovereigns, of your royal line, always inherit your crown, and these illustrious qualities with which your Majesty does now adorn it. May you be long honoured to do eminent service to God on earth, and at length enjoy a great reward in heaven. So pray,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

J. A. SMITH, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 3, May 11, 1723.—Additional Directions to Visitors of Books, besides those mentioned in the 4th Act of the General Assembly, 1713.

1. That the visitors of Synod-books take notice if the Acts of Assembly concerning licensing probationers be observed, particularly, that none be entered on trials till they have studied divinity the usual time, and produce ample testimonials, and the advice of the Synod be taken, and the questions appointed by Act of the General Assembly read to them before trials; and that none be entered thereon until they have resided an half-year at least, immediately before, in their bounds. And that the whole particulars in the 5th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1705, 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1711, and 6th Act of the General Assembly, 1714, be punctually observed; and that all give satisfying answers to the questions, and sign the Formula contained in the foresaid 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1711, and no other, according to the 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1717; and that licences bear the same.

2. If due care be taken for preserving purity of doctrine, according to the 9th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1717, Acts 5th and 8th of the General Assembly, 1720, and 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1722.

3. If the 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1714, for discouraging unworthy bursars, be observed; and 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1715, for preferring students having Irish to bursaries.

4. That they take notice of the diligence of Synods and Presbyteries, in observing the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1714, 13th Act of the General Assembly, 1715, 8th Act of the General Assembly, 1717, 4th Act of the General Assem-

bly, 1719, and 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1720, for procuring the better execution of former acts against Popery, and for preventing the growth thereof, by taking up yearly lists of their names and designations, and giving in copies of the same to the Justices of the Peace, or other Judges competent, and to the Synods; and if their diligence herein be recorded.

5. If all Ruling Elders have signed the Formula contained in the 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1694, and if Presbyteries, at their privy censures, inquire into the behaviour of their members, and if all Ruling Elders and Deacons in their bounds keep family-worship, and observe the other particulars mentioned in the 9th Act of the General Assembly, 1722, and if deacons be ordained in every parish, as is appointed by Act 7th Assembly, 1719.

6. That they remark the diligence of Synods and Presbyteries, with relation to reading the King's Proclamation, and abbreviate of the Acts of Parliament and General Assembly against Immorality, and giving suitable exhortations, according to the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1714.

7. If fasts and thanksgivings be observed according to the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1710, and 4th Act of the General Assembly, 1722.

8. How the 4th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1719, concerning the settlement and provision of schools, and the encouragement of ministers in parishes where there are Papists, is observed.

9. How the 4th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1718, concerning a fund for maintaining the indigent widows and orphans of ministers, is observed.

VI.

Sess. 5, May 14, 1723.—Act concerning the Election of a Representative from the University of Edinburgh in the General Assembly.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, enact and declare, that the right of election of a representative in the General Assemblies of this National Church, from the University of Edinburgh, is only in the professors, principal, regents, masters, and others bearing office in the said University; that is to say, the chancellor, rector, and dean of faculty, if any such there be, exclusive of all others; and discharge the Clerk of the General Assembly, in all time hereafter, to receive in any commission to any person, or to insert any person's name in the rolls of Assembly, as a representative from the said University, in succeeding Assemblies, whose commission is given otherwise than is appointed by this Act.

VII.

Sess. 8, May 17, 1723.—Act concerning the Form of Commissions from Burghs and Universities to their Representatives in the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, for the greater uniformity in commissions to members of the General Assembly, and attestations of the same, do, in the meantime, until the matter concerning commissions from burghs be further thought upon, appoint, that the rules and forms prescribed by the 8th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1695, Act 6th General Assembly, 1704, Act 9th General Assembly, 1718, and 4th Act General Assembly, 1720, in commissions from Presbyteries to their representatives in the General Assembly, be strictly observed in commissions to be given to representatives of Universities and Royal Burghs: And do appoint, that all commissions to members of the General Assembly, whether from Universities or Royal Burghs, and attestations of the same, shall be conceived in the terms prescribed by the former Acts above mentioned, *mutatis mutandis*.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 17, 1723.—Act concerning the Church's Public Money.

The General Assembly having had laid before them a report of the Committee appointed by the last Assembly for examining the public accounts, which was referred by the said Assembly to their Commission, together with the said Commission their judgment thereupon, and upon the several petitions and claims for money laid before the said Assembly; and having considered the several Acts of Assembly with relation to the disposal of the Church's public money, do find, that there are many demands made upon that fund which it will not answer for several years to come: And, therefore, the Assembly do resolve and appoint, that not only no more orders shall be granted by the General Assemblies of this Church, and Commissions thereof, until all the claims already stated be first paid; but also, seeing that now the vacancies in the North, the Highlands and Islands, are for the most part planted, and that when any vacancies shall happen in these places, it will be more easy to get the same planted than formerly it was, therefore, the General Assembly do hereby rescind and repeal the 5th article of the 8th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1698, which relates to the allowances to ministers or probationers to be sent to the foresaid places, and likewise the 6th article of the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1699, and the 5th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1715, in so far as concerns the said allowances.

IX.

Sess. 12, May 18, 1723.—Commission to some Ministers and Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Messrs James Smith at Cramond, their Moderator, &c.; to be Commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned, with power to the said Commission, or their quorum, (the powers and instructions are the same as in the preceding year.)

X.

Sess. 11, May 20, 1723.—Act enlarging the Time allowed by the 4th Act of Assembly, anno 1718, for contributing to the Fund for maintaining the indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered a proposal made by some of the contributors in the Synod of Lothian to the fund for maintaining the indigent widows and orphans of ministers, setting forth, that there are divers ministers, who have neglected in due time to pay in their decimas of their stipends, according to the 4th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1718, and are now desirous to contribute; but the receiving thereof is prohibited by the said act. And the said contributors being unwilling that any should be deprived of the opportunity of contributing to so necessary and charitable a fund, and therefore proposing, that any minister who pleases may be yet allowed another year to pay in the decima of their stipends, provided they pay in therewith the annual rent thereof from the time it should first have been paid. The General Assembly did, and hereby do, enlarge the time allowed by the foresaid Act of Assembly, for ministers paying in their contributions, in Synods, where no such contributions have yet been made, until the term of Whitsunday 1725,

and as to such Synods, where the said contributions have in part been made, the General Assembly recommend to the ministers who have contributed, that they would willingly consent yet to admit such as shall pay in the decima of their stipends, to the ends above mentioned, betwixt and the term of Whitsunday next to come, 1724, with the annual rent thereof from the time it should first have been paid, to join with them in the foresaid pious and charitable design, upon the footing of the foresaid Act of Assembly made to that effect.

XI.

Sess. 12, May 21, 1723.—Act anent Mr Gabriel Wilson, Minister at Maxton, his Sermon, preached before the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale.

The General Assembly having had under consideration a reference made by the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale to the Commission of the late General Assembly, and by them transmitted to this Assembly, containing some remarks of that Synod upon a sermon preached before them by Mr Gabriel Wilson, minister at Maxton, in October 1721; find three points of doctrine, wherein the Synod represent that he did not satisfy them as to his orthodoxy, viz. *1mo*, That the moral law to a believer is divested of the curse or threatening of eternal damnation, and hath no other sanction but fatherly chastisement. *2do*, That gospel or saving repentance is not necessary in a sinner, in order to the pardon of his sins in justification. *3tio*, That assurance, or a man's persuasion, that he shall be saved by Christ, is of the essence of justifying faith. And the General Assembly having heard what was contained in the remarks of the Synod, and offered by them upon these three points of doctrine, and having also heard Mr Gabriel Wilson at full length thereupon, thought fit to appoint a committee of their number to converse further with Mr Gabriel Wilson, and prepare an overture upon the whole; and having heard the report of the committee, wherein they represented, that Mr Wilson pleads, that these points of doctrine are not expressed in his sermon; and that it was purely in obedience to the Synod's command, that he had said any thing about them before the Synod, or their committee. And as to the first proposition concerning the sanction of the law, he declared before the committee that he did not tenaciously adhere to that expression, that the moral law is divested of the threatening of eternal damnation as to the believer; and that all his meaning is, that a believer, by his union with Christ, is for ever delivered from the curse of the law, so that he shall never for one moment come under the sentence of eternal condemnation. As to the second proposition, he declared, that justifying faith and gospel repentance are inseparable both in their principles and exercise. And being asked, if he would own it as a truth, that God did never justify an impenitent sinner; he answered, that he could not express himself in these terms, or in any words that might seem to import that a sinner was justified by any works of his own; and that the cautioning against that was the main thing he had in his view, in expressing himself so as he did in his sermon, and to the Synod. And as to the third proposition, he declared, that he owned all that is contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms upon that head. And, at the same time, adhered to the answers given in to the Commission of the General Assembly, anno 1721, upon that point, by the twelve ministers then before them, of which he was one. And the committee in the report having further represented, that they having reasoned upon what Mr Wilson had laid before them, though they had not received satisfaction from him upon these points, yet, considering that all the foresaid three points had been under the particular consideration of the last General Assembly, and that they had passed an Act thereupon, and that this process concerning Mr Gabriel Wilson was commenced, and depending before the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale before that act; upon the whole, they declared their opinion, that the General Assembly should admonish the said Mr Gabriel Wilson, and prohibit and discharge him to use, by writing, printing, preaching, catechis-

ing, or otherwise teaching, either publicly or privately, any expression upon these three points of doctrine, that are inconsistent with, or contrary unto, the points of doctrine maintained in this Church, agreeable to the Word of God and the Confession of Faith and Catechisms thereof, and contrary to what was determined in the Act of the General Assembly, anno 1722, upon these subjects; and that he should be admonished to keep the form of sound words, and to beware of expressing himself upon any occasion, in such terms as may be of bad influence on Christian practice, or any ways tend to weaken the life and power of godliness, and be of dangerous consequence to the great interests of precious souls: which report of the committee the General Assembly having heard, and maturely considered, they did, and hereby do, agree thereto, and enact accordingly; and the said Mr Gabriel Wilson being called in, was admonished and prohibited by the Moderator in the terms of this act.

XII.

Sess. 12 et ult., May 21, 1723.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next to come, 1724 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 68th Psalm, from the 18th verse to the 21st, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1724.

I.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1724.—The King's Commission to James Earl of Findlater and Seafield produced, and ordered to be Recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1724.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner, 14th May 1724.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1724.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1724.—Act concerning Commissions from Universities and Burghs.

The General Assembly, for the greater uniformity in commissions to the members of Assemblies, do resolve and appoint, that the Presbytery's attestation and approbation of all commissions from universities and burghs to their representatives in Assembly, as well as the commissions from Presbyteries, shall, in all time coming, bear the following clause, viz.—“And, further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly.”

V.

Sess. 5, May 19, 1724.—Act erecting the Synod of Glenelg, and four Presbyteries therein.

The General Assembly, taking under consideration the overture transmitted by the late Assembly for erecting of four new Presbyteries and a Synod, and having heard the returns of the Synods and Presbyteries concerned, thereupon; and considering that through the greatness of ministerial charges in the bounds after mentioned—the great way that the ministers thereof have to travel to their Synods and Presbyteries—and that when they do attend the same, they are long detained, and much diverted from their parochial and ministerial work, and from watching over their flocks, and guarding their people against the poisonous influence of Popish emissaries, and others disaffected to our happy establishment; do, for a remedy to these things, hereby rescind and make void and null the Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1642, entitled, “Act anent the joining the Presbytery of Skye to the Synod of Argyle;” and also do disjoin the parishes and Presbyteries after named, from the Presbyteries and Synods they formerly belonged to, and do erect the parishes of Glenelg, Kintail, Lochalsh, Lochcarron, Gairloch, Lochbroom, and Assint, with the pertinents thereof, into a Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Gairloch, and to have their meetings for ordinary in that place: And do erect the parishes of Kilmalie in Lochaber, Kilmanivaig, Abertarff, Laggan, and Urquhart, and Glenmorristoun, into another Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Abertarff, and to have their meetings at Killiwhimin: And do erect the whole parishes of the Isle of Skye, and small islands next adjacent thereto, into a third Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Skye, and to have their meetings for ordinary at Strowan in Bracadale: And do erect the whole parishes in the Lewis, Harris, North and South Uists, and Barra, and small islands adjacent thereto, with Hirta, into a fourth Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Long Island, and to have their meetings, *per vices*, at Rudil in Harris, and Ballallan in Lewis: And ordains the foresaid four Presbyteries to have their first meetings, at their respective places of meeting above mentioned, the second Wednesday of July next. And the General Assembly hereby erects the foresaid four Presbyteries into a provincial Synod, to be called the Synod of Glenelg, and to have their first meeting at Glenelg, the first Wednesday of July 1725 years; and thereafter to meet once in the year, that day and place, and oftener, when and where they shall see needful; and appoints them to send one minister and a ruling elder to correspond with each of the Synods of Argyle and Ross; and these two Synods, each of them, to send two ministers and one ruling elder, to correspond with the said Synod of Glenelg, aye and until the Assembly see cause to restrict the number of these correspondents. And the Assembly declares the foresaid Synod and Presbyteries therein to have the same powers and privileges which any other Synod or Presbyteries of this Church, by the Word of God, and constitutions of this Church, have. And because the ministers at present in the Presbyteries of Gairloch and Abertarff are few, the General Assembly appoints the Presbytery of Skye to send two or more ministers, and a ruling elder with each of them, to meet with and assist the said Presbytery of Gairloch in their presbyterial work; and also to send ministers and probationers to supply vacant

churches therein. And likewise appoints the Presbyteries of Inverness and Abernethy to send each of them a minister and a ruling elder, to correspond with the Presbytery of Abertarff, until the vacancies in the said Presbyteries of Gairloch and Abertarff shall be fully planted. And the General Assembly ordains the whole four new Presbyteries above named to lay an account of their circumstances before the next General Assembly or Commission; and appoints letters to be written to the old Presbyteries and Synods above mentioned, intimating the premises to them, and requiring them to acquaint the brethren in their bounds to give obedience to this Act. And the Assembly appoints all concerned to observe what is hereby enjoined, as they will be answerable to the General Assemblies of this Church. And, lastly, it is referred to the Commission of the General Assembly to give all the assistance, concurrence, and encouragement they can to the foresaid new Synod and Presbyteries, and to the brethren therein, in order to the carrying on a reformation in the foresaid bounds, and to give them advice in difficult matters when applied unto for that effect. And it is hereby declared, that the annexation of the parish of Assint to the Presbytery of Gairloch is only temporary, until the Assembly shall consider what other Presbytery the same ought to be joined unto.

VI.

Sess. 6, May 20, 1724.—Act concerning the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly, considering that the Act 6th of Assembly, *anno* 1711, entitled, "Recommendation concerning the Administration of the Lord's Supper," has not had its full effect, do hereby revive and renew the said Act; and do appoint Presbyteries to do all they can to have the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper more frequently administered in their bounds throughout the several months of the year. And in regard it has been represented, that there are some disorders committed in divers places at such occasions, especially on the Lord's Day; therefore, the General Assembly does hereby enjoin Kirk-sessions and Presbyteries to endeavour the reformation of such disorders; and for that end, that Presbyteries take care that on the Lord's Day, upon which the sacrament is to be administered in any congregation, the neighbouring congregations be supplied with sermon; and that the ministers of the several parishes, where the sacrament is to be administered, do give public warning, on the preparation day, to all their audience, that if any disorders shall be committed by any person on the Lord's Day, those guilty will be censured according to the degree of their offence. And the General Assembly appoints the several Presbyteries, at their privy censures, to call the respective brethren in their bounds to an account as to their observation of this and the other above mentioned Act, and to record their diligence in their books. And likewise ordains the several Synods to see to the punctual observation of the said Acts, and, particularly, at their privy censures, to call their respective Presbyteries to a strict account with regard to their observation of what is above enjoined; and to record also their diligence in their books, that their obedience herein may come under the consideration of the General Assemblies of this Church.

VII.

Sess. 13, May 26, 1724.—Act concerning vagrant Beggars, Maintenance of the Poor, and Recommendations for Charity.

The General Assembly does instruct their Commission to consider what may be proper for ministers and church judicatures, in their several capacities, to do, for maintaining of the poor, and restraining of vagrant beggars in their respective bounds. And, in the meantime, the Assembly recommends it to ministers and Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, to take effectual care, and use all due means, to get every parish to maintain their own poor; and to make earnest application to

Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, Commissioners of Supply, and heritors in their respective bounds, and to Magistrates of Burghs, that the laws against vagrant and sturdy beggars be put into vigorous execution. And the General Assembly further enjoins Synods, Presbyteries, Kirk-sessions, and Ministers, strictly to observe the 19th Act of Assembly, 1696, which discharges them to give recommendations for charity to any without their own bounds; and appoints that recommendations given within their bounds be for a definite time.

VIII.

Sess. 14, May 26, 1724, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate and appoint their reverend brethren, Mr William Wisheart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, and one of the ministers of that city, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned, with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Act of the two preceding years.)

IX.

Sess. 14, May 26, 1724, post meridiem.—Act concerning Commissions to Ruling Elders.

The General Assembly appoints and ordains, that all commissions hereafter to be given to ruling elders in this Church, as members of Assembly, shall bear this additional clause, viz., “And in particular, that the said elders are qualified in all respects, according to what is required by the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1722.”

X.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1724.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, 1725 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*Sess. 4, May 18, 1724.—Overture concerning the Form of a Licence to Probationers.**

The Committee for Overtures brought in the draught of a licence to be given by Presbyteries to probationers, after they have passed their trials, in order to their being allowed to preach the Gospel, which was transmitted by the late Commission to this Assembly, with an overture that the said form of a licence should be established, and that every probationer should be obliged to have such a licence before he be allowed to preach the Gospel; and that no other form of a licence than that after mentioned should be regarded, the tenor of which follows:—“The Presbytery of _____ taking into consideration that _____ having passed his course at the college, and thereafter studied divinity for the space of six years; as also having resided for the most part of that time within the bounds of this Presbytery, or having resided

* This and the following Overture do not appear to have been passed into Acts —*Ed.* 1843.

six months within those bounds, and been recommended by the Presbytery or Presbyteries of _____, where he resided for the most part of that time, as a person fit to be entered on trials; and they being satisfied with the testimonials given as to his life and conversation; as also, having had sufficient testimonials from the Professors of Divinity with whom he studied, during the time of his attendance with them, as to his proficiency in his studies, and his good behaviour; and neighbouring Presbyteries, as also the Synod of the bounds, having been acquainted with the design of entering him on trials, and their advice obtained thereto, he was admitted to the usual trials appointed by the Acts of the General Assembly of this Church;* and having passed through all the parts thereof, the said Presbytery did, upon the _____ day of _____ years, declare their satisfaction with the said _____ his literature, and other necessary qualifications; and thereupon the questions appointed to be put to such as are to be licensed, prescribed by the 10th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1711, being put to him, he gave satisfying answers to all the said Questions, and then did judicially subscribe the Formula annexed to the said Act, and thereby coming under the engagements to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and Presbyterian government of this Church, contained in the said Act, Question, and Formula; he was licensed by the foresaid Presbytery to preach the Gospel of Christ, and exercise his gifts as a probationer for the holy ministry. And now being designed to go elsewhere, the said Presbytery doth hereby allow him this extract of his licence." And the General Assembly having heard the said form of a licence and overture read, and having reasoned thereupon, they did transmit the same to the several Presbyteries within this Church, to be considered by them, and appointed them, in the terms of the 9th Act of Assembly, 1697, to send up their opinion thereupon to the next General Assembly; and to render the examining the said form more easy to the Presbyteries, they appointed the Acts of Assembly related to therein to be set down upon the margin thereof.

Sess. 14, May 20, 1724, post meridiem.—Overture as to Ministers, Probationers, Elders, and Deacons, their signing the Formula prescribed by Act of Assembly, anno 1711.

The General Assembly, for the greater uniformity and equality amongst the office-bearers of this Church, as to their obligations with respect thereto, do transmit to the several Presbyteries the following overture, to be considered by them, that they may send in their opinion of it to the next General Assembly, in manner directed by the 9th Act of Assembly, anno 1697, viz., "That all the ministers of this Church, and probationers for the holy ministry, who have not yet subscribed the Formula prescribed by the 10th Act of Assembly, held anno 1711; and all ruling elders and deacons that shall be hereafter ordained to these offices within this Church, shall, at their admission, and before they begin to act or vote in Church Judicatories, in their foresaid capacities, subscribe the said Formula."

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 6, 1725.

I.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1725.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

* Act 5th, Assembly, 1705; Act 10th, Assembly, 1711; Act 6th, Assembly, 1714.

II.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1725.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. That steady zeal and affection to our person and government, as well as concern for the interest and prosperity of the Church, which have so eminently appeared in your former Assemblies, leave us no room to doubt but we shall find in you the same good spirit and disposition on all future occasions, especially in this your present meeting, which we therefore most willingly approve of, and countenance with our royal authority.

We have given you so many assurances of our resolutions to maintain inviolable the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as by law established, that we think it unnecessary to repeat them at this time, or to recommend to you such measures as shall be conceived to conduce most to the flourishing estate of the true reformed religion, the promoting of virtue, and discouraging vice and immorality; in all which you may be assured of our approbation and concurrence.

Our Commissioner has it in his instructions to signify to you the steps taken by us to put some stop to the spreading of ignorance and profaneness on the one hand, and the trafficking of Popish priests and emissaries on the other, in the Highlands and Islands, of which frequent representations have been laid before us, from several preceding Assemblies and their Commissions.

As nothing can be more becoming a religious assembly than the spirit of moderation and unanimity, so can it suffer in nothing more than in divisions; which we therefore most earnestly exhort you to avoid, and guard against the practices of such as would labour to destroy that brotherly love and affection which ought to shine and prevail in all your debates and councils.

We are so sensible of the capacity and abilities of our right trusty and well-beloved cousin and counsellor, Hugh Earl of Loudoun, that we have thought fit to renew our choice of him to represent our royal person in this Assembly, not doubting but his true concern for the Church, as well as zeal for our service, will render him acceptable to you. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court of St James', the 17th day of April 1725, in the 11th year of our reign.

By his Majesty's command,

ROXBURGH.

III.

Sess. 3, May 8, 1725.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We embrace, with the greatest satisfaction, this new opportunity of making a dutiful return to your Majesty's most gracious letter to us. We esteem it our great honour that your Majesty is pleased again to take notice, in so kind and encouraging terms, of the steady zeal and affection to your Majesty's royal person and government, which has appeared in the former Assemblies of this Church; and we should be most unworthy of so many instances of your royal favour if we did not continue to be of the same good spirit and disposition on all future occasions, and particularly in this our present meeting, which your Majesty is pleased so willingly to approve of, and countenance with your royal authority.

It is with the greatest joy and satisfaction we reflect on the many repeated assurances your Majesty has been pleased formerly to give us of your resolution to maintain inviolable the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, by law established, on which we rely with the most entire confidence; and do acknowledge ourselves to be thereby laid under the strongest obligations to pursue such measures as shall be conceived to conduce most to the flourishing estate of the true reformed religion, the promoting of virtue, and discouraging vice and immorality; in which we are greatly encouraged by the assurance your Majesty gives us of your royal approbation and concurrence.

May it please your Majesty,

As your Majesty's reign and wise administration has, from the beginning, been most auspicious to all your dominions, so they have, in a very particular manner, proved a great blessing to this Church; and we have now a new and distinguished instance of your Majesty's great goodness and fatherly care, in appointing a proper fund to be applied for the provision and entertainment of such itinerant preachers and catechists as shall be employed in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for removing of ignorance, and putting a stop to profaneness and the growth of Popery; for which royal bounty we are engaged, by the strongest ties, to return our most sincere and dutiful thanks.

We cannot but rejoice that the representations, made by former Assemblies and their Commissions, have moved your royal heart so effectually to take care of the good of mankind and the welfare of precious souls, as to provide so bountifully for instructing them in the faith and practice of the true Christian religion, and preventing their being seduced to vice and the errors of Popery.

As we have the deepest sense of gratitude for this your royal donation, so we hope the due and faithful application of it to the pious purposes for which it is granted by your Majesty, shall appear by the accounts of the distribution, which shall be annually exhibited to your Majesty's High Treasurer, or Commissioners of your Treasury, or Barons of your Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Scotland, in obedience to the direction contained in your Majesty's royal warrant; and it does afford us the greatest pleasure and encouragement to consider, that by the blessing of God on our endeavours, the same methods that contribute to remove the ignorance and superstition of the rude inhabitants of those remote places, and to defeat the attempts of Popish emissaries, must necessarily tend to impress them with sentiments of loyalty towards your Majesty, to promote the interest of your happy government and royal family, and dispose them to give a due and cheerful obedience to your Majesty and the just laws, to which all your subjects ought to conform themselves. We have always looked on ourselves to be bound, by the strictest ties, to endeavour to influence the people committed to our charge with a due sense of their duty in those particulars, and we shall be careful to instruct such as shall be employed upon your Majesty's gracious donation, to use their utmost endeavours among the people with whom they are to deal for the same purpose.

We are very sensible, that nothing can be more becoming a religious Assembly than the spirit of moderation and unanimity, and that it can suffer by nothing more than by divisions; and, therefore, (as your Majesty is pleased graciously to exhort us,) we are resolved, by the grace of God, to avoid them, and to guard against the practices of all such as, under any pretence whatsoever, would labour to destroy that brotherly love and affection which, your Majesty so justly observes, ought to shine in all our debates and councils.

The Earl of Loudoun's capacity and abilities, by which he has so often distinguished himself in your Majesty's service, and in promoting the good of this Church, whose interests were on many occasions the particular care of his noble ancestors, render your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly most acceptable to us.

That our gracious God may plentifully reward your Majesty and your royal family the many great favours you have conferred upon this Church; that He may long preserve your Majesty, to reign a happy prince over an obedient people; that He may

long continue you to be guardian of the Protestant religion both at home and abroad; that He may greatly bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their royal offspring, and make these nations happy in a succession of Protestant princes of your royal line to latest posterity, who may inherit your royal virtues as well as your crown, is, and shall be, the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
JA. ALSTON, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 11, May 15, 1725.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint their reverend brethren, Mr James Alston, minister at Dirleton, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Act of the three preceding years.)

V.

Sess. 11, May 15, 1725.—Act erecting the Presbytery of Cairston, and a Synod in Orkney.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the circumstances of the ministers of Orkney and Caithness, and the great difficulty they have in attending their judicatures, as they are now constituted, by reason of the dangerous seas and ferries that lie betwixt their residences and the places at present fixed for the meeting of the said judicatures; for remedying of the which inconveniences, and for the more easy and regular carrying on of the Lord's work in those countries, they did, and hereby do, unite and erect the ministers of Kirkwall, Deerness and St Andrews, Holme, South Ronaldshay, and Evie and Rendall, and a ruling elder from each united parish, in one Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Kirkwall, and to meet at the town of Kirkwall; the ministers of the parishes of Birsay and Harray, Firth and Stenhouse, Orphir, Sandwick and Stromness, Græmsay and Hoy, and Walls and Flotta, with a ruling elder from each of these united parishes, into another Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Cairston, and to meet at Cairston. Also, they appoint the ministers of the parishes of Rousay and Egilshay, Westray, and Papa Westray, Cross-parish, Burness and North Ronaldshay, Lady-parish, Stronsay and Eday, and Shapinshay, with their ruling elders, to continue their meeting together as formerly, and to constitute a third Presbytery, to retain the name of the Presbytery of North Isles; and they appoint the Presbytery of Kirkwall to have their first meeting at Kirkwall, upon the first Wednesday of July next, and thereafter at such times as they shall find convenient; and the Presbytery of Cairston to meet at the Church thereof, upon the third Wednesday of July next, and thereafter at such times as they shall see cause. And, further, the General Assembly unites and erects the said three Presbyteries of Kirkwall, Cairston, and North Isles, into a Synod, to be called the Synod of Orkney; and appoints them to meet at Kirkwall, and to hold their first meeting upon the last Wednesday of July next, and thereafter at such times and places as they shall judge needful and convenient, and so to continue in all time coming. And the Assembly hereby declares, that the said Synod, and the Presbyteries that constitute the same, shall have the same powers and privileges that any other Synods and Presbyteries of this Church have, by the Word of God and constitutions of this Church. And,

further, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, disjoin and dismember the Presbytery of Caithness from the Synod of Orkney, and do adjoin and annex them to the Synod of Ross and Sutherland; and appoints the said Synod to have their first meeting at Tain, the first Tuesday of September next, and their second at Dornoch, the first Tuesday of April next; and thereafter to hold their meetings at the said places *per vices*, at such times as they shall find necessary and expedient. And the General Assembly hereby ordains the Synod of Ross and Caithness to send two ministers correspondents to the said Synod of Orkney at every meeting; and ordains the Synod of Orkney to send one of their number to correspond with the Synod of Ross at their meetings. And, *lastly*, considering that the minister of Shapinsay lives within two miles of the town of Kirkwall, therefore, for the better assistance of the foresaid Presbyteries, they ordain the said minister to correspond with the Presbytery of Kirkwall; and suchlike, appoints the two ministers of Kirkwall, by turns, to correspond with the Presbytery of Cairston, beginning with the eldest of the said ministers.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1725.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that his Majesty, upon its being represented to him, by the General Assemblies of this Church, that Popery and ignorance did increase and prevail in several places in the Highlands and Islands, had, out of his great concern for the glory of God and good of souls, signified his gracious inclination to contribute yearly the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to these parts; and that his Majesty's royal warrant is already issued for L.1000 sterling for this year, the distribution whereof is entrusted to this Assembly; to the intent, therefore, that the same may be managed with all due care and fidelity, in pursuance of the great and good ends mentioned in the said royal warrant, and conform to it in all points, the Assembly does appoint and ordain as follows:—*Primo*, That Mr John Dundas of Philipstoun, procurator for the Church, be empowered, likeas he is hereby empowered, to receive the said L.1000 sterling for this first year, and to grant discharge for the same, he giving sufficient bail to the committee underwritten to apply the said sum, after deducting the charges of the warrant, according to the orders of that committee. *Secundo*, That the persons after named, viz., the Reverend Mr James Alston, minister of the Gospel at Dirleton, their Moderator; Messrs William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity there, William Mitchell at Edinburgh, William Miller there, James Nisbet there, James Ramsay at Kelso, John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, Niel Campbell at Renfrew, Allan Logan at Culross, James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, Alexander Anderson at St Andrews, James Craig at Edinburgh, Samuel Semple at Libberton, Niel M'Vicar at West Kirk, James Smith at Cramond, John Cuming at Humble, James Hart at Edinburgh, John Wilkie at Strathbrock, Matthew Crawford, Professor of Church History in the College of Edinburgh, Robert Kinloch at Dundee, William Steuart at Perth, William Morison at Tiree and Coll, George Chalmers, Principal of the King's College of Aberdeen, James Chapman at Cromdale, Hugh Munro at Tain, Daniel M'Aulay at Bracadale, James Guthrie at Irongray, and John Anderson at Kirkmaiden, *Ministers*; the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Lauderdale, George Lord Reay, Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, Baronet, Lord President of the Session, Mr Robert Dundas, younger of Arniston, his Majesty's Advocate, Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, Sir Alexander Ogilvie of Forglen, Baronet, Mr James Erskine of Grange, Sir Francis Grant of Cullen, Baronet, Mr James Hamilton of Pencaitland, Sir Andrew Home of Kimmerghame, Sir Walter Pringle of Newhall, seven of the Senators of the College of Justice, John Campbell, Esq., Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, Baronet, Colonel Robert

Munro of Fowlia, Mr Patrick Grant of Easter Elchies, advocate, Mr Hugh Dalrymple, senior, advocate, George Drummond, Esq., one of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs, and Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, *Ruling Elders*; shall be a committee, to continue and endure till another committee be nominated in their room, with full power to employ and lay out the said sum for the ends mentioned in His Majesty's royal warrant; who are hereby empowered to choose their own moderator and clerk, and appointed to have their meetings at Edinburgh upon the Fridays, at nine o'clock forenoon, next after the meetings of the Commission of the General Assembly in May current, August, November, and March next; and their first meeting to be in the Burgh-room, at nine o'clock in the forenoon, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places, and to name sub-committees, to prepare matters, and see their orders executed, as they shall think fit, and to meet oftener as there may be occasion, upon advertisement by their moderator or clerk, and that nine shall be a quorum, whereof six shall be ministers; and they are appointed to cause keep a record of their proceedings. *Tertio*, They are to appoint itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the proper places designed in his Majesty's warrant; and for that end they are carefully to inform themselves of the fit places where the said itinerant preachers are to be sent and employed, and of persons duly qualified for that service, of good abilities for the same, of a pious life and conversation, prudent, of undoubted loyalty to his Majesty, and competently skilled in the principles of divinity, and in Popish controversies; and that none be employed as catechists but such as are certified and found, upon due trial, to be so qualified. And for these ends, the committee are to correspond with Presbyteries where these preachers and catechists are to be employed, and with the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee, and to advise with the Commission appointed by this Assembly, as there may be occasion; and all these itinerant preachers and catechists are appointed to be subject to the Presbyteries of the bounds to which they are sent, and to be under their inspection; and the said Presbyteries are to take care that the orders of the committee be duly observed by the said preachers and catechists; and the said preachers are also appointed to catechise, and both they and the catechists to instruct the people from house to house, and visit the sick; and, in all their labours among the people, to be careful to teach them the principles and duties of the true Christian Protestant religion, and the obligation they are under to duty and loyalty to our Sovereign King George, and obedience to the laws; and the committee are empowered to give them such instructions, as to their work and behaviour, as they shall judge meet, and they are appointed to obey the same. *Quarto*, That the allowance to an itinerant preacher do not exceed the sum of forty pounds sterling per annum, and that the allowance to a catechist do not exceed the sum of twenty-five pounds sterling for the said time, except upon special circumstances of sickness, losses, or other accidents. *Quinto*, To the end people may have the benefit of baptism and marriage in remote corners of large parishes, or where the parishes are vacant, the committee is hereby empowered to appoint ministers of settled congregations within the bounds of the Synods of Argyle, Ross, Moray, Aberdeen, and Perth, and Presbytery of Dumbarton, to go to proper places, for which they are to have a suitable allowance out of the fund, not exceeding four pounds sterling per month, except in the cases foresaid, and such ministers are to be subject to the Presbyteries in whose bounds they are to be employed during their mission; and they are hereby ordered to obey the committee's appointments for their going to the same, otherwise to be censured by the Commission appointed by this Assembly, upon their disobediences being represented to them; and their respective Presbyteries are required to supply their churches during their absence, and they are hereby declared not transportable to the Highlands. Also the committee is to direct Presbyteries to order the changing of posts between ministers of settled parishes and probationers employed in the distant corners thereof, that the people may be readily served with ordinances which ordained ministers only can dispense. And, *lastly*, the committee are in all points strictly to conform themselves to the terms and articles of his Majesty's royal warrant, in the discharge of the trust hereby committed unto them. And

the General Assembly ordains the several Presbyteries of the bounds pointed at in his Majesty's warrant, to meet as soon as they can, and draw up a state of their bounds, and send in the same to the agent for the Church, to be laid before the said committee; and ordains copies hereof to be printed, and sent to Synods and Presbyteries.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1725.—Act establishing the Forms of Commissions to Members of the General Assembly, and Attestations thereof.

The General Assembly, judging it very necessary, that Commissions to members of the National Assemblies of this Church, and attestations thereof, should be according to, and in the terms prescribed by, the Acts formerly made concerning the same, have appointed, and hereby do appoint and ordain, the following forms of Commissions and attestations to be observed by Presbyteries, Sessions, Universities, and Burghs; and enact and ordain, That all such Commissions and attestations be precisely in the terms following, respectively; and prohibits Presbyteries and Sessions to grant or attest any Commissions which are not in these precise words; and likewise prohibits Presbyteries and Sessions to grant their own attestations in any other words than those prescribed in this Act; with certification, that, in time coming, every Commission not conceived and attested in these very words shall be rejected.

Form of Commissions by Presbyteries.

At the day of years.

The which day, the Presbytery of did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint Mr minister at and Mr minister at and ruling elders, their commissioners to the next General Assembly of this Church, indited to meet at the day of next to come, or when and where it shall happen to sit, willing them to repair thereto, and to attend all the diets of the same; and there to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that come before them, to the glory of God, and the good of his Church, according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and agreeable to the constitutions of this Church, as they will be answerable; and that they report their diligence therein at their return therefrom. And the said Presbytery does hereby testify and declare, that all the ministers above named have signed the Formula enjoined by the 10th Act of the Assembly, anno 1711; and the Ruling Elders above written have signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the Assembly, 1694. And, further, that all the said commissioners are every other way qualified to be members of the Assembly, according to the Acts of the Assembly; and, in particular, that the said elders are qualified in all respects, according to what is required by Act 9th of the General Assembly, held anno 1722. Extracted by C. D. Cls.

Attestation.

At the day of years.

The which day, the Presbytery of having had the above extract of their commission to their representatives in the ensuing Assembly laid before them, they caused it to be read, and having revised and considered the same, they did approve thereof. Attested by A. B. Moderator.

Or Cls.

Form of Commissions from Universities.

At the day of years.

The which day, the Principal, Professors, Masters, and other Members of the Uni-

versity of _____, having right to elect, did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint _____, their commissioner to the next General Assembly of this Church, indited to meet at _____, the _____ day of _____ next to come, or when and where it shall happen to sit, willing him to repair thereto, and to attend all the diets of the same, and there to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that come before them, to the glory of God and good of his Church, according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and agreeable to the constitutions of this Church, as he will be answerable; and that he report his diligence therein at his return therefrom. And it is hereby testified and declared, that the said _____ is a minister (or an elder) of this Church, lawfully ordained, and hath signed the Formula enjoined by the 10th Act of the Assembly, *anno* 1711; (or, if an elder,) hath signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the Assembly, 1694. And further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of the Assembly; (and if an elder, it must be said,) and, in particular, he is qualified in all respects, according to what is required by the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1722. Extracted by _____ C. D.

Attestation.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.

The which day, the Presbytery of _____ having had produced before them a commission given by the University of _____ to _____, to represent the said university in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do, in the terms of 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, the 7th Act of Assembly, 1723, and 4th Act of Assembly, 1724, testify and declare, that the said _____ is a minister, (or an elder,) lawfully ordained, that he has signed the Formula enjoined by the 10th Act of Assembly, 1711; (or, if an elder,) hath signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694, and that he is a master of the said university, or _____ . And further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly. This signed by _____ A. B., Moderator.

Form of Commissions from Burghs.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.

The which day, the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ being convened in council, did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint _____ their commissioner to the next General Assembly of this Church, indited to meet at _____ the _____ day of _____ next to come, or when and where it shall happen to sit, willing him to repair thereto, and to attend all the diets of the same, and there to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that come before them, to the glory of God and the good of his Church, according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and agreeable to the constitutions of this Church, as he will be answerable; and that he report his diligence therein at his return therefrom. And it is hereby testified and declared, that the said _____ is an elder of this Church, lawfully ordained, and hath signed the Formula enjoined by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694, and is every other way qualified to be a member of Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly; and, in particular, he is qualified, in all respects, according to what is required by the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held *anno* 1722. Extracted by _____ C. D., *Cls.*

Attestation by the Kirk-Session.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.

The which day, the Kirk-Session of _____ having had laid before them a commission given by the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ to _____, to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do, in the terms of the 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, testify and declare, that the said _____

is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1694; and likewise, that he is (a residenter in the said burgh;) or (an heritor in the said burgh;) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies;) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh;) or (Presbytery of _____ within which the said burgh does lie.) Extracted by

A. B., *Moderator.*

C. D., *Cls.*

Attestation by the Presbytery.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.
The which day, the Presbytery of _____ having had produced before them a commission given by the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ to _____, to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, with an attestation of the Kirk-Session of the said burgh, conform to the direction of the Act 9th, Assembly, 1718; Act 4th, Assembly, 1720; and Act 4th, Assembly, 1724; do, in the terms of the foresaid acts, likewise testify and declare that the said _____ is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694; and likewise, that he is (a residenter in the burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh;) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies;) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh;) or (Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh does lie.) And further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly. This signed by _____
A. B., *Moderator.*

VIII.

Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, 1726 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 5, 1726.

I.

Sess. 1, May 5, 1726.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 5, 1726.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,

We greet you well. 'The many proofs we have received of your zeal and affection for our person and government, of your care and concern for the peace and welfare of the Church, for the suppressing of profaneness and immorality, and the preventing the growth of Popery, have induced us most willingly to approve of your present meeting, and to countenance the same with our royal authority; not doubting but you come together with the same good dispositions you have formerly shown in so eminent a manner, and with a resolution to do all that in you lies, towards promoting the desirable ends and purposes before mentioned; in the doing of which, you may be well assured of our protection and assistance, being always ready to contribute to so pious a work, and which so nearly concerns the honour of God, the peace and quiet of our government, and the welfare of our subjects.

As we are firmly resolved to maintain the established government of the Church in that part of our kingdom of Great Britain in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, we doubt not but you, on your part, will conduct yourselves with that moderation and unanimity in all your debates and councils, and with that prudence in all your proceedings, which become so venerable an Assembly, and which will further entitle you to our royal favour.

We have again made choice of our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin and counsellor, Hugh Earl of Loudoun, to represent our royal person in this present Assembly, not doubting but the experience you have had of his great knowledge and capacity, as well as of his zeal for our service, and his adherence to the principles of the Church of Scotland and concern for its prosperity, will make him acceptable to you. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 12th day of April 1726, in the twelfth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

HOLLIS NEWCASTLE.

III.

Sess. 3, May 7, 1726.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and faithful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, do, as in all duty bound, return your Majesty our most humble and hearty thanks for your gracious letter to us, and for your great goodness in signifying your favourable acceptance of the zeal and affection of this Church for your Majesty's royal person and government—duties which we account ourselves bound to by the strongest obligations. And that your Majesty is pleased graciously to take notice of the concern we have shown for the peace and welfare of the Church, for the suppressing of profaneness and immorality, and preventing the growth of Popery, animates us to exert ourselves yet the more in these duties, under the great encouragement given us by your Majesty's approving our present meeting, and countenancing the same with your royal authority; and it shall be our earnest care to show the like dispositions as formerly, to do all that in us lies to-

wards promoting these desirable ends and purposes. The assurances your Majesty is graciously pleased to give us of your royal protection and assistance in doing of the same, and of your readiness to countenance us in so pious a work, which so nearly concerns the honour of God, the peace and quiet of your government, and welfare of your subjects, make us deeply sensible of the great kindness of Heaven in blessing us with such a Sovereign, and are such encouragements from a prince piously disposed, and who has so much at heart the weal of his subjects, as must render us without excuse should we be remiss in our duty.

It is most comforting to us, and gives us a full confidence in your Majesty's royal goodness, that you are graciously pleased to renew the assurances of your firm resolution to maintain the established government of this Church in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges; these being what we have exceedingly at heart, and do judge ourselves the more strongly obliged, by these your Majesty's gracious assurances, to conduct ourselves on our part with that moderation, unanimity, and prudence that become us, and which may entitle us humbly to hope for the continuance of your Majesty's royal favour.

Your Majesty's pious and bountiful donation to the last Assembly of a sum to be employed in maintaining itinerant preachers and catechists, in places where ignorance and Popery prevail, for remedying these evils, we humbly hope will be found to have been exactly managed according to your Majesty's intentions, as will appear by the accounts of the management, ready to be exhibited to your Majesty's Lord High Treasurer, or Commissioners of your Majesty's Treasury, or to the Barons of your Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Scotland, as your Majesty was graciously pleased to direct. And now that your Majesty has, out of your royal goodness and laudable concern for the good of the souls of your subjects, been pleased to renew your royal gift to this Assembly, for the like pious purposes, which your Majesty's Commissioner has delivered to us, we accept it with the most profound respect and thankfulness, and shall endeavour not to be wanting on our part to employ it agreeably to your Majesty's royal will, and account for it as your Majesty has appointed in your royal warrant; and in this we act with great cheerfulness, seeing, as we are bound to promote obedience to your Majesty's just laws, the tendency of our endeavours is to make those upon whom we bestow our labours, in so far as we succeed, by the blessing of God, at the same time better subjects to your Majesty, as they are made better Christians. And for this end, all care shall be taken by us that none be employed in this service but such as are unquestionably well affected to your Majesty and your auspicious government; and we shall be careful to take all those we employ strictly engaged to instil in the people the principles of loyalty and duty to your Majesty.

Your Majesty's choice of the Earl of Loudoun to represent your royal person in this Assembly, we acknowledge thankfully, as a special mark of your regard to the good of this Church, having had experience of his great knowledge and capacity, and of his zeal for your Majesty's service; and it gives us particular satisfaction that your Majesty is pleased to mention, as a reason of your choice, his adherence to the principles of this Church, and concern for its prosperity, of which he has given many convincing proofs.

That your Majesty's precious life, which is so great a blessing to all your people, and the whole Protestant interest, may be long preserved;—that the best of Heaven's blessings may be plentifully poured out upon your royal person, the Prince of Wales, the Princess, and all your royal offspring;—that your wise councils and undertakings, for the happiness of your own kingdoms, the relief of distressed and persecuted Protestants, the welfare of all the reformed Churches, and the good of Christendom, may be crowned with remarkable success;—that the designs of all your secret and avowed enemies may be defeated;—that your crown may long flourish upon your head, and at length you may inherit immortal glory, are, and shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. MITCHELL, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 6, May 11, 1726.—Act erecting the Presbytery of Tongue and Synod of Caithness.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration a proposal made to the late Assembly, concerning the erecting of a Presbytery in Strathnaver, with the opinion of the late Commission in that matter; and having heard the brethren from the Presbyteries concerned; and it being informed that the ministers of the parishes after named, whereof this Presbytery is to consist, are some of them twenty-four, others forty and forty-two, and one of them fifty-two miles distant from the seat of their Presbyteries, so that they can seldom attend the same, which is very uneasy both to ministers and people: and that by this erection brethren will have for the most part but one half of that way to travel to the Presbytery hereby erected; and finding that there have been of late divers new parishes erected in the foresaid bounds, and that there will be a competent number of ministers in the Presbyteries of Dornoch and Caithness, besides the brethren of that new Presbytery; and judging that the erections after mentioned may tend to the interest of religion and advantage of the country, do therefore disjoin the parishes of Diurness, Edrachillis, Tongue, and Farr, from the Presbytery of Caithness, and the parishes of Kildonan and Assint from the Presbytery of Dornoch, and do hereby erect those six parishes into a Presbytery by themselves, to be called the Presbytery of Tongue, and to have their meetings for ordinary at Tongue; and do appoint their first meeting to be there upon the first Wednesday of October next to come; and until all the parishes in that Presbytery be fully planted, the General Assembly appoints the Presbyteries of Dornoch and Caithness to send correspondents to the Presbytery of Tongue. And likewise, considering that the Presbytery of Caithness was, by the last Assembly, disjoined from the Synod of Orkney, for the reasons mentioned in the Act made to that effect, and that the Presbyteries of Caithness, Dornoch, and Orkney, were formerly a Synod, and that it would be a hardship to oblige the Presbytery of Caithness to attend the Synod of Ross twice in the year, because of the great distance; and it being the Assembly's intention to make the meetings of Synods as easy as possible to all concerned, therefore, they do disjoin the Presbytery of Dornoch from the Synod of Ross, and hereby erect the Presbyteries of Dornoch, Caithness, and Tongue, into a Provincial Synod, to be called the Synod of Caithness and Sutherland; and ordain their ordinary meetings to be at least once a year at Dornoch and Thurso *per vices*, and their first diet to be at Dornoch the third Wednesday of June 1727; and do appoint that Synod to send correspondents to the Synods of Ross and Orkney, and the said two Synods to send correspondents to the Synod of Caithness and Sutherland. And the General Assembly declares the foresaid Synod, and Presbyteries therein, to have the same powers and privileges which any other Synod or Presbytery have by the Word of God and constitutions of this Church.

V.

Sess. 11, May 16, 1726.—Act appointing a solemn National Fast.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the many weighty causes of solemn fasting and humiliation before God, by reason of abounding sin, and the withdrawing of his presence from his ordinances, and the power of his Spirit in a great measure; that gross ignorance, errors, impiety, profaneness, and immoralities of all sorts do prevail; and also considering the great growth of Popery in divers parts of the land, and how much the practice of serious religion is neglected, the holy laws of God, and the precious Gospel of his ever blessed Son, our Saviour, are contemned; that pride, luxury, dishonesty, and uncharitableness, are arrived to so great a height; and that perjury, and other gross impieties and immoralities, are so common in the land, and so little laid to heart and mourned over, whereby a holy God is greatly provoked; and that all those evils are aggravated by the height of ingratitude to God, to whom we stand engaged by the strongest ties and obligations, who, by a

long tract of merciful Providences, has dealt most kindly with us, in sparing us, and preserving unto us our valuable liberties and reformed religion, for which he has often signally interposed, especially by the late glorious Revolution, and the happy accession of his present Majesty, King George, to the throne,—events never to be forgotten; and that these sins do still prevail, notwithstanding his Majesty's good laws against vice, and his royal proclamation, out of a true zeal for the glory of God, for putting the same in execution; and in a time of clear light of the Gospel, and pure administration of the ordinances of Christ, by contemning of which the guilt of these sins is aggravated to a high degree.

And considering, that by these things we are exposed to the hazard of calamitous judgments, if God, of his infinite mercy, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, prevent it not; and that our Protestant brethren abroad have had barbarous cruelty exercised upon them, and are still groaning under great hardships and persecution; the General Assembly does, therefore, most seriously call and exhort all to the duties of solemn fasting, humiliation, and prayer, upon such a day as his Majesty shall please to appoint,—the Assembly having made humble application to him for naming the day, and for interposing his royal authority for the due observation of the same. And hereby all are earnestly obtested to apply to the said duties seriously and devoutly, mourning for, and endeavouring reformation of, those evils; and, for that end, to put up fervent prayers for the plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, to give power and efficacy to the blessed Gospel, and enable us to practise the duties of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, for mercy through his blood, the only atonement, that deserved judgments may be averted, and that God may continue his precious blessings with us, and give us grace to improve them.

That he may long preserve our Gracious Sovereign, and eminently bless the Prince of Wales, the Princess, and all the royal family;—that he may direct and prosper his Majesty's councils and enterprises, for the good of his own subjects, and the preservation of the peace of Christendom, and relief of our persecuted Protestant brethren in foreign parts;—that he would strengthen and support them under their afflictions, defeat the attempts of their adversaries, provide in mercy for their speedy deliverance, and overrule the great affairs now in agitation for that end—and that God would be graciously pleased to disappoint the restless endeavours of those who are enemies to our religion and liberties—and that he may bless endeavours in prosecution of the encouraging means his Majesty hath afforded for removing ignorance, and putting a stop to the growth of Popery—and that God may be graciously pleased to continue the blessing of seasonable weather, joining thankfulness for the remarkable favour he hath shown us this way. And the Assembly enjoins all ministers to take care that this fast be duly observed; and, for this cause, to intimate this act from their pulpits upon the Lord's Day preceding the day that shall be appointed by his Majesty for the observation thereof, and to take occasion to excite the people to their duty, with grave and serious exhortations suitable to the occasion.

VI.

Sess. 11, May 16, 1726.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that it has pleased the King's Majesty, out of his royal bounty, again this year to grant the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the Highlands and Islands, for instructing the people there in the principles of the true religion, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, Mr William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity there, Mr Matthew Crawford, Professor of Ecclesiastical History there, Mr John Flint at Edinburgh, Mr Robert Sandilands there, Mr James Hart there, Mr John M'Laren there, Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh at Errol, Mr George Clephan at

Newtyle, Mr Allan Logan at Culross, Mr James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, Mr Thomas Blackwell, Principal of the College of New Aberdeen, Mr George Chalmers, Principal of the King's College of Aberdeen, Mr David Anderson, Professor of Divinity there, Mr Hugh Innes at Mortlach, Mr John Crockett at Dallas, Mr Alexander McBean at Inverness, Mr William Steuart there, Mr John Schaw at Leith, Mr Samuel Semple at Libberton, Mr James Grierson at Edinburgh, Mr William Miller there, Mr Neil McVicar at St Cuthbert's, Mr Walter Allan at Colinton, Mr James Craig at Edinburgh, Mr James Walker at Canongate, Mr James Nisbet at Edinburgh, Mr John Brand at Borrowstounness, Mr David Walker at Temple, Mr William McGeorge at Pennycuik, Mr James Alston at Dirleton, Mr James Christie at Morbottle, Mr Patrick Cuming at Lochmaben, Mr Robert Seton at Glasserton, Mr John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow, Mr William Hamilton at Bothwell, Mr Neil Campbell at Renfrew, Mr Robert Wodrow at Eastwood, Mr Alexander Campbell at Inverary, Mr James Gilchrist at Kilmalie, Mr James Smith at Gairloch, Mr Daniel McAulay at Bracadale, Mr Colin Mackenzie at Lochs, Mr William Guthart at Edinburgh, Mr James Smith at Cramond, Mr John Mathison at Edinburgh, Mr James Bannatyne there, Mr Matthew Wood there, Mr John Walker at Canongate, Mr George Fordyce at Corstorphine, Mr William Brown at Edinburgh, Mr John Hepburn there, and Mr James Stevenson at South Leith, *Ministers*; Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, Lord President of the Session, Duncan Forbes, Esq., Lord Advocate, Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, Mr James Erskine of Grange, Sir Walter Pringle of Newhall, two of the Senators of the College of Justice, George Drummond, Esq., Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Sir James Campbell of Aberuchill, Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochnel, Mr Robert Dundas, younger of Arniston, Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, Mr Charles Erskine of Barmjarg, his Majesty's Solicitor, Mr Alexander Hamilton, younger of Pencaitland, Mr Hugh Dalrymple, senior, advocate, Mr Patrick Grant of Easter Elchies, John Campbell, late Provost of Edinburgh, Alexander Arbuthnot of Knox, Mr Charles Binning of Pilmore, advocate, Dr Alexander Dundas, his Majesty's Physician, Mr Robert Craige of Glendoig, advocate, Mr Alexander Belches of Innermay, John Osburn, late bailie in Edinburgh, James Nimmo, late bailie there, and Mr John Dundas, Writer to his Majesty's Signet, *Ruling Elders*; to be a committee for the ends mentioned in the foresaid royal gift, and the 6th Act of the late General Assembly, entitled, "Commission by the General Assembly to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end;" and grants to the committee now named the whole powers given the foresaid committee, and appoints them to proceed according thereto in all points, and to prosecute the orders and resolutions of the former committee; and, further, to inquire how the ministers, preachers, and catechists, named by that committee, did obey, and to censure such as have not performed their missions, as they shall see cause: also to name a cashier for receiving and giving out the foresaid royal bounty; and to call for and state the cashier's accounts, and lay the same before the Commissioners of Treasury, or Barons of his Majesty's Exchequer, and to apply what remains of the last year's royal bounty not disposed of, by reason of any of the missionaries their not fulfilling the appointments on them. And which committee are to have their meetings at Edinburgh upon the Fridays, at nine of the clock forenoon, next after the meetings of the Commission of the General Assembly in May current, August, November, and March next, with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall see cause; and their first meeting to be in the Assembly-House, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at eight of the clock in the morning; and which committee are empowered to name a sub-committee, to meet upon the last Wednesday of every month, at four of the clock afternoon, with power to adjourn themselves, to receive letters, petitions, and representations, and prepare matters, and execute the orders of the committee, in the intervals of their meetings. And, likewise, empowers this committee to nominate ministers and elders, though not of their number, to meet with the Protestant heritors, to concert measures for advancing the interest of true religion in the foresaid countries; and which ministers and elders are hereby ordained to join with the Synod of Glenelg,

and the Presbyteries in the bounds of that Synod, in their meetings, and be assisting to them therein as members. And ordains the foresaid Synod and Presbyteries, and other Presbyteries concerned, to draw up and send to the said committee, from time to time, distinct informations of the state of their bounds, particularly as to Popery, and the success of the missionaries, and what discouragements they meet with.

VII.

Sess. 13, May 17, 1726.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint their reverend brethren, Mr William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Act of the four years immediately preceding.)

VIII.

Sess. 13, May 17, 1726, post meridiem.—Act making an Alteration in the Form of Commissions from Universities.

The General Assembly, considering that the present form of the commissions from universities does not agree to the state of some universities, therefore, they do hereby appoint, that in place of the words preceding "did and hereby do," in the beginning of the said form, the words following be inserted, viz.:—"The which day, a meeting of the University of ——— being called and convened, they did, and hereby do," &c.

IX.

Sess. 13, May 17, 1726.—Act regulating Transportations of Ministers settled in Highland Congregations.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary it is to be particularly careful that Highland congregations be planted with well qualified ministers, and that the settlement of such congregations as are so planted may not be unnecessarily disturbed; therefore, they hereby ratify and confirm all former Acts made for planting preachers and ministers in the Highlands who have the Irish language, and concerning the transporting of ministers from the Highlands to the Lowlands; and further appoint and ordain, that no transportation from the Highlands to the Lowlands, nor from one part of the Highlands to another, be granted, nor any act or thing be done by any judicature, which directly tends thereunto, without duly calling all concerned, and hearing them thereupon, and examining the sufficiency and proof of the reasons on both sides of the question. And the Assembly hereby declares and ordains, that from any Highland place, especially where Popery abounds, a minister shall not be transported, nor any step be made towards the same, but upon great and weighty reasons, and for the evident good of the Church of Christ. And, moreover, that in Highland parishes, wherein Popery abounds, no minister shall be transported, nor anything done leading thereto, but by the General Assembly of this Church, except it be to another Highland parish wherein Popery does also prevail.

X.

Sess. ult., May 18, 1726.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, 1727 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 4, 1727.

I.

Sess. 1, May 4, 1727.—The King's Commission to James Earl of Findlater and Seafield produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 4, 1727.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. It is with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction that we reflect upon the wise and prudent behaviour of your former Assemblies; and as we doubt not but you come together with the same zeal for the honour and glory of God, for the advancement of true religion and piety, the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and irreligion, we do most willingly countenance this your present meeting by our approbation and royal authority.

We have had so many proofs of the loyalty and affection of the Church established by law in Scotland to our person and government, and of its steady adherence to the succession in our family, and to the Protestant interest in general, that you may always depend upon our firm resolution to maintain the said Church in the full enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges.

You may also be fully assured of our readiness to concur in whatever may tend to the promoting of its peace and prosperity, not doubting but you, on your part, will be equally careful to do all that in you lies which may conduce to our service, and to the welfare of our people; and that your debates and proceedings will be conducted with that spirit of concord and brotherly love, which so much become this venerable Assembly; carefully avoiding whatever may create unhappy divisions among you, as the most effectual means that the enemies to our happiness and tranquillity could make use of, to disappoint and frustrate the good ends for which you are convened.

The experience you have already had of the abilities and integrity of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and councillor, James Earl of Findlater and Seafield, and of his concern for the Church, and zeal for our service, will, we doubt not,

render the choice very agreeable to you, which we have made of him, to represent our royal person in this Assembly; and we are persuaded that his diligence and application, in the discharge of so important a trust, will be assisted and encouraged by the unanimity and dispatch with which you will go through the several affairs that are proper for your consideration. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 18th day of April 1727, in the thirteenth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

TOWNSHEND.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 6, 1727.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We humbly beg leave to acknowledge, with hearts full of joy and thankfulness, the honour of your Majesty's gracious letter to us, approving the behaviour of former Assemblies, and expressing your Majesty's confidence of our zeal for the honour and glory of God, for the advancement of true religion and piety, the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and irreligion; duties to which your Majesty's favourable expectations from us do greatly oblige and excite us, and the more, that our meeting is countenanced by your Majesty's approbation and royal authority.

We account it the great honour and happiness of this Church, that the testimonies of our loyalty and affection to your Majesty's royal person and government, and our steady adherence to the succession in your royal family, and to the Protestant interest in general, have been acceptable to your Majesty; and it fills our hearts with joy, and quickens our zeal for your Majesty's service, that in your great goodness, you are graciously pleased to renew the assurances of your firm resolution, to maintain this Church in the full enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges, and readily to concur in whatever may tend to the promoting of its peace and prosperity; upon which your royal assurances we entirely depend. And we should be altogether inexcusable, to be wanting on our part to do all that in us lies for your Majesty's service and the welfare of your people, or should we not conduct ourselves with that spirit of concord and brotherly love which becomes us; and we judge we are bound to watch strictly against all divisions among ourselves, which may tend to disappoint the good ends for which we are convened, by affording your Majesty's enemies any handle to disturb the happiness and tranquillity of your Majesty's auspicious administration, which is, under God, our great safety.

Our experience of the Earl of Findlater and Seafeld's abilities and integrity, and of his concern for the Church and zeal for your Majesty's service, renders your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in the Assembly most obliging and acceptable to us, and the full confidence we have of his diligence and application in the discharge of his high and important trust, obliges us to give him the best assistance and encouragement, upon our part, by unanimity and dispatch, in going through the affairs proper for our consideration.

We have received from your Majesty's Commissioner your most pious and bountiful donation for this year, to be employed in maintaining itinerant preachers and catechists, in places where ignorance and Popery prevail, which we accept with the most profound respect and thankfulness, and shall use our utmost care in employing

it for the pious ends to which it is designed, and account for it as your Majesty's royal warrant directs.

May it please your Majesty,

The present critical juncture of affairs, which has moved others of your loyal subjects to address your Majesty, expressing their duty and loyalty upon occasion of formidable alliances and designs framed against your Majesty, and the happiness of your people, under your wise administration, calls us to embrace, with the greatest cheerfulness, this opportunity to testify our utter abhorrence of all the designs and attempts of your open or secret enemies against your royal person, and the happy constitution of your government, which we account our great security under God, for all that is dear to us as men and Christians. The early humble address of the Commission of the last Assembly to your Majesty, expressing the duty and loyalty of this Church, we heartily approve and concur with, being deeply concerned, that our gracious God, who has eminently appeared in behalf of your Majesty, and blessed your people with your signal preservation hitherto, may now, when you are attacked with open hostilities, bless your councils and arms remarkably, and enable your Majesty to carry on a successful war, or to procure a safe and lasting peace to Europe, for the relief of our oppressed Protestant brethren abroad, and security of the valuable rights of your own subjects; and that he may defeat all designs of restless and deluded abettors of the desperate cause of a Popish Pretender, who, should they succeed in their wicked attempts, which God forbid, nothing could remain for your loyal and dutiful subjects to expect but utter ruin.

It is, therefore, with the most ardent desires, and in the greatest sincerity of our hearts, that we pray the most High God long to preserve your Majesty's precious life, to bless your Majesty, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all their royal offspring, with the best of heaven's blessings; and, after a long and happy reign upon earth, to crown your Majesty with immortal glory. These are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by
WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 15, May 16, 1727.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers and weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Acts of the five immediately preceding years.)

V.

Sess. 17, May 17, 1727.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that it has pleased the King, out of his royal bounty, again this year to grant the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage the itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the Highlands and

Islands, for instructing the people in the principles of the true religion; and the Assembly being desirous to carry on the reformation in the foresaid places, and to prosecute the design of his Majesty's grant, do hereby continue Mr John Dundas of Philipstoun, procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid sum, in the terms of the 6th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1725; and suchlike, do nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee for disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty, for the ends mentioned in the foresaid royal grant, and for carrying on a reformation in the foresaid places, according to the powers granted by the foresaid 6th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1725, also in the 6th Act of the late General Assembly; and which powers are hereby renewed. And, further, this General Assembly do instruct and empower the said committee, as they shall see cause, to apply to his Majesty, and those in the government, or any magistrate, for assistance in carrying on a reformation, and the interest of true religion in the foresaid places; and the said committee are appointed to keep a correspondence with the Presbyteries, Protestant heritors, ministers, preachers, and catechists, in the above mentioned places, and to do all that is competent for them towards the encouragement of ministers and Protestants in these countries; and the said committee are enjoined in their management to have a particular regard to the regulations and resolutions of the late committee for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and to use their endeavours to make the same effectual; and to report their diligence to the next General Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 18, May 18, 1727.—Act concerning the Printing of Papers in Processes brought before the Judicatories of this Church.

The General Assembly, finding that the Act of Assembly inhibiting the printing of papers in processes before Church judicatories has not had the desired effect; therefore, they hereby enact and declare, that, in case parties concerned in processes brought before the judicatories of this Church shall think fit to print states of their case, or other papers relating to the said processes, such printing is permitted only under the provisions, and with the restrictions, following, viz.: that a written copy of such printed papers be given in to the clerk of the judicatory, subscribed by the party or his commissioner, and that the printed copies have the name of the party or his commissioner subjoined thereto, to the end that if any facts that are false, or not instructed, be therein inserted, or any indecent expressions be used, the subscriber may be censured according to the demerit of the fault; and the Assembly do hereby strictly discharge parties to disperse, or the members of the Church judicatories to regard, any printed paper concerning matters depending before them, not subscribed in the terms of this act.

VII.

Sess. 18, May 18, 1727.—Act concerning the Duties and Qualifications of Ruling Elders.

The General Assembly, finding that the Acts of Assembly, made with respect to the duties and qualifications of elders, are not so duly observed as they ought to be, do, therefore, enjoin the several Presbyteries of this Church to have a strict regard to what is required as to the duties and qualifications of elders by the 9th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1722, especially in choosing of elders to represent them in General Assemblies, and in attesting the commissions of such as are chosen either by themselves, by universities, or by royal burghs.

VIII.

Sess. 18, May 18, 1727.—Act concerning the admitting of Persons to the Lord's Table.

The General Assembly, having considered an overture from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, about admission of persons to the Lord's Table, they strictly enjoin the observation of the Act, February 7, *anno* 1645, § 12, "Of the Opinion of the Committee for keeping greater Uniformity in this Kirk, in the practice and observation of the Directory in some points of Public Worship;" and leaves it to the several Church judicatories to give directions in cases of this nature, as the same do occur.

IX.

Sess. 19, May 18, 1727, post meridiem.—Act and Recommendation in favour of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

The General Assembly, finding, from a representation laid before them by the committee of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, in name and by order of the general meeting thereof, that it is now above eighteen years since this Society was first erected, by letters patent from the Sovereign, upon an application from this Church, and, ever since, the utmost diligence has been applied to make it answer the great end for which it was obtained, to promote Christian knowledge and virtue, to suppress error and vice, and to preserve our happy constitution both in Church and State; and by the blessing of God their endeavours have proved successful in attaining some of these ends, as is sufficiently attested from many parts in this nation, by reports from Presbyteries, ministers, and gentlemen their correspondents, which have been read to them at their meetings, and heard with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction; that in several places not only great numbers of children, but persons far advanced in years, crowded to their schools to learn reading, writing, arithmetic, and Church music, who never probably could have had any measure of knowledge had it not been for the Society's schools, and few of them left their schools till they had learned the Assembly's Catechism by heart. By the benefit of these schools, and the masters' diligence, together with the supplying them with useful books, such as Bibles, New Testaments, Confessions of Faith, Vincent's Catechism, and Guthrie's Trial of a Saving Interest, and others, many of these poor people have been happily delivered from their ignorance; the schoolmasters have been useful in remote islands and large parishes by reading the Scriptures, praying, and singing of psalms, and catechising the people on the Lord's Day in the places of public worship, by the minister's allowance, when he himself is employed in other places of his parish. The discipline used in these schools has had great influence upon the morals of the people; some children of Popish parents have been trained up in the principles of the true Protestant religion; and the English language is become more universal. The remarkable advantages and success that have attended these schools have encouraged the Society, being also thereto excited by the pressing recommendations of the Committee of Assembly for Reformation in the Highlands, to settle more schools. By this addition, in those places where they were so necessary, their number increased to eighty, the salaries of the schoolmasters, and other incidents, amounted to the sum of L.526, 18s. 10½d. sterling in one year, and the charges of books, carriage, &c. that year came to near L.200 sterling, besides the great expense of maintaining hopeful youths of more than ordinary capacity, having the Irish language, who were not in a condition to maintain themselves, and whose parents and nearest relations became bound that these boys should serve as schoolmasters; and some of them are now teaching schools for smaller salaries than others either would or could, to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Society, upon a review of the state of their funds, found that the income would by no means balance their charge; and they being tied down by their patent not

to encroach upon their stock, were forced to sink some of their schools in places where they were much wanted. The Society had, indeed, flattered themselves with more donations, and that Presbyteries would have sent up their collections according to the General Assembly's recommendation; but both these have failed in great measure.

Upon this the Society inquired how the recommendations of the General Assembly and Commission for collections and donations had been obeyed, and found that several had contributed very liberally, whose names are recorded as promoters of this noble design, and to whose bounty its success is much owing; but, on the other hand, it was not a little discouraging, that it appeared from the Society's books, that some Synods, excepting a very few ministers and parishes, and not a few Presbyteries, have never sent up their collections to the Society's treasurer; and it is even suspected that the Assembly's recommendations have not been so much as published to the people. The Society, in the years 1715, 1716, 1717, and 1718, gave in to the General Assembly a particular state of their affairs, as also to the Commission in the year 1723; and, that every particular person might be satisfied, they printed their letters patent, with an account of their rise, constitution, and management, as also lists of their schools, bearing the dates of erection, with the names of Presbyteries, parishes, and places where each school was settled, and names of schoolmasters, number of scholars, both boys and girls. Letters have been frequently written to Presbyteries to satisfy them about the Society's management, and also to put them in mind of deficiencies; and because few or no returns came to these letters, the Society, in March last, by their preses, wrote to Synods, to inquire into the diligence of their Presbyteries about collections, and to acquaint them that a list of deficiencies was to be laid before this venerable Assembly; but the Society were averse to the doing of any thing which might give offence, or put to the blush any who might be in the least deficient in promoting so good a design, and yet are inclined to contribute, and therefore chose rather to delay the giving a particular condescendence of deficiencies, that they might have a new opportunity of contributing; and new intrants, and others transported to better benefices, might have an opportunity of sending their donations up with the collections. That there were also several who, since the Assembly's recommendation, are grown up, and others who have either come to estates, or are preferred to places of profit, who, it was hoped, would not be wanting to promote that pious and charitable undertaking, not to mention those who have already given something, and have promised to give more liberally; and the present situation of affairs seemed to call every true Christian, as God gives them ability and opportunity, to concern themselves in this matter. Our Gracious Sovereign does countenance the design, and has given liberally out of his own royal bounty for maintaining preachers and catechists in those places which very much need the same. Our ancestors never had such a price put in their hands, and it should be improved for advancing the interests of religion.

The General Assembly, having much at heart the success and advancement of the pious and charitable design of the said Society, and being much concerned that their most useful and painful endeavours should meet with so much obstruction from the forgetfulness or backwardness of some, and slothfulness of others, who are otherwise well and charitably disposed, in not contributing to the encouragement of the fore-said good work; do, therefore, most seriously and earnestly recommend to all the Presbyteries within this Church, that they diligently inquire at kirk-sessions and ministers within their bounds how the recommendations of former Assemblies, with respect to donations, subscriptions, and collections for the above pious and laudable design, have been obeyed. And the Assembly orders such ministers as have not collected, forthwith to do the same, and to use their endeavours to persuade charitable persons to contribute something towards the buying of books and maintaining of poor scholars; and the General Assembly does appoint every Presbytery to enjoin the several kirk-sessions within their bounds to give a particular account to them what has been collected for the end foresaid in their parishes since the year 1709, and that betwixt and the term of Martinmas next to come. And the Assembly ordains every Presbytery to keep distinct minutes of their proceedings in this matter until full reports

are made to them from all their parishes, and then to transmit the said reports to the anniversary general meeting of the said Society, the first Thursday of January next, and that they send therewith a list of subscribers who have not yet paid in their money. And the General Assembly does likewise hereby recommend to the several Synods within this National Church, that they call Presbyteries to an account of their diligence in this matter; and that they report an account of their own diligence therein to the next General Assembly. And, lastly, the Assembly appoints this their act and recommendation to be printed, and copies thereof to be sent to the several parishes in Scotland; and that the same be read from the pulpits, immediately after divine worship in the forenoon, upon the first Lord's Day of August next.

X.

Sess. 19, May 18, 1727, post meridiem.—Act and Commission of this Assembly for preserving Purity of Doctrine, and concerning Mr John Simson.

The General Assembly, considering that it is not practicable for them to overtake what yet remains of the process laid before them, from the reports of the last Assembly's committee for purity of doctrine, and the Presbytery of Glasgow, concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, in such a manner as the variety of the matter, and great importance thereof, and also the clearing and vindicating of divine truths require; and yet that it is fit that the supreme judicatory of this Church only should give a final determination therein, did therefore agree that the same be delayed till the next General Assembly; and in order to the further preparing and ripening this whole affair, did appoint the persons after mentioned, viz.:—Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator, Messrs James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, George Chalmers, Principal of the King's College of Aberdeen, Thomas Blackwell, Principal of the College of New Aberdeen, David Anderson, Professor of Divinity in the King's College of Aberdeen, Matthew Crawford, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Edinburgh, William Mitchell at Edinburgh, James Ramsay at Kelso, Allan Logan at Culross, Thomas Black at Perth, Thomas Linning at Lesmahagow, William M'George at Pennycuik, John Hamilton at Glasgow, Samuel Sempie at Libberton, James Mercer at Aberdalgie, Robert Wodrow at Eastwood, James Smith at Cramond, James Bannatyne at Edinburgh, James Craig there, John Brand at Borrowstounness, William Miller at Edinburgh, Alexander Anderson at St Andrews, John Mathison at Edinburgh, John Scott at Glasgow, and Alexander Robertson at Tinwald, *Ministers*; the Right Honourable Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, Mr James Erskine of Grange, Mr James Hamilton of Pencaitland, and Mr Hugh Dalrymple of Drummorie, four of the Senators of the College of Justice, George Drummond, Esq., Lord Provost of Edinburgh. Mr Robert Dundas of Arncliffe, advocate, Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, and Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, advocate, *Ruling Elders*; to be a committee, whereof thirteen to be a quorum, and nine always to be ministers; and that their first meeting shall be in the Old Church Aisle of Edinburgh, upon Monday the 22d instant, at nine o'clock in the forenoon, and their subsequent stated meetings to be upon Tuesday, before each quarterly meeting of the Commission of this General Assembly, in the same place, at four o'clock in the afternoon; with power to them to choose their own moderator and clerk, and to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall see cause. And the Assembly hereby earnestly obtests all the members of the said committee punctually to attend, as they shall be accountable to the next General Assembly. And it is hereby declared, that any ministers of the Presbytery of Glasgow, who shall attend the meetings of this committee, shall be members thereof, though not of the above nomination. And the General Assembly gives full power to the said committee to proceed upon the articles in the process, both as to the libel and queries, and what has followed thereupon, not judged by this Assembly, and upon what else is contained in the Act of the last Assembly for preserving purity of doctrine, which the Presbytery

of Glasgow and former committee could not overtake. And that they proceed in the whole hereby committed to them, conform to the powers and directions of that act, and *usque ad sententiam*; but shall not pass a sentence either absolving or condemning Mr Simson, but report their diligence to the next General Assembly; all being reserved to their judgment. And it is recommended to the Presbytery of Glasgow to be assistant to the committee as they shall be required by them. And Mr Simson is appointed to attend upon the said committee, when called by them, and upon the next General Assembly, when and where they shall happen to meet. And the General Assembly, in the interim, on account of the articles in the libel charged on Mr Simson, which have been found relevant and proven, judged he ought to be suspended; likewise they hereby suspend him from teaching and preaching till the meeting of the next General Assembly.

Follows the Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1726, referred to in the foresaid act, viz. "*At Edinburgh, 17th May 1726.*—The General Assembly, considering that several Presbyteries have instructed their Commissioners to propose that inquiry be made into the grounds of some reports of unsound doctrine, concerning the persons of the Blessed Trinity, being taught at Glasgow, and that the Committee for Instructions having called their brethren Commissioners from the Presbytery of Glasgow to give them an account what they knew about these reports, and what they had done about the same? These brethren answered, that upon some surmises of Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in Glasgow, his having taught erroneous doctrine, particularly with respect to the Blessed Trinity, the Presbytery of Glasgow had sent two of their number to converse him thereupon, that he had sent to the Presbytery a letter, owning that there were such reports; but that they were false and calumnious, and giving an account of what he said he taught upon that article, and that the Presbytery had appointed a committee of their number to consider his said letter; but that their committee had not yet made report to the Presbytery; and the General Assembly, being zealously concerned for the preservation of the purity of doctrine in this Church, and for preventing the entry and spreading of any error, especially in such a weighty and fundamental article; do, therefore, recommend to, and appoint the Presbytery of Glasgow to proceed with all diligence in their inquiry into Mr Simson's opinions concerning the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and, particularly, as to the passages and expressions relative thereto, contained in his letter to them, or other letters or papers written by him; and also that they make inquiry into what he hath taught or vented concerning the Trinity, and also how he has obeyed the injunctions of the General Assembly, in anno 1717, as to the points which they had then prohibited him to teach. And, further, if they shall see ground to suspect him to be unsound in any other Article of our Confession of Faith, they shall likewise make inquiry into his opinion and sentiments concerning the same; and for the help and assistance of the said Presbytery in these matters, the General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint the Reverend Mr William Mitchell, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, Messrs James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, Allan Logan at Culross, William Wishart, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity there, James Craig at Edinburgh, James Bannatyne there, James Smith at Cramond, James Alston at Dirleton, William M'George at Pennycuik, John Brand at Borrowstounness, Michael Potter at Kippen, John Hunter at Ayr, Hugh Fauside at Loudoun, Robert Wodrow at Eastwood, Thomas Linning at Lesmahagow, John Currie at Old Monkland, and James Bayne at Bonhill, *Ministers*; the Right Honourable Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick, Lord President of the Session, Adam Cockburn of Ormiston, Lord Justice-Clerk, Mr James Erskine of Grange, Mr James Hamilton of Pencaitland, Sir Walter Pringle of Newhall, Senators of the College of Justice, Sir James Stewart of Goodtrees, Bart., and Mr Robert Dundas of Arniston, younger, *Ruling Elders*; to be a select committee, and thirteen of them to be a quorum, whereof nine are always to be ministers; and appoints their first meeting to be in the Old Church Aisle of Edinburgh, upon the next day after the dissolving of this present Assembly, at nine of the clock in the forenoon, and that their subsequent

stated meetings be upon the Tuesdays before each ordinary meeting of the Commission of the General Assembly, at four o'clock in the afternoon, with full power to them to choose their own moderator and clerk; that they give advice and direction in these affairs to the Presbytery, as they shall be applied to for the same, and that the Presbytery send an account of the steps of their procedure to the several meetings of this committee that are or shall be afterwards appointed, that they may give advice and direction as the case shall require;—that the moderator of the committee shall correspond with the Presbytery; and he is hereby empowered to call meetings of the said committee *pro re nata*, as he shall be advised by the said Presbytery, or as occasion shall require. And the Assembly hereby gives full power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall see cause; and also to meet and join with the Presbytery in the trial of the affair recommended to them; but neither committee nor Presbytery, jointly nor separately, shall pass a judgment, either absolving or condemning Mr Simson, but shall only prepare this affair by all proper ways of inquiry, and proceed *usque ad sententiam*, and then report their diligence to the next General Assembly. Yet, if Mr Simson shall refuse or decline to answer questions that shall be proposed to him by the said Presbytery or committee, and conform to the direction of this act; or if he shall give such answers, or behave himself with relation to the premises in such manner as that it shall appear to them to be unsafe to the Church of God, that he continue to teach or preach, in any of these cases, the Presbytery, or Presbytery and committee, are empowered to suspend him till the next General Assembly. And the General Assembly appoint that the select committee, at their meeting in March next, shall order an abstract of their procedure to be sent to the several Synods within this Church, and that in all their actings, the Presbytery and committee be careful to proceed according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of this Church founded thereupon, and they are not to insist upon any articles not contained therein.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 19, 1727.—Address to the King in regard to the Growth of Popery, &c.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty having been graciously pleased, on many occasions, to express your royal confidence in our loyalty and duty to your Majesty's sacred person and government, and our hearty affection and zeal for the Protestant succession in your royal family, and your firm resolution to maintain the Presbyterian government of this Church; and having recommended to us the promoting religion and piety, and using our best endeavours to prevent the growth of Popery, ignorance, and immorality, as we have the greatest encouragement, we are thereby laid under the strongest ties to apply ourselves with the utmost diligence to the accomplishing of those pious ends.

It is from our sincere desire faithfully to answer this great trust, that we now crave leave most humbly to represent to your Majesty, that the Papists, especially in the Highlands and Islands, and northern parts of this country, continue still to diffuse their corrupt and pernicious doctrines among your subjects, their bishops and priests taking upon them to say mass publicly, and exercise other parts of their superstitious worship, and even to train up great numbers of youth at schools in a most open manner, in manifest contempt and defiance of your Majesty's laws, disowning them, as established by unlawful authority, to which no manner of obedience is due; and instilling into the people an opinion, contrary to the rules of the Gospel, and destructive of society and good order, that, under no less than the pain of damnation, they are bound to oppose them, and to do every thing which may contribute to sap and

undermine their foundations; and maintaining that nothing can be more meritorious than to propagate these impious maxims by all means whatsoever. For a more full account of this, we beg leave to refer to former memorials, particularly to one in November 1725, from the Commission of the General Assembly, laid before the Lords-Justices in your Majesty's absence.

We reckon ourselves also obliged humbly to inform your Majesty, that the Non-juring pretended Protestant bishops, and those who are put in orders by them, restlessly endeavour to sow the seeds of disaffection to the present happy establishment in your royal person and family, especially this last year, both in city and country; and in everything that tends to this they unite in measures with professed Papists. Their preachers do not only forbear to pray expressly for your Majesty, but, on the contrary, they pray in terms by which their hearers understand that none else can be meant but the Pretender. They take every opportunity to insinuate into their minds that they are oppressed under your Majesty's administration, and can have no prospect of redress but from his success. By these means their followers entertain favourable impressions of Popery, and are the more easily perverted to it; concerning which we have sent to your Secretary of State a particular memorial.

With the greatest thankfulness we acknowledge your Majesty's pious and princely care to prevent the growth of Popery, and to promote the reformed religion. It remains only that your subjects should follow your royal example; that all persons in public stations, and, more particularly, inferior judges, should conform to your royal intentions, lay themselves out towards a vigorous execution of the laws, which the well-affected among them cannot but incline to, and would probably effectuate, were they furnished with proper funds necessary for defraying the charges thereof.

We presume, therefore, with all submission, to offer these matters to your royal consideration, and humbly pray that such effectual measures may be taken against these growing evils above mentioned as to your Majesty, in your consummate wisdom, shall seem fit.

That God may long preserve your Majesty, for the good of all your people, the maintaining of the true Protestant religion, and the protection and comfort of all the churches of Christ; that he may direct your councils, and prosper your arms against all your enemies; and that a Protestant in your royal family may always sit on the throne, shall be the earnest and constant prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator*.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 19, 1727.—Act concerning the Licensing of Probationers for the Holy Ministry, and Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly, finding it needful now, when the number of probationers is so great, to take all due care that no persons be entered on trials for the holy ministry but with all due caution and deliberation; do, therefore, enjoin the strict observation of all former Acts of Assembly made with respect to the entering of students upon trials for the end foresaid. And further, they do appoint and ordain that when any Presbytery, who is about to enter a person upon trials, shall receive a letter from another Presbytery showing their dissatisfaction with the person to be entered, and giving grounds for the same, the said person shall not be licensed until the Synod give their directions in that matter, unless the above mentioned Presbytery, who showed their dissatisfaction, do afterwards signify their consent that the said trials should go on. And the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries who shall receive such letters about students from any other Presbytery, to write a return to the said letters with the first post after their meeting. And the Assembly like-

wise appoints, that when any young man comes to wait upon the profession of divinity in any university, he shall bring along with him a testimonial from the minister of the parish from whence he comes; and when he leaves the profession, he shall also take with him, beside the professor's certificate, a testimonial from the minister of that parish in which he resided when he attended the profession.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 19, 1727.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, 1728 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 2, 1728.

I.

Sess. 1, May 2, 1728.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 2, 1728.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The many proofs and repeated instances which your former Assemblies have given of their firm and steady adherence to the succession in our family, and to the Protestant interest in general, and of their zeal for the advancement of piety and virtue, and the prudence, wisdom, and moderation which influenced their councils and debates, have engaged us most willingly to countenance your present meeting with our royal authority; and we do with the greatest pleasure take this first opportunity of assuring you of our fixed and determined purpose and resolution to maintain and support the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

We have the most entire confidence in your loyalty and affection for our person and government, and are fully persuaded that you come together with the best disposition to contribute all in your power to the happiness of our reign, as well as to promote the true interest of the Church whereof you are members, and the good of your country; and you may be assured of our ready concurrence in whatever may tend to those great and desirable ends, particularly in the preventing of the growth

of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and irreligion. And we doubt not, but as ye will avoid all disputes and contentions among yourselves, which might give advantage to those who are enemies to our peace and prosperity, you will also make the people under your charge sensible of the blessing of a perfect tranquillity which they now enjoy, and will infuse into them those principles on which the security of our happy constitution and their own welfare entirely depend.

We have appointed our right trusty and right entirely beloved cousin and councillor, Hugh Earl of Loudoun, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service; which qualifications, and his abilities for the discharge of this important trust which he has had opportunity of showing upon former like occasions, and the affection and concern which you have experienced in him for the Church of Scotland, cannot but make our choice of him very agreeable to you. And we hope that the unanimity and brotherly love and charity with which you will dispatch the business before you, will bring this your meeting to as happy conclusion as that of any former Assembly. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 1st day of April 1728, in the first year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

Directed thus,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 4, 1728.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The honour done by your Majesty's most gracious letter to this first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland which hath had the happiness to meet since the beginning of your Majesty's most auspicious reign, we have received with the greatest joy, and do acknowledge with the utmost gratitude.

The mention your Majesty is pleased to make of the firm and steady adherence of our former General Assemblies to the succession in your royal family, and to the Protestant interest in general; of their zeal for the advancement of piety and virtue; and of the prudence, wisdom, and moderation, which influenced their councils and debates, shows us your Majesty's kind inclination to approve, in the most favourable manner, what hath been done by others before us, according to their duty, and is a great encouragement to us to follow the good example of those with whom your Majesty hath the goodness to express yourself so well pleased. And the countenancing our present meeting with your Majesty's royal authority we take as a great blessing from God, and a most engaging evidence of your Majesty's royal goodness.

Your Majesty's being pleased to acquaint us in so kind and gracious a manner, that it is with the greatest pleasure you take this first opportunity of assuring us of your fixed and determined purpose and resolution to maintain and support the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges as by law established, is an endearing testimony of your royal favour to us, which we humbly accept with the greatest thankfulness, and rely upon with the firmest confidence, as esteeming your Majesty's royal protection to be, under God, our great security.

Your Majesty does us the greatest honour when you are pleased to express the

most entire confidence in our loyalty and good affection for your person and government, and it shall be our care, through Divine assistance, so to acquit ourselves upon every occasion, as your Majesty may never have reason either to alter or to lessen it. These sentiments are deeply rooted in our hearts, and we shall most cheerfully embrace every proper opportunity of showing them.

To promote the happiness of your Majesty's reign, the true interest of this Church whereof we are members, and the good of our country, are great and desirable ends, which we are bound always to have in view; and we think them so closely connected together, that not any one of them can be advanced without the rest; and we should be most unworthy of your Majesty's favour, and of the character we bear, if we had not the best disposition to contribute all in our power unto them, seeing the assurance your Majesty gives us of your hearty concurrence in whatever may tend to these great purposes, is at once the greatest encouragement and obligation for us to exert ourselves in the most vigorous manner for accomplishing them. With pleasure also we acknowledge your Majesty's royal wisdom, when you observe that the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and irreligion, will, in a particular manner, contribute to the happiness of your Majesty's reign and the good of our country, as well as to the promoting the true interest of this Church.

In this we are greatly animated by your Majesty's recommending them to us, and also by your royal proclamation, emitted so early in the beginning of your reign, and in a special manner by your bountiful and princely donation to this General Assembly, and the intimation given us by your Majesty's royal warrant, directed to the Barons of your Exchequer in Scotland, of your royal and gracious inclination to contribute yearly so considerable a fund for promoting the knowledge and practice of religion in the Highlands and Islands of our country; for this we beg leave to return your Majesty our most humble and grateful acknowledgments, and shall earnestly pray that God may abundantly reward you for so great a charity to souls. And we hope the due and faithful application of it to the pious purposes for which it is granted by your Majesty, shall appear by the accounts which shall be annually exhibited, according to the direction contained in your Majesty's warrant; and the most effectual care that we can shall be taken, that the persons to be employed upon that fund shall be duly qualified for serving the purposes for which your Majesty hath been pleased to bestow it. And it is with great pleasure we observe that the same endeavours which we use for preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and irreligion, and for advancing the knowledge and service of God among the people under our charge, do also contribute to make them sensible of the perfect tranquillity, and other great blessings which they now enjoy under your Majesty's happy government and wise administration, and to infuse into them those principles of duty and loyalty on which the security of our happy constitution, and their own welfare, entirely depend; for next to the persuading men to become faithful subjects to our Lord Jesus Christ, our chief care shall be to make them loyal and dutiful subjects to your Majesty.

The Earl of Loudoun hath given such eminent proofs of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for your Majesty's service, and, upon many former occasions, of his abilities for the discharge of this important trust, and of his most affectionate concern for the prosperity and happiness of this Church, as render your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly most acceptable and obliging to us, and we humbly acknowledge it as a particular evidence of your Majesty's goodness.

We are sensible how much disputes and contentions among ourselves would give advantage to those who are enemies to the peace and prosperity of your Majesty's government, upon which our own welfare under God does depend; and we humbly acknowledge your Majesty's fatherly tenderness for us, in being pleased to caution us against them. We pray and hope that the good Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of love and peace, will assist us to dispatch all our business with that unanimity, brotherly love, and charity, which becomes the servants of the Prince of Peace, and which is so necessary to the bringing of our meeting, at this time, to a happy conclusion.

That the Most High God, by whom kings reign, may graciously preserve your

Majesty's person, direct all your councils, and bless your government;—that your Majesty may long reign a happy prince over a loving and obedient people;—that He may pour down his best blessings upon your Royal Consort the Queen, upon his Royal Highness the Prince, and all your royal progeny;—that there may never be wanting a Protestant prince of your royal family to sway the sceptre over us;—and that your Majesty may late, very late, exchange the crown which you now wear for a crown of glory that fadeth not away, are, and shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. WISHART, *Moderator.*

IV.

Address to the King on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

The great concern which we, according to our duty, have in all the events which happen to your royal family, obliges us to take hold of every proper opportunity to express it; and the death of our late gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's royal father, of glorious memory, with your Majesty's most peaceable and happy accession to the crown, having in Providence fallen out since the last meeting of the General Assembly of this Church, we humbly presume to take hold of this first occasion to give vent to those different passions, which, even at this distance of time, continue to work in our minds, upon account of these important occurrences.

It is with great satisfaction that we understand that the Commission of the late General Assembly did, according to their duty, in the most respectful manner they could, by some of their number, present a humble address to your Majesty, upon an occasion of so great concern to us and all your Majesty's good subjects, which your Majesty was pleased to accept very graciously, and which address we have in this our meeting unanimously approved; yet we cannot forbear to take hold of this first opportunity of expressing, in the most public and solemn manner which our constitution admits of, our own sentiments upon this subject, wherein we are well assured we have the hearty concurrence of all the members of this Church, whom we have the honour in this our meeting to represent.

The death of our late gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's royal father, of glorious memory, whom God made the instrument of so great blessings to us and to all Europe, was so sensible and heavy a stroke to us, that we should have been inconsolable under it, if so great a loss had not been made up to us by your Majesty's most peaceable and happy accession to the throne.

Permit us, then, great Sir, to congratulate your Majesty upon your ascending the throne of your royal ancestors, with the joyful acclamations of all your dutiful subjects.

We can never cease to bless our gracious God, when we think of his setting a king over us, whose royal qualities do so brightly adorn the throne upon which he sits; who, even from the beginning of his reign, hath given so evident proofs of his being the guardian of the peace and liberty of Europe, and of all the just rights and privileges of his subjects; who, at his entering upon the administration of his government, did, with the greatest cheerfulness, give us the most firm and solemn assurances of his inviolable resolution to maintain and protect our Church in the enjoyment of all her rights established by law, and hath fully made good, to our great joy, this his gracious purpose in the following steps of his reign.

It is with the greatest joy that we observe these blessings multiplied upon your Majesty, which we hope shall continue to distinguish your reign, and render it more

and more illustrious. That you are blessed with a Royal Consort, who, for her many excellent qualities, and particularly her distinguished zeal and constancy in adhering to the Protestant religion, ought to be dear to all the Protestant Churches while she lives, and have her memory highly honoured by them to the latest posterity. And it greatly adds to our joy for the present, and fills our hearts with the most encouraging hopes for the time to come, that we behold your Majesty's throne encompassed with so numerous and hopeful a progeny, born, as we trust, for great blessings to the world, and for securing the succession to the crown in the Protestant line of your Majesty's royal house for many generations.

That God may bless your Majesty with a long life and a prosperous reign ;—that he may ever defeat all the open and secret attempts of your enemies ;—that he may establish your throne by righteousness, and make you more and more a blessing to your own subjects, and to all the Protestant Churches ;—that he may eminently bless your Royal Consort, our gracious Queen, his Royal Highness the Prince, and the whole royal family, with all temporal and eternal blessings ;—and when your Majesty hath been long honoured of God to serve him and promote the good of mankind upon earth, you may be rewarded with eternal happiness in heaven, is, and shall be, the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in a General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our presence, in our name, and at our appointment, by

WILL. WISHART, *Moderator.*

Address to the King, by the late Commission, on the same subject.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We lay hold of this first opportunity that our meeting together affords us to express our just sorrow and concern for the unspeakable loss which we, together with all the Protestant churches, have sustained, in the unexpected death of his late Majesty, your royal father, our most indulgent Sovereign ; and, at the same time, to declare the hearty joy and complete satisfaction that possess us on your Majesty's quiet and peaceable accession to the throne.

When we revolve in our thoughts, how melancholy our situation appeared to be by the sudden removal of our late most gracious and wise king, at a season when the critical juncture of public affairs in Europe seemed to call for the most steady hand to conduct them ; and when we reflect how momentary our fears were, how quickly they were dispelled upon your Majesty's ascending the throne of your ancestors, with the universal and joyful consent and congratulation of your people ; and when we see the weight of British councils, in supporting the Protestant interest abroad, and preserving the balance of Europe, prevail as formerly, we cannot but admire and adore the kind Providence of Almighty God, who hath turned our sorrow into gladness, and under those gloomy circumstances which threatened us with danger, hath opened to us the prospect of lasting happiness and security.

It has been the unhappiness of Britain for more than a century past, that it never saw the throne filled at the same time with a Protestant King and Queen, blessed and supported by a hopeful progeny ; whence grew that weakness in the state, and uncertainty in the settlement in matters of religion, that has frequently threatened the Protestant churches with ruin. But now, thanks be to our most gracious God, we see joined to our King, whose wisdom, justice, and magnanimity, secure the Church and State from all apprehensions, a Queen, whose virtues and piety are a fit

pattern for your people, and whose generous contempt of diadems, when standing in competition with the Protestant religion, is rewarded even in this life with one of the most considerable crowns in Europe; and assures religion in this island of finding in her a tender nursing-mother, as it gives a solid expectation, that the growing royal family, the hope and glory of this kingdom, will be brought up in the same principles.

Under these happy circumstances, we can have no apprehensions of what we formerly dreaded; but may reasonably hope, that the abjured Pretender will soon have no friend in Britain, who is not likewise a friend to his absurd religion; and our faithful endeavours must, with the blessing of God, have the same success against him, as against those errors that lead captive his blinded abettors into his interest against their own.

That the profession we make of affection to your Majesty is unfeigned and genuine, no enemy we have can pretend to doubt. Early upon your accession to the crown we received the strongest security that your Majesty will maintain inviolably the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland; and its main support, under God, is from the present happy establishment of the crown on your Majesty and your royal family. Our preservation depends so evidently upon your undoubted title to the imperial crown of this realm, that though the Popish Pretender to your Majesty's throne, in public papers and declarations, has often attempted to delude others with the vain hopes of protection, should his arbitrary and tyrannical government take place over this island, yet not the remotest insinuation either was or could, with any colour, be made in favour of our Church—so inseparably are our duty to your Majesty and our interest connected together: and, therefore, we humbly presume to hope, that your Majesty will graciously accept of this first declaration and tender of our unalterable love, duty, and loyalty.

That God may long preserve your Majesty, the great pattern and promoter of religion, and the defender of the true faith; that your reign may be happy and undisturbed; that you may always possess the hearts and affections of all your subjects; that you may be the guardian of the liberties of Europe, the support of the Protestant interest, and the blessed instrument of relief to our suffering brethren abroad; that all divine blessings in Christ Jesus may be plentifully dispensed to your Majesty, to our most gracious Queen, to the Prince, and all your royal family; and that it may ever be the happiness of Britain to have a Prince of your royal line to sway the sceptre, are the ardent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, at our appointment, and in our presence, by

WILL. HAMILTON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, May 8, 1728, ante meridiem.—Act renewing the Recommendation of the last Assembly in favour of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

The Lord President of the Session, preses of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, gave in to the Assembly a memorial from the said Society, representing that they did lay before the late General Assembly the then state of their affairs, upon which a recommendation was granted; but are sorry to find that divers Synods and Presbyteries have neglected to make any report as to their diligence in what was therein desired of them,—that there are new demands made by several Presbyteries and parishes for charity schools, which the Society cannot answer, because they have already more schools than their fund can well maintain; but when collections come in, they are ready, as far as they can, to settle schools in places that most need the same; and, for enabling the Society to do this, humbly de-

siring that the recommendation of the late General Assembly may be renewed. The Society also represented, that they having received payment of the L.1000 sterling, mortified by John Raining, merchant in Norwich, for a school, they laid out the same upon heritable security; and having formerly intimated to the Assembly a proposal of settling that school at Inverness, to which hopeful youths having Irish at the Society's other schools might be brought, in order to learn the English language, and, when further instructed, be returned to take up schools in the Highlands, it was now reported that the magistrates, town-council, ministers, and kirk-session of Inverness, have agreed to give accommodation and encouragement thereto, and that thereupon that school was, in May last, settled in the said town, and is in a flourishing condition. The General Assembly having heard and considered the above memorial, with the act and recommendation of the late Assembly in favour of the said Society, and heard the Lord President, and other members of that Society, give account of the state and management thereof, they did, and hereby do, renew the recommendation of the said Assembly, and instruct and appoint their Commission to be named by them to take care that the said recommendation be executed; and, likewise, do appoint the several Synods and Presbyteries within this Church to send up to the meeting of the Commission, in November next, and also to the next Assembly, with the commissioners from their bounds, a particular account in writing of their diligence, with a list of deficient contributors within the several Presbyteries. And they appoint their said Commission to take this matter under their consideration, at their said meeting in November next, at furthest, and report their diligence, and an account of their success, to the next General Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 12, May 11, 1728, post meridiem.—Act and Recommendation for a Voluntary Contribution, to be applied towards erecting an Infirmary or Hospital for Diseased Poor at Edinburgh.

There was presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland a petition for the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, showing, that they having observed many poor miserable objects in this place, as well strangers from all corners of the nation, as inhabitants of the city, seeking after the means of health, having nothing either to maintain themselves or provide medicines, they did, some years ago, erect a dispensatory, provided it with medicines at the lowest rates, and by turns gave attendance at their public hall to give advice gratis; but finding that the advice given, and the medicines applied, often proved unsuccessful, and came short of their good effect, through the patients their wanting due care taken of them, and their being destitute of means for providing a proper diet and lodging while under cure. For remedy of which, the said college did lately propose the establishing an infirmary or hospital for sick and wounded poor, after the example and practice of most other countries and cities, unto which proper objects may be taken for cure, and to raise a stock for that end, by voluntary subscriptions and donations, that so poor persons may not only have advice and medicines gratis, but also (when any physician sees it necessary) be entertained at bed and board, with proper servants to attend them during the time of their cure; and having already made some good progress in obtaining subscriptions and donations for the end foresaid, by the care and pains of some worthy gentlemen, and the charitable disposition of persons of all ranks to whom application has been made, they thought it proper to make the good design more publicly known, in hopes of an universal approbation; and that many will cheerfully contribute towards carrying on so Christian and necessary a work, which may prove universally profitable to the nation; the commendable practice of erecting and maintaining many such hospitals abroad, and the great advantages that are well known to arise therefrom, being a strong motive for us in Scotland to establish one amongst us, whereby many poor tradesmen, servants, apprentices, journeymen, and labourers, who casually meet with fractures, bruises, wounds, dislocations, or do fall into sickness, may, by the blessing of God, and the timeous application of proper

medicines, be recovered and restored to health and strength, who, through the want of such help, become beggars, or a burden upon their friends or the public, but by means of this hospital may be restored to health, and enabled to follow their employments and business, gain their own livelihood, and be useful in the commonwealth. And another great use of such an hospital is, that the overseers thereof will be a check upon many idle and slothful persons, who, under pretence of some slight lameness, sickness, or weakness, become a burden upon the country; for such, being brought into the hospital and cured, will be debarred from begging, and the really poor and incurably lame or sick will the more easily and cheerfully be pitied and supplied by charitable persons. And therefore the foresaid college do invite all persons, societies, and corporations, who are in case to contribute towards carrying on this charitable and necessary design, to concur therein, and earnestly desire the General Assembly of this National Church to recommend a voluntary contribution at the several parish churches in Scotland, for advancing the foresaid charitable work, in such manner as to them shall seem most suitable.

The General Assembly, having heard the said petition, and taking into their most serious consideration the deplorable circumstances of many industrious poor of both sexes, who, while in health and firmness of body, do labour with diligence, and maintain themselves and families, yet when they fall into sickness, or are otherwise disabled, are in the greatest extremity of misery, being not only destitute of bread, but want the necessary means of cure and recovery; against both which inconveniences a remedy is proposed by this pious and Christian project; and the Assembly also considering that this infirmary or hospital will be of universal and common use to the poor of the whole nation; they do, therefore, with the greatest earnestness, recommend a public contribution through all the parishes of Scotland for advancing thereof, to be made upon such Lord's Days as the several Presbyteries or ministers shall think most proper, after these presents come to their hands; and do exhort all well disposed persons, especially those on whom God has bestowed the inestimable blessings of health and strength, and any competent measure of the other good things of this life, that they lay to heart the distress of such their fellow Christians as are deprived of them, and, according to their ability, contribute cheerfully to their relief, by encouraging this so necessary and charitable a design. And the Assembly appoints this Act and recommendation to be published in all the parish churches of Scotland, upon the Lord's Day preceding the day to be appointed for the collection, immediately after sermon in the forenoon; and recommends to the several ministers who preach on the said Lord's Days to enforce the same with suitable exhortations. And appoints the money collected in the several parishes to be put into the hands of the moderators of the respective Presbyteries, and by them to be carefully transmitted to Edinburgh, with the first opportunity, to David Spence, Secretary to the Bank of Scotland, who, at the desire of the said Royal College of Physicians, has undertaken the trouble of receiving the whole contributions for this charitable work, and will give receipts for the same, to be accounted for by him to the managers of the said infirmary, conform to his obligation granted for that end.

VII.

Sess. 16, May 14, 1728, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this Assembly; any thirty-one of them are hereby declared to be a quorum, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers; with power to them to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred to them, by any Act or order of this Assembly; which commissioners are hereby ordained to convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at

ten of the clock in the forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think convenient; with power to them to choose their own moderator. And this General Assembly do hereby renew the powers, granted by the late General Assembly, to their commissioners by their Act, dated the 16th day of May last, entitled, "Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them," and the instructions therein mentioned in all points; and ordains this Commission to proceed according thereunto, and report to the next General Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. 18, May 15, 1728, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration, that it has pleased the King, out of his royal bounty, to grant the sum of £.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the Highlands and Islands, for instructing the people in the principles of the true religion; and being desirous to carry on the reformation in the foresaid places, and to prosecute his Majesty's pious design, do hereby continue Mr John Dundas of Philipston, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid money, and to lay out the same in the terms of his Majesty's grant and 6th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1725, entitled, "Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and Management of the King's Bounty for that end;" and do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty, for the ends above mentioned, according to the said 6th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1725, 6th Act of Assembly, 1726, and 5th Act of Assembly, 1727; and the whole rules and powers contained in these Acts are hereby renewed, any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four to be always ministers. And the General Assembly appoints the said committee to have their meetings in the hall of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, in Edinburgh, the last Thursdays of every month, at three of the clock in the afternoon, but to have a quarterly meeting the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated meetings of the Commission of the General Assembly, at ten of the clock in the forenoon, with power to adjourn themselves as they shall find needful; and they are appointed to keep a correspondence with the said Commission, also with the foresaid Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and with Presbyteries and Synods concerned in the Highlands and Islands, and places where Popery abounds in the North; and the said Commission are empowered to concur with the said committee in their work when applied unto for that effect; and ordains the said committee to report an account of their actings and diligence to the next General Assembly. And this committee are to continue till another committee be named in their room.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 16, 1728.—Act concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow.

The General Assembly, having maturely considered the affair concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, with all that hath appeared to them, both from the depositions of the witnesses and his own writings and papers, do find, that, in his papers, given in to the General Assembly upon the 14th and 15th days of this instant, and this day, he does assert the necessity of the existence

and generation of the person of our Lord Jesus Christ; also, that he declares that the titles, *Summus Deus*, and the only true God, are equally applicable to the Father and the Son, and not in any lower sense to the Son than to the Father. Likewise, that he affirms that the three Persons in the Godhead are one substance or essence in number; therefore, the General Assembly does find that his sentiments, as above expressed in his foresaid papers upon these articles, are sound and orthodox; nevertheless, considering what hath been found both relevant and proved against him by this present and the preceding General Assembly, of his having taught and uttered such things, and expressed himself in such terms, as are subversive of these blessed truths, as they are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and laid down in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and tend to shake the belief of them, and to inject needless and ill-grounded doubts and scruples into the minds of men, and to render them dark and uncertain as to what they ought to believe concerning the same; and, likewise, considering the great offence which he hath given by neglecting so many opportunities, during the course of the proceedings against him, of giving satisfaction to the judicatories of the Church, as to the soundness of his faith concerning those important articles, find themselves obliged, for the honour of truth, and in order to prevent the spreading of error, and preserving the purity of doctrine in this Church, to testify their high dissatisfaction with his conduct and behaviour. And many members declaring that they thought the said Mr John Simson deserved deposition, the Assembly, after mature deliberation, considering that the process is not entirely finished, and the other circumstances of the case, as it now stands, did agree to suspend, and hereby do suspend, the foresaid Mr John Simson, from preaching and teaching, and all exercise of any ecclesiastical power or function, until another General Assembly shall think fit to take off this sentence; and this Assembly does leave it to the next ensuing General Assembly to do concerning him, with relation to this process, and the other, not yet brought under consideration of this Assembly, as to them shall seem fit. And the Assembly further orders the proceedings of this Assembly to be printed, and to be transmitted, with the state of this process, printed by an order of the committee of the last Assembly for purity of doctrine, to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may send up their commissioners to the next Assembly duly instructed upon what they think proper to be further done in that which remains of Mr Simson's affair.

X.

Sess. ult., May 16, 1728.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, 1729 years.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of a part of the 72d Psalm, from the 17th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 1, 1729.

I.

Sess. 1, May 1, 1729.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Buchan produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 1, 1729.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 3, 1729.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 3, 1729, ante meridiem.—Act renewing the Recommendation of the last General Assembly in favour of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge.

There was brought into the General Assembly, from their Committee for Bills, the petition and representation of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, showing that the foresaid Society having formerly, from time to time, given an account to the General Assembly of the state of their affairs, and having, since the last General Assembly, caused print the present state thereof, and sent copies to all parishes, Presbyteries, and Synods, in Scotland, do now present a copy of the same to this Assembly, whereby it appears that the number of their schools is seventy-eight, and the number of scholars are near 3000; and the Society are about erecting more schools.

As to the school erected upon the fund left by the deceased John Raining, merchant in Norwich, it is in a flourishing condition, having therein, at the last visitation, 101 scholars; and the Society are using their endeavours for recovering what remains unpaid of that fund.

Many places are yet needing and petitioning for schools, but the Society's funds do not allow thereof; and divers of the masters do complain of the smallness of their salaries, and the Society are convinced that they need augmentations; but the expenses of furnishing books, postage, and other incidents, are so great, that the Society are much straitened how to answer the demands on them; and therefore did, for increasing their funds, grant a commission this year to divers noblemen, persons of honour, ministers, and other worthy and charitable persons in England, to be correspondent members, in order to obtain donations, and for negotiating the Society's affairs there; which commission is printed in the foresaid state.

The Society, considering that the coming of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour is what all sincere believers wish and pray for, and that it has pleased God to put it in the hearts of many, in his Majesty's dominions to contribute their endeavours, and

to bestow of their worldly substance for advancing the knowledge of Christ in places needing the means thereof, both at home and abroad; and not only does our gracious Sovereign countenance it, but also out of his royal bounty gives yearly a considerable sum for that end; and Protestant powers abroad are concerning themselves in this laudable design, by sending missionaries to heathen nations, and with good success.

This being a matter of the greatest moment, the promoters thereof do need direction and encouragement from the Word of God, and also the prayers and concurrence of the Lord's people.

The Society, by their committee, did therefore apply to the reverend ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh to appoint a sermon on the foresaid subject, in the High Church of Edinburgh, the first Thursday of January yearly, being the day of the anniversary meeting of the foresaid Society; and that these sermons be for confirmation of people in the truth of the holy Christian religion, and the excellency thereof, and in the faith of the great promises made for spreading the knowledge of Christ; and the ministers of the foresaid Presbytery did very cordially agree thereunto; and that when the Society shall invite any of their number, the Presbytery should lay their appointment on him to preach that sermon; and left it to the Society to apply to the venerable Assembly to have their allowance to invite any minister of this National Church, who may conveniently be had, to preach that sermon annually.

It has been a great satisfaction and encouragement to this Society, that as their erection was at the earnest desire of the General Assembly, so they have still had the concurrence and approbation of the Established Church, and by the pious zeal and great care of the ministers thereof, considerable sums have been brought in to the Society, so that their present fund is upwards of £9000 sterling, besides what of Mr Raining's mortification is already paid in, and divers other legacies by charitable persons, liferented and yet resting. But, at the same time, the Society cannot but represent that there are many ministers and parishes in Scotland who never, to this day have given any thing to the Society's funds. The Society are unwilling to be more particular in this matter, being hopeful those concerned will lay it to heart, and with their first conveniency contribute, but are resolved to prepare, in order to be laid before the next General Assembly, a full list of parishes in every Synod and Presbytery in Scotland deficient in contributing; and, therefore, humbly craving to the effect after mentioned.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the foresaid representation and petition, they did, and hereby do, renew their former recommendations to deficients in contributing to the Society's funds, and do earnestly entreat them yet to in contribute cheerfully to so excellent and Christian an undertaking, and to send their donations in the terms of the eighth Act of the last General Assembly, to Mr Joseph Cave, merchant in Edinburgh, the Society's treasurer. And the Assembly recommends to any minister of this Church whom the Society shall invite, yearly to preach a sermon at their anniversary meetings suitable to the occasion; and likewise, recommends to the several Presbyteries where the Society's schools are or may be settled, to visit them frequently, and give them all encouragement, and to report to the said Society the state of their charity schools, according to the rules laid down by them in the foresaid printed state of the Society.

V.

Sess. 14, May 12, 1729, post meridiem.—Act Dividing the Presbytery of Lorn, and erecting a new Presbytery in Mull.

The General Assembly, having had laid before them a petition of the Presbytery of Lorn, concurred with by the Synod of Argyle, setting forth the great extent of the bounds of that Presbytery, and the distance at which sundry of the parishes in it do lie from the Presbytery seat, and that travelling in that country, both by sea and land, is very difficult, which often stops the members of Presbytery from meeting, and other

persons concerned from attending their diets, and occasions much expenses and trouble ; and, for a remedy of this, in some measure, proposing the erection of another Presbytery therein—as the said petition and Act of the Synod, both read in Assembly, more fully bear. And the General Assembly, having considered the premises, and judging the present situation of the said Presbytery very inconvenient, and a great obstruction to the exercise of discipline, as well as an hinderance to the ministers in their work, they being thereby frequently detained long from their parishes ; do, therefore, hereby disjoin the said Presbytery and parishes after named, and erect the same into two Presbyteries, in manner following, viz., the whole parishes within the Isles of Mull, Tiree, and Coll, and the country of Ardnamurchan, Sunnard, and Morven, consisting at present of six ministerial charges, into one Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Mull ; and ordains, that their ordinary place of meeting be at Arros in Mull ; and the parishes of Lismore and Appin, Ardchattan and Muckairn, Kilmore and Kilbride, Kilbrandon and Kilchattan, Kilninver and Kilmelfort, part of the old Presbytery of Lorn, with the parishes of Kilchrennan and Dallavich, and Innishall and Clachandysart, now in the bounds of the Presbytery of Inverary, into another Presbytery, consisting at present of seven ministerial charges, to be continued under the name of the Presbytery of Lorn ; and appoints that their place of meeting be for ordinary at Kilmore. And the Assembly ordains the foresaid two Presbyteries to have their first meetings respective at the places above mentioned, upon the first Wednesday of July next ; and they declare both the said Presbyteries to be still a part of the Synod of Argyle, as formerly, and to have the same powers and privileges which any other Presbytery have, by the Word of God and constitutions of this Church. And, lastly, the General Assembly ordains that the records and papers formerly belonging to the old Presbytery of Lorn remain with the new Presbytery of that name, but that they may be patent to the Presbytery of Mull, and that they have all necessary extracts therefrom, as they shall require the same.

VI

Sess. 15, May 13, 1729, ante meridiem.—Act concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow.

The General Assembly, considering how necessary it is that the process which hath so long depended, concerning Mr John Simson, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow, should be brought to an issue, such as may tend to the preservation of the purity of the doctrine and of the peace of this Church ; and being now to give their determination in it, do observe, with great pleasure and thankfulness, that God hath so happily directed all the judicatories of this Church which have had this process under their consideration, that there hath not appeared the least difference of sentiment ; but, on the contrary, there hath been the most perfect and unanimous agreement among them, as to the doctrine of the glorious Trinity, and the proper Supreme Deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, according as the same is revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and contained in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

And they having maturely and seriously considered all that hath been found relevant and proven against the said Mr John Simson by the two last preceding Assemblies, together with all that hath been offered by him, for alleviating the censure that ought to be inflicted for the same ; and having also considered the declarations given in by him to the two former General Assemblies, and to this, wherein he owns the orthodox doctrine concerning those great and fundamental articles of our holy religion, and disclaims and renounces all those errors, and erroneous or suspicious ways of speaking which he had been charged with, and declares himself exceedingly sorry for the offence he had given, by such ways of expressing himself. And though the said Mr John Simson hath constantly disowned that ever he held, or deliberately taught, the gross errors whereof he was accused, yet many members of this General Assembly declared it to be their opinion, that the uttering such things, and making use of such expressions, as have been found against Mr Simson, was such a fault in a

minister, especially in one of his station, who had the care of the education of youth designed for the holy ministry, as deserved no less than the censure of deposition ; and other members, in respect of the alleviations found in the course of the process, and of the declarations made by Mr Simson, having, on the other hand, given it as their opinion, that he ought to be treated with more tenderness ; and the General Assembly being desirous to avoid going to extremities on either side, but to give such a decision in the matter as may give just and reasonable satisfaction on all hands, and preserve peace, both among the members of this Assembly, and among all the other ministers and members of the Church, find that the foresaid Mr John Simson, by what hath been found relevant and proven against him in this process, and also by his neglecting so many opportunities, as he had during the course thereof, of giving satisfaction to the judicatories of this Church, when called to do so, as to the soundness of his faith concerning those important articles about which he was called in question, had given such offence as renders it not fit or safe that he should further teach as a Professor of Divinity in this Church : Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, ratify and confirm the sentence of the last Assembly, suspending the said Mr John Simson from preaching and teaching, and all exercise of any ecclesiastical power or function, until another General Assembly shall think fit to take off this sentence ; and also give it as their judgment, that it is not fit or safe that he be further employed in teaching divinity, and instructing of youth designed for the holy ministry in this Church.

And that the judicatories of this Church may have no more trouble about this process, the General Assembly have thought fit, that, for peace's sake, this whole affair concerning Mr Simson should rest here.

VII.

Sess. 16, May 13, 1729, post meridiem — Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the great extent of many parishes in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and that, by reason thereof, ignorance, Popery, superstition, and vice, do abound in many places therein, and that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to bestow yearly the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the foresaid Highlands and Islands, for assisting the ministers established there, in giving the people in those parts such instruction as is necessary to enlighten and arm them against the practices of many Popish priests that resort thither to pervert and seduce them from the profession and principles of the reformed religion ; and the General Assembly being glad of such an opportunity of advancing the interest of religion and good of their country, under such favourable circumstances, with so great encouragement and assistance, and earnestly desirous to improve the same, and to promote his Majesty's pious design ; and seeing they cannot do what is necessary in that matter during the short time of their continuing together, and that it is proper there be a standing committee of fit persons, such as may best attend and be most useful, appointed for this matter, to meet frequently in the intervals of the General Assemblies: The General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr James Alston, minister of the Gospel at Dirleton, their Moderator, &c. ; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty for the ends above mentioned, and according to his Majesty's grant ; and do hereby renew the powers contained in the fifth Act of the General Assembly, anno 1727, and eighth Act of the Assembly, in the year 1728, entitled, " Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and Managing the King's Bounty for that end," and the several acts therein mentioned, which are held as here repeated ; and any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four are always to be ministers. And the fore-

said committee are appointed to have their meetings in Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursdays of every month, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and with power to nominate ministers, preachers, and catechists, to go in mission to the foresaid parts; and such ministers as they shall appoint to go in mission are hereby empowered to act as members of Presbyteries and Synods while within their bounds, and keep sessions for discipline. And the General Assembly does hereby continue the forenamed Mr John Dundas of Philipston, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and for laying out the same in the terms of his Majesty's grant, and according to the orders and directions of the foresaid committee; and the said committee are enjoined to take special care that the foresaid money be no otherwise disposed of than for the purposes contained in the royal grant, and not only that those who receive thereof be duly qualified in all respects for what they are to be employed in by the foresaid committee, but also that they do punctually serve for the same, according to the rules of the former committee, contained in their register, and be ordered and enjoined to observe the same; and the said committee are required, besides the register of their actings, to keep distinct books of accounts how the foresaid money is bestowed; and which books of accounts are to be patent to any concerned, who please to inspect the same; and the said committee are appointed to keep a correspondence with the Commission of this Assembly, also with the foresaid Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and with the Synods and Presbyteries concerned in the Highlands and Islands, and places in the North of this Church, and where Popery does abound; and the said Commission are empowered to concur with the said committee in their work, when applied unto for that effect; also, the said committee are ordained and empowered to state the accounts of their distribution of the foresaid royal bounty, and to lay the same before the Lord High Treasurer, or Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or Barons of Exchequer in Scotland, according to his Majesty's royal pleasure expressed in the foresaid grant; and also to lay the same before the next General Assembly, with the register of their actings and proceedings. And, lastly, this committee are to continue till another committee be appointed in their room; and members, especially those in Edinburgh, are required to give punctual attendance on all the diets of this committee, and when they cannot do it to send their excuse; and the clerk of the said committee is ordered to keep an exact account of the attendance of members, and lay the same before the next General Assembly, in so far as the excuses for absence are not sustained by the committee.

VIII.

Sess. 18, May 14, 1729, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs remitted to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, so as to determine therein themselves, for want of time, do therefore nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Alston, minister at Dirleton, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this Assembly, any thirty-one of whom are declared to be a quorum, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers; with power to them to cognosce and finally determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this Assembly, which commissioners are hereby ordained to convene within the Assembly-house at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think convenient; with power to them to choose their own moderator. And this General Assembly do hereby renew the powers granted by the late General Assembly to their commissioners by their Act, dated the 14th day of May last, entitled, "Commission to some

Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them," and the instructions therein mentioned in all points; and ordains this Commission to proceed according thereunto, and report to the next General Assembly.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 16, 1729.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at dinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next to come, 1730 years.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1730.

I.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1730.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1730.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1730.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1730.—Act concerning the Management of the King's Royal Bounty for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The General Assembly did approve of the rules laid down by the committee of the last Assembly for managing his Majesty's bounty for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, in their letters to Presbyteries for the regular distribution of the foresaid bounty, and do appoint all concerned hereafter punctually to observe the same; particularly, the Assembly ordains the several Presbyteries to insert in their registers

the committee's appointments of the designations, salaries, and stations, of the respective missionaries, and enjoins them to have an exact regard thereto, in all the letters that they shall write about the said missionaries, and in giving of their certificates to them. And the Assembly also appoints the several Presbyteries to direct all their letters concerning missionaries in their bounds only to the moderator of the committee, and ordains that the said letters be signed, at the appointment of the Presbytery, by the moderator or clerk thereof. And the General Assembly does discharge for the future any payments to be made of the salaries of missionaries, except upon receipts from the missionaries themselves, and upon certificates from Presbyteries, bearing that they have served the time mentioned in the receipts, yet reserving liberty to the committee, when they first employ missionaries, to allow them, upon their own receipts as above, one quarter's salary per advance, if they find it necessary; provided always, that before the said new missionaries receive their second quarter, they produce certificates of their service for the whole half year preceding. And the General Assembly likewise appoints that all the committee's accounts with their cashier be duly signed and attested, and immediately thereafter recorded in the book prepared for that effect; and in regard the Barons of his Majesty's Exchequer did, upon the 7th of July 1729, allow twenty-five pounds sterling per annum of the expenses in managing the royal bounty, to be for the future stated in the accounts thereof that shall be laid before them; therefore, the General Assembly declares the Church's annual allowance of five hundred pounds sterling to be in so far relieved of the burden laid upon it by the Act of the last Assembly, dated the 13th day of May 1729, *post meridiem*. And the Assembly appoints a particular account of all money disbursed in managing the foresaid bounty to be annually stated by the committee, and laid with their report before the Assembly, for their approbation; and this without prejudice to the other heads of the foresaid Act of Assembly, which the General Assembly appoints to take effect, according to the committee's acts dated August 25, 1725, and May 9, 1726, approved in the subsequent Assemblies.

V.

Sess. 14, May 23, 1730, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, so as to determine therein themselves, for want of time, do therefore nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this Assembly, and any thirty-one of them are declared to be a quorum, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers; with power to them to cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this Assembly; which commissioners are hereby ordained to convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think convenient; with power to them to choose their own moderator. And this General Assembly do hereby renew the powers granted by the late General Assembly to their commissioners, by their Act dated the 14th day of May last, entitled, "Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them," and the instructions therein mentioned in all points; and ordains this Commission to proceed according thereunto; and all affairs referred to the late Commission, not yet finally determined, are hereby remitted to the Commission of this Assembly, to be proceeded in until the same be finished; and this Commission is to report to the next General Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 14, May 23, 1730, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the great extent of many parishes in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and that by reason thereof ignorance, Popery, superstition, and vice, do abound in many places therein, and that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to bestow yearly the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the foresaid Highlands and Islands, for assisting ministers established there, in giving the people in those parts such instruction as is necessary to enlighten and arm them against the practices of many Popish priests that resort thither; and finding that divers preceding General Assemblies have appointed some ministers and elders for management of the royal bounty, for the end foresaid; and it being necessary the like be now done, the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr William Hamilton, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty, according to his Majesty's grant; and the General Assembly do hereby renew the powers contained in the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1729, entitled, "Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end;" and the several Acts therein mentioned, also the regulations and Act of this Assembly, dated the 22d day of May current, which are held as here repeated; and any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four are always to be ministers; and the foresaid committee are appointed to have their meetings in Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursdays of every month, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday following; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and with power to nominate ministers, preachers, and catechists, to go in mission to the foresaid places. And the General Assembly does hereby continue the said Mr John Dundas to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and for laying out the same in the terms of his Majesty's grant, and according to the orders of the foresaid committee; and which committee are enjoined to take special care to observe the whole directions contained in the foresaid 7th Act of the late General Assembly, and the Act above mentioned, in all points.

VII.

Sess. 15, May 25, 1730, post meridiem.—Act discharging the Recording of Reasons of Dissent.

The General Assembly appoints that the reasons of dissent against the determination of Church judicatories, in causes brought before them, shall not be entered in the register, but be kept *in retentis*, to be laid before the superior judicatories.

VIII.

Sess. 15, May 25, 1730, post meridiem.—Act for preventing the Spreading of Error.

The General Assembly recommends it to all the ministers of this Church to be careful in their several charges, to guard against the spreading of any errors contrary to our standards of doctrine, and condemned by Acts of Assemblies, particularly such as strike against the fundamentals of our holy religion.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1730.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, being the 6th day of that month, in the year 1731, in this place, being the ordinary place of their meeting.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of the 72d Psalm, from the 17th verse to the end, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JO. DUNDAS, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

May 25, 1730, post meridiem.

OVERTURE IN REGARD TO APPEALS.*

There being laid before the Assembly an overture, proposing that for hereafter the members of an inferior court, from which an appeal is brought, shall not be excluded from judging, nor be reckoned parties, because they gave judgment when the cause was tried before the inferior court, reserving all other grounds of declination as accords; the Assembly does transmit the said overture to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may send their opinions to the next Assembly, whether it be expedient to pass the same into an act.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 6, 1731.

I.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1731.—The King's Commission to Hugh Earl of Loudoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1731.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 8, 1731.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

* This Overture does not appear to have passed — *Ed. 1843.*

IV.

Sess. 9, May 14, 1731, post meridiem.—Act and Overture concerning the Method of Planting Vacant Churches.

The General Assembly, considering the inconveniences and divisions that have arisen, in planting of vacant parishes, occasioned partly by Presbyteries not following an uniform method in supplying those vacancies with Gospel ministers, and that those evils may be in part remedied and prevented, they appoint that Presbyteries, when the planting of any parish falls into their hands, *tanquam jure devoluto*, take care to have the same supplied with a well qualified Gospel minister, to labour amongst the people for their spiritual edification; and in order thereunto, they shall appoint one or more of their number to meet with the heritors, being Protestants, and the elders who represent the people, that they may elect and call one to be their minister, whom they are to propose to the whole congregation, to be either approved or disapproved by them; and the disapprovers to offer their reasons to the Presbytery of the bounds at whose judgment, and by whose determination, the calling and entry of a minister is to be ordered and concluded. And when the like case happens in royal burghs, that the call or election be by the magistrates, town-council, and kirk-session, where there is no landward parish; and where there is a part of the parish in landward, the call or election shall be by the magistrates, town-council, kirk-session, and heritors of the landward parish.

And that there may be no unnecessary delays in planting of churches, the Assembly further ordain, that Presbyteries when applied unto, within the six months after the vacancy for supplying thereof, by consent of the patron and others concerned, shall forthwith proceed to the planting of the vacant charge, in the manner and way above specified, without putting off till the six months be elapsed: And the Assembly recommends to all ministers, preachers, and members of this Church, to take care that they do not encourage or go into any method for planting vacant churches, contrary to or inconsistent with this rule.

The General Assembly do transmit this overture to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may return their opinion to the next Assembly, whether it shall be turned into a standing act; and the General Assembly do enjoin Presbyteries, in the meantime, to observe it until the next Assembly. And in case Presbyteries shall neglect to send up their opinion upon it, the General Assembly do appoint the overture to be laid before the next General Assembly to be passed into a standing act or not, as they see cause.

V.

Sess. 10, May 15, 1731, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, so as to determine therein themselves, for want of time, do therefore nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Smith, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this Assembly, and any thirty-one of them are declared to be a quorum, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers; with power to them to cognosce, and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them, by any act or order of this Assembly; which commissioners are hereby ordained to convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March next, and oftener, when and where they shall think convenient; with power to them to choose their own moderator. And this General Assembly do hereby renew the powers granted by the late General Assembly to their commissioners, by their act, dated the 23d day of May last, entitled, "Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs re-

ferred to them," and the instructions therein mentioned in all points; and ordain this Commission to proceed according thereto; and all affairs referred to the late Commission, not yet finally determined, are hereby remitted to the Commission of this Assembly, to be proceeded in until the same be finished; and this Commission is to report to the next General Assembly.

 VI

Sess. 10, May 15, 1731, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the great extent of many parishes in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and that by reason thereof ignorance, Popery, superstition, and vice, do abound in many places therein, and that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to bestow yearly the sum of L.1000 sterling, to encourage itinerant preachers and catechists to go to the foresaid Highlands and Islands, for assisting ministers established there in giving the people in those parts such instruction as is necessary to enlighten and arm them against the practices of many Popish priests that resort thither; and finding that divers preceding General Assemblies have appointed some ministers and elders for managing of the royal bounty for the end foresaid; and it being necessary the like be now done, the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Smith, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, Messrs William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty according to his Majesty's grant; and the General Assembly do hereby renew the powers contained in the seventh Act of the General Assembly, 1729, and the several acts therein mentioned, also the regulations contained in the fourth and sixth Acts of the Assembly, 1730, which are held as here repeated; and any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four are always to be ministers, and the foresaid committee are appointed to have their meetings in Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday following; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and with power to nominate ministers, preachers, and catechists, to go in mission to the foresaid places; and the General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr William Grant, Advocate, Procurator for the Church of Scotland, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, he giving bond and caution to hold account for what thereof he receives, and to pay out the same as he shall be ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules and directions; and the foresaid committee are hereby empowered to account with the heirs and representatives of the deceased Mr John Dundas of Philipston, late cashier of the foresaid royal bounty, and, upon payment of the balance that was in his hands, to discharge the same, and to put the foresaid balance in the hands of the said Mr William Grant, who is to lay it out as he shall be directed by the said committee. And, lastly, the foresaid committee are enjoined to take special care to observe the whole directions contained in the foresaid seventh Act of the said General Assembly, 1729; and the said committee are likewise to have a particular regard to the regulations agreed upon by the foresaid committee upon the 30th September last, and to take care that Presbyteries and others concerned observe the same.

VII.

Sess. 12, May 17, 1731, post meridiem.—Act and Recommendation in favour of the Infirmary or Hospital for Diseased Poor at Edinburgh.

The General Assembly, considering that by an Act of the Assembly, 1728, for very weighty causes therein set forth, a collection in all the parish churches was recommended to be made, for encouraging the laudable design of erecting in Edinburgh an infirmary or hospital for diseased poor; and it being represented to this Assembly that the foresaid hospital was actually erected some years ago, and that, by the blessing of God upon that pious undertaking, many diseased poor have been successfully cured of very dangerous distempers, and dismissed in good health, able to work for their livelihood, and that the said hospital is open to all objects throughout the nation, who are readily received upon application, and not only carefully attended by able physicians, chirurgeons, and nurses, and furnished with proper medicines, but also well attended and accommodated with convenient lodging in the house, and furnished with the diet fit for them, by the prescription of physicians; all which requires a considerable expense for servants' wages, and otherwise; and the Assembly being informed that the far greater part of parishes have yet sent in no collections, do, therefore, in the most earnest manner, recommend to all those parishes who have not made or sent in their collections, that with all the expedition they can they would proceed to make the same; and for that end, that ministers cause intimate the Act and recommendation of the Assembly, 1728, and also this present act, upon a Lord's Day immediately preceding the day in which the collection is to be made; and recommends it to ministers to represent to the people the great usefulness of this charity, and exhort them to contribute to the carrying on a work so beneficial to their distressed countrymen, and which the more the fund is enlarged will be of more extensive usefulness; all that hath been hitherto contributed, though many charitable persons have given liberal donations, being far from sufficient to answer the demands of help that are made for the many objects that offer. And the Assembly appoints the money collected to be sent to David Spence, Secretary to the Bank of Scotland, according to the directions given in the foresaid Act of Assembly, 1728.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 18, 1731.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next to come, being the 4th day of that month, in the year 1732, in this the ordinary place of their meeting.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 4, 1732.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 4, 1732.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian
produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 4, 1732.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 6, 1732.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 8, May 12, 1732.—Act and Recommendation of the General Assembly for en-
couraging a Collection towards the further Propagating of Christian Knowledge.*

The General Assembly having, at a former diet, presented to them a petition for the general meeting of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, showing, "That the said Society, erected by royal authority, having had the countenance of the General Assembly and other judicatories of this Church, and assistance of many ministers and other charitable persons therein, and in England, have been enabled, by the blessing of God, to carry on the design of their erection with good success, so that they have at present the number of 105 schools, at which there are about 4146 scholars, besides that there are great numbers who have been taught thereat formerly; and by reports of ministers and other correspondents who have visited these schools, it appears that many are not only taught reading English, and the principles of our holy religion, but writing and arithmetic, also the common tunes sung in churches, and the English language is spreading in the Highlands and Islands; and care is taken that the rising generation be brought up in the abhorrence of vice, and in love with piety and virtue. In parishes where formerly few or none of the common people could read, but were living in gross ignorance and superstition, there are now about 300 who can read, in others 400, yea, 500, and upwards, reading the Holy Scriptures and other pious books, and the young ones reading to their aged parents and others in the family; and in the parishes where it does not appear that ever the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered, ministers have had the freedom to celebrate the same with comfort.

"That Dr Daniel Williams, a pious Presbyterian minister in England, lately deceased, did give a large sum to this Society towards promoting Christian knowledge in Scotland, and also did mortify some lands, to the value of £.68 sterling yearly rent, to be paid in to the said Society, at the end of one year after they should have three missionary qualified ministers to abide in infidel foreign countries; and it being thought a pity that such a charitable fund should not be employed accordingly, but lost to the Society, they have agreed to essay this good work, and have settled a correspondence with his excellency the Governor of New England in America, and divers mi

ministers and gentlemen there, in order to the finding out and employing fit persons for instructing the native Indians, and a very agreeable return is already come from the foresaid correspondents, so that in a little time it is expected, that persons shall be set to work for the end foresaid; and from what appears from a former attempt of this nature, in a book lately printed, entitled, ‘*Magnalia Christi Americana*,’ there is ground to hope for success in this design. But the Society having so much to do at home, by the many schools they maintain, which is not by far the half of what is necessary for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, they are not in case as yet to do anything considerable for foreign parts, seeing they cannot break their stock, but only dispose of the revenue; but this being a glorious design, and hoping that many good Christians will be ready to concur therein, and perhaps some who have already contributed for schools in the Highlands and Islands will, when they hear of the good effects thereof, again bestow something of what God has given them for advancing the kingdom of Christ in foreign infidel parts, and others may, perhaps, give for this, who do not incline to give for the other; this has encouraged the Society to lay the case before the venerable Assembly.

“That though many Presbyteries, ministers, and others, have done worthily towards the furtherance of the design of this Society in Scotland, yet others have very much neglected the same; and it has been designed to have given in a list of deficient Presbyteries and parishes to the General Assembly, but it has been delayed, waiting their sending in their contributions, both for stock and buying books, and maintaining poor scholars.” And craving to the effect after mentioned.

The General Assembly, again having this day heard the said petition, with the report of their committee thereupon, and considered the same, did unanimously, and hereby do, recommend it to Presbyteries and ministers to deal with charitable Christians in their bounds, to contribute for promoting of Christian knowledge, both at home and abroad; and do ordain, that intimation of these presents be made from the pulpits of all the churches in Scotland, upon or before the first Lord’s Day of August next, that so piously inclined persons may know that such a noble design is carrying on; that they who have a mind to concur therein may give in their contributions to their ministers, or transmit the same to Mr Joseph Cave, merchant in Edinburgh, treasurer to the foresaid Society, with their first conveniency, and a signification how they incline to have their donations bestowed, whether towards maintaining schools in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, or for buying books thereto, or for maintaining poor boys at these schools, or for helping to subsist missionary ministers or schoolmasters in foreign parts of the world; and whether they desire their donations to be added to the stock, and laid out on interest, or bestowed presently on the most pressing exigencies of the Society. And the General Assembly appoints that Presbyteries inquire particularly into ministers’ diligence in this matter, and deal with deficients yet to pay in, and send their written report to the foresaid Society betwixt and the first day of November next.

V.

Sess. 9, May 13, 1732.—Act anent Appeals, and for explaining the Tenth Paragraph of the Fifth Chapter of the Form of Process, agreed to by the Assembly, 1707, anent Appeals.

The General Assembly appoints that, in all time coming, an appeal shall stop the finishing of the settlement of a parish by an inferior judicature, until it is either fallen from or discussed. Nevertheless, a Presbytery may proceed to take trials, serve the edict, and to all the other previous steps towards the settlement—only the ordination or admission shall stop until the appeal be discussed,

VI.

Sess. 11, May 15, 1732.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers and weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of the College of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c. ; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said commissioners—whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers—to meet and convene within the Assembly-House at Edinburgh, the first free day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, and afterwards the second Wednesdays of August, November, and March, next to come, and oftener, when and where they shall think fit and convenient; with power to the said commissioners to choose their own moderator. And likewise, the General Assembly fully empowers and authorises their said commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine, as they shall see cause, in every matter referred, or that shall be referred, to them by any act or order of this Assembly, and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by this Assembly, and to advert to the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; providing always, that this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to or influence upon the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed, that no private processes be determined, except at the four stated diets, and what shall be determined at one diet of the said Commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force, till disapproved by the General Assembly. And the General Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly, *anno* 1717, to their Commission, and appoints the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the commissioners above named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially here inserted; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets, tending towards the promoting of opinions, of whatever kind, inconsistent with our Confession of Faith, and the recommenders of such books or pamphlets, or the errors therein contained, whether by word, writing, or print, be called before the said Commission, to answer for the same. And further, the said Commission is hereby empowered to receive any references and appeals that shall be made to them from Synods in matters of doctrine, and ripen such affairs for the General Assembly; likewise, to take care that the impressions of the Holy Scriptures, the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, and such books as are authorised by this Church, relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, be correct, and to give directions about printing the same; they are also appointed, at their first meeting, to take under consideration all representations of the growth of Popery within the bounds of this National Church, and of meeting-houses not authorised by law, which have been brought up to this and former Assemblies, or Commissions thereof, or may be further offered to this Commission, and to apply to the government for a proper remedy and speedy redress. And the said commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned, and in all their actings they are to proceed according to the acts and constitutions of this Church, and to do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to and censurable by the next General Assembly, as they shall see cause. And this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed, and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission, and absentees therefrom ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1706. And, for the better securing of a quorum and attendance of members on the Commission,

the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and any other Presbyteries within twelve miles thereof, to meet any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of those Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required all of them to give punctual attendance on the diets thereof; and Presbyteries at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same.

VII.

Sess. 11, May 15, 1732.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Managing the King's Bounty, and for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The General Assembly, finding that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to renew his grant of L.1000 sterling, for encouraging itinerant preachers and catechists, for assisting ministers established in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, in giving the people in those parts such instruction as is necessary to enlighten and arm them against the practices of Popish priests that resort thither; and finding that divers preceding General Assemblies have appointed some ministers and elders for managing of the royal bounty given for the end foresaid, who did yearly account for their management; and it being necessary that some be of new nominated for that effect, the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of the University of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for disposing upon the foresaid royal bounty, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant above mentioned. And the General Assembly do hereby renew the powers contained in the 6th Act of the late General Assembly, anno 1731, and the 7th Act of the General Assembly, 1729, and the several Acts therein mentioned; also the regulations contained in the 4th and 6th Acts of the General Assembly, anno 1730, which are held as here repeated; and any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four are always to be ministers; and the foresaid committee are appointed to have their meetings in Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be on Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday next thereafter; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful. And the said committee are hereby empowered to nominate ministers, preachers, and catechists, in the terms before mentioned, to go in mission to the foresaid places, and assign them their several posts, and determine the time of their continuance therein, and to inquire anent their diligence, faithfulness, and carriage, and what their salaries shall be, and give orders about the payment thereof, as the said committee shall see cause. And the General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr William Grant, Procurator for the Church of Scotland, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules and directions; and the said committee are likewise to have a particular regard to the regulations agreed upon by the foresaid committee, upon the 30th of September 1730, and to take care that Presbyteries and others concerned observe the same.

VIII.

Sess. 11, May 15, 1732.—Act anent the Method of Planting Vacant Churches.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration how necessary it is that (until it shall please God, in his Providence, to relieve this Church from the grie-

vances arising from the act restoring patronages) there should be an established rule for the planting of vacant parishes, when the right of doing so falls into the hands of Presbyteries, either *tanquam jure devoluto*, or by the consent of such as have interest; and that there may be an uniform method followed by Presbyteries in this matter, and so the unhappy debates and divisions which have often fallen out upon such occasions may be prevented in time coming; and also, that it may be evident that this Church desires to have all the parishes in it settled in such a manner as may give reasonable satisfaction to all concerned; therefore, enacts and ordains, that all Presbyteries, when the planting of any parish shall fall into their hands, *tanquam jure devoluto*, take care to have the same supplied by a well qualified Gospel minister, to labour among the people for their spiritual edification. And, in order thereunto, when application shall be made unto them by any two or more of the heritors and elders, jointly or separately, for the moderation of a call, the Presbytery shall appoint intimation to be made from the pulpit of the vacant parish, ten free days before the meeting for that effect, that a call is to be moderated, and shall appoint one or more of their number, who, after sermon, shall meet with the heritors and elders of the vacant parish, in presence of the congregation, upon the day fixed for the moderation, to moderate in a call to one to be minister of the parish, who is to be elected and called by the heritors and elders in a conjunct meeting. That after the finishing of the election, the person so elected to be minister shall be proposed to the congregation, to be either approven or disapproven of by them. That the disapprovers shall offer their reasons to the Presbytery of the bounds, at whose judgment, and by whose determination, the calling and entry of the minister shall be ordered and concluded, according to the rules of this Church. That in case of vacancies in royal burghs, the election or call shall be by the magistrates, town-council, and elders, in a joint meeting, where there is no landward parish; and by the magistrates, town-council, heritors, and elders, in a joint meeting, where part of the parish is to landward. And the General Assembly declares, that all heritors, being Protestants, who shall be willing to subscribe the call by themselves, or their lawful proxies, or who shall, by a writing under their hand, invite the person called to be minister of the parish, and to exercise the duties of his ministerial function, and promise to encourage him in it, shall be admitted to vote in calls or elections of ministers to vacant parishes. And that no vote, either of heritors or elders, shall be sustained, except such as shall have either signed the call, or for whom there shall be produced a writing in the manner and to the purpose above mentioned, in presence of the minister moderating in the call. And in case of difference amongst the heritors and elders about the person to be elected, the minister moderating is appointed to reduce what shall be alleged on both sides into a minute, containing the true matters of fact impartially, and to lay the same before the Presbytery for their decision. And in case no application shall be made to the Presbytery in manner foresaid, by the heritors or elders, for moderating a call within six months after the *jus devolutum* begins to take place, the General Assembly recommends it to Presbyteries to plant vacant churches in such manner as shall contribute most to the advancement of religion, and to the peace and comfort of parishes.

And that there may be no unnecessary delays in planting of churches, the Assembly further ordains, that in case within the six months next after the vacancy, such as have interest shall show their disposition to comply with this ecclesiastical rule, by applying to the Presbytery to have the parish planted in the way and manner above specified, the Presbytery shall proceed to the settlement thereof in the foresaid way and manner, without putting it off till the said six months are expired. And the General Assembly recommends it to all ministers, preachers, and members of this Church, to take care that they do not encourage nor go into any method for planting vacant churches contrary to or inconsistent with this act.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 16, 1732.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next, in the year 1733, in this place.

This General Assembly was concluded with prayer, singing of a part of the 48th Psalm, from the 10th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 3, 1733.

I.

Sess. 1, May 3, 1733.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 3, 1733.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 5, 1733.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 10, May 14, 1733, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, finding that divers late General Assemblies had granted commissions to some ministers and ruling elders for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and management of his Majesty's royal bounty for that end; and the Assembly finding that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to renew his grant of L.1000 sterling for the end foresaid, therefore, they do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr John Gowdie, one of the ministers of

Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for managing the royal bounty for the end foresaid, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant above mentioned; and do hereby renew the powers granted to the said committee by the 7th Act of the General Assembly, *anno* 1732, and the whole Acts therein mentioned, in all points. Any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four are always to be ministers; and the foresaid committee are appointed to have their meetings in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock afternoon, and also the first lawful day after adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be on Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday next thereafter; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and to keep a correspondence with the Commission of this Assembly, and Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee. And the General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint Mr William Grant, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules.

V.

Sess. 10, May 14, 1733, ante meridiem.—Act concerning some of the Ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and for preserving the Subordination of the Judicatories of the Church, and good Order therein.

The General Assembly, having fully and maturely considered the disobedience of Mr James Wardlaw and Mr Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, Mr John Gib at Cleish, Mr Daniel Hunter at Carnock, Mr John Geddes at Culross, and Mr Thomas Mair at Orwell, ministers of the Gospel, members of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, to the Act of the General Assembly, dated the 12th day of May 1732, and several Acts of the Commission of the said Assembly, appointing the said Presbytery to enrol Mr Robert Stark, minister of Kinross, as a member thereof; and the behaviour and conduct of the said ministers before this Assembly, during their procedure on the said affair; do judge it highly contrary to, and utterly inconsistent with, the subordination of judicatories, happily established among us, and the duty they owe to the said judicatories, which they had engaged to perform at their ordination, and, therefore, deserving the highest censures: Yet the Assembly, inclining to show all tenderness towards the said brethren, they appoint them to be sharply rebuked in their presence, and appoint and command them to own Mr Robert Stark as minister of the Gospel at Kinross, to encourage and strengthen his hands in the Lord's work in the said parish, and to discourage all separation from, and non-subjection to, his ministry. And the Assembly do hereby strictly inhibit and discharge the said brethren from admitting any of the parish of Kinross to sealing ordinances, without the consent of Mr Robert Stark, according to the 12th paragraph of the Act of Assembly, February 7, 1645. And, further, the Assembly do hereby strictly discharge the offering, admitting, or receiving any protest or dissent, by any member of the said Presbytery, or other person whatsoever, against the said Mr Stark's sitting and acting in the Presbytery of Dunfermline, as a member thereof, and minister of Kinross. And they empower the Commission to be appointed by them to summon before them any person or persons who shall offer any such protest or dissent, and also the said Presbytery, if they shall receive or admit the same, and censure the said persons or Presbytery as they shall see cause. And, in regard several within the bounds of the said Presbytery do withdraw from the ministry of their respective pastors, therefore, the Assembly does hereby enjoin the observation of the Act of Assembly, dated the 24th day of August 1647, "Against such as withdraw themselves from the Public Worship in their own Congregation;" and ordains the foresaid paragraph of the Act 1645, and the said Act 1647, to be publicly intimated by the ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, from their respective pulpits, on any Lord's Day of June next, with

suitable exhortations. And the Assembly appoints the said ministers to appear before the Commission to meet in August next, and to report their obedience to this whole Act and appointment; and appoints and requires the said Commission, in case of disobedience or non-compearance, to proceed to the highest censures, if they see occasion for it, then, or any subsequent diet or meeting of the Commission.

And because the brethren within the bounds of the Presbytery of Dunfermline who have done their duty, in obeying the appointment of the Assembly, may be in hazard of being discouraged in the exercise of their ministry, by persons of a schismatical and divisive temper, notwithstanding of what is contained in this present Act; therefore, the Assembly, considering that these brethren deserve all encouragement, do enjoin their Commission to receive any complaint that may be offered by any of these brethren, and to judge and censure, as they shall see cause, any minister or ministers, or others, who shall give them disturbance or discouragement in their work. And appoints this Act to be read in the first meeting of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and recorded in their register; and that this Act be printed and published among the other Acts of the Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 14, 1733, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do nominate, commission, and appoint, their reverend brethren, Mr John Gowdie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

VII.

Sess. 12, May 15, 1733, ante meridiem.—Act and Sentence concerning Mr Ebenezer Erskine, and some other Ministers adhering to his Protest, for their Contempt of the Authority of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, having at a former diet considered an appeal, entered by Mr Ebenezer Erskine, minister at Stirling, from a sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, wherein the said Synod had found ground to censure him, and appointed him to be rebuked on account of several indecent expressions uttered by him in a sermon preached before the said Synod in October last, tending to disquiet the peace of this Church, and impugning several Acts of Assembly and proceedings of the Church judicatories; and had appointed him to be admonished to behave orderly for the future—the Assembly found these expressions vented by Mr Erskine, and contained in the minutes of the foresaid Synod's proceedings, with the answers thereto, made by him, to be offensive, and to tend to disturb the peace and good order of this Church: Therefore, they approved the proceedings of the Synod, and appointed him to be rebuked and admonished by the Moderator at their own bar, in order to terminate the process, which was done accordingly. But the foresaid Mr Ebenezer Erskine, together with Mr William Wilson, minister at Perth, Mr Alexander Moncrieff, minister at Abernethy, and Mr James Fisher, minister at Kinclaven, gave in a paper at the Assembly's bar, subscribed by them, craving and protesting that the same might be read and recorded in the minutes of the Assembly; but the Assembly having represented to them the irregularity and danger of such a practice, and desired them to withdraw their paper and protest, and they refusing to do it, and withdrawing, they were ordered to be cited to the next diet; and a committee was appointed to consider the paper and their conduct in this affair, and to bring in, by an overture, what might be fit for the Assembly to do upon the whole affair. This day

the said four brethren having compeared, the Assembly, to show all tenderness towards them, appointed a committee to confer with them, and endeavour to persuade them to withdraw their paper and protest, and submit themselves to the Assembly; who having retired, did return, and showed that these four brethren continued fully resolved to adhere to their said paper and protest. Then the Committee reported that they had considered the paper given in by the foresaid brethren the last night, and the whole of their conduct. The said paper being produced, was read, the tenor whereof follows:—

**PROTEST BY MR EBENEZER ERSKINE AND OTHERS, GIVEN IN TO THE
ASSEMBLY, 1733.**

Although I have a very great and dutiful regard to the judicatories of this Church, to whom I own my subjection in the Lord, yet, in respect the Assembly have found me censurable, and have tendered a rebuke and admonition to me, for things I conceive agreeable unto and founded upon the Word of God, and our approved standards; I find myself obliged to protest against the foresaid censure, as importing that I have, in my doctrine, at the opening of the Synod of Perth, October last, departed from the Word of God, and the foresaid standards; and that I shall be at liberty to preach the same truths of God, and to testify against the same or like defections of this Church, upon all proper occasions. And I do hereby adhere unto the testimonies I have formerly emitted against the Act of Assembly, 1732, whether in the protest entered against it in open Assembly, or yet in my Synodical sermon, craving this my protest and declaration be inserted in the Records of Assembly, and that I be allowed extracts thereof.

EBENEZER ERSKINE.

Edinburgh, May 14, 1733.

We, undersubscribing ministers, dissenters from the sentence of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, do hereby adhere to the above protestation and declaration, containing a testimony against the Act of Assembly, 1732; and asserting our privilege and duty to testify publicly against the same or like defections, upon all proper occasions.

WILLIAM WILSON.

ALEX. MONCRIEFF.

I, Mr James Fisher, minister at Kinclaven, appellant against the sentence of the Synod of Perth, in this question, although the committee of bills did not think fit to transmit my reasons of appeal, find myself obliged to adhere unto the foresaid protestation and declaration.

JA. FISHER.

The Committee offered their overture upon the whole affair; which being read and considered, the Assembly, by a very great majority, enacted and appointed as follows:—

The General Assembly ordains that the four brethren aforesaid appear before the Commission in August next, and then show their sorrow for their conduct and misbehaviour, in offering to protest, and in giving in to this Assembly the paper by them subscribed; and that they then retract the same. And, in case they do not appear before the said Commission in August, and then show their sorrow, and retract, as said is, the Commission is hereby empowered and appointed to suspend the said brethren, or such of them as shall not obey, from the exercise of their ministry. And, further, in case the said brethren shall be suspended by the said Commission, and that they shall act contrary to the said sentence of suspension, the Commission is hereby empowered and appointed, at their meeting in November, or any subsequent meeting, to proceed to a higher censure against the said four brethren, or such of them as shall continue to offend by transgressing this act. And the General Assembly do appoint the several Presbyteries, of which the said brethren are members,

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to report to the Commission in August, and subsequent meetings of it, their conduct and behaviour with respect to this Act.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 15, post meridiem.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the first Thursday of May next, in the year 1734.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 2, 1734.

I.

Sess. 1, May 2, 1734.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 2, 1734.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 4, 1734.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 4, 1734.—Address to his Majesty on the Marriage of the Princess Royal.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the Ministers and Ruling Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, now convened in a National Assembly, beg leave, with the greatest sincerity, and with hearts full of joy, to take this first opportunity unanimously to congratulate your Majesty upon the happy marriage of the Princess Royal with his Serene Highness the Prince of Orange, and to assure you, that the satisfaction and pleasure we have upon this joyful occasion is not inferior to that of any of your most faithful and loyal subjects.

The goodness of God, which has directed your Majesty's wisdom to a choice that must both contribute to strengthen the Protestant interest in Europe, and to secure to that most excellent Princess, for whose honour and welfare we have the most tender concern, all the joys and comforts of conjugal life, is what we acknowledge with great thankfulness.

A fresh union of the royal family with the illustrious House of Nassau and Orange, in the person of a Prince who is the worthy heir of our great deliverer King William, to whom, under God, we owe the inestimable blessings of the glorious Revolution, whereby we are rescued from ecclesiastical and civil tyranny, and the establishment of the Protestant succession. The happiness we enjoy under your Majesty's auspicious reign, and the eminent virtues which adorn both their Highnesses, fit to make them shining examples in every rank and station of life, fill us with the greatest hopes that this happy marriage shall produce a series of blessings to this and after ages.

As this Church has, upon all occasions, given undoubted proofs of her great zeal and loyalty to your royal person and government, so we most cheerfully embrace this opportunity of praying Almighty God, that your Majesty may ever have the happiness to possess the hearts and affections of your people, and be a blessing to this and all the Protestant Churches; and, after a long and prosperous reign upon earth, you may exchange your temporal crown for a crown of glory that fadeth not away; and that your imperial crown may be handed down by a succession of Protestant princes, descended of your royal person, to latest posterity, are, and shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JA. GORDON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 7, May 9, 1734, ante meridiem.—Act declaring the seventh Act of the General Assembly, 1730, and eighth Act of Assembly, 1732, to be no longer binding Rules in this Church.

The General Assembly, considering that, whereas, by the penult Act, Sess. 23, Assembly, 1639, it is ordained, that no novation, which may disturb the peace of the Church, and make division, be suddenly proponed and enacted, but so as the motion be first communicated to the several Synods, Presbyteries, and kirks, that the matter may be approved by all at home, and commissioners may come well prepared, unanimously to conclude a solid deliberation upon those points in the General Assembly—

and by Act 9th, Assembly, 1697, it is appointed, enacted, and declared, that before any General Assembly of this Church shall pass any Acts which are to be binding rules and constitutions to the Church, the same Acts be first proposed as overtures to the Assembly, and being by them passed as such, be remitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their opinions and consent reported by their commissioners to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass the same into Acts, if the more general opinion of the Church, thus had, agree thereunto—and by Act 16th, Assembly, 1700, it is enacted and appointed, that when any thing of public concern and great weight is proposed to the General Assembly, to be passed as overtures or acts for a standing rule to the Church, after the first reading, it be delayed till the next day of the Assembly's sitting, and lie on the table, to be seen and considered by all the members; and likewise, when any thing is passed as overtures by the General Assembly, it is ordained, that all and every Presbytery read them publicly in their Presbyterial meeting—and by Act 18th, Assembly, 1705, it is appointed, that the agent for the Kirk in all time coming, after every Assembly, as soon as the acts thereof shall be printed, do transmit as many copies of the same to every Presbytery within the kingdom as will serve them and each parish within their bounds; and ordains, that both Presbyteries and Sessions, at their first meeting, after receiving of the said Acts, cause read the same, at least so many of them as are of public concern: And whereas the Act 7th, Assembly, 1730, entitled, "Act discharging the Recording of Reasons of Dissent," and Act 8th, Assembly, 1732, entitled, "Act anent the Method of Planting Vacant Churches," were not made according to the said former Acts, and are found hurtful to this Church; therefore the said Acts, 1730 and 1732, are hereby declared to be no longer binding rules in this Church; and the General Assembly recommends unto, and ordains the several judicatories of this Church, when the planting of vacant parishes falls into the hands of Presbyteries, to proceed therein according to the former rules and practice of this Church, that obtained before the making of the said Act, 1732.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 13, 1734.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Management of the King's Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, finding that divers late General Assemblies had granted commissions to some ministers and ruling elders for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and management of his Majesty's royal bounty for that end; and the Assembly finding, that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to renew his grant of £.1000 sterling, for the end foresaid this year; therefore, they do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr James Gordon, minister of the Gospel at Alford, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for managing the royal bounty for the end foresaid, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant above mentioned, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 14, 1734.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, finding there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Gordon, minister at Alford, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned, with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Act of

the immediately preceding years, the following being added, viz.) And the Assembly recommend to their Commission, at their first meeting, to discuss as many of the causes and questions relative to the settlement of vacant churches, which are or shall be referred to them by the Assembly, as they can overtake. And it is further provided, that when any Presbytery or Synod of this Church shall decline to comply with the sentences of the Commission, or to give the same a full execution; in that case, the Commission is hereby prohibited to execute the same, by appointing any such correspondent meetings as has been the practice of late, but shall allow the matter to lie over to the ensuing Assembly, to which such Presbyteries or Synods shall be answerable for such their conduct; and are hereby appointed to send up with their commissioners their reasons for the same.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 14, 1734.—Act concerning Mr Ebenezer Erskine, and other Ministers, his Adherents; and a Commission and Recommendation to the Synod of Perth and Stirling concerning them.

The General Assembly, considering the great hurt and prejudice that hath at all times arisen, and must yet arise, to the Church, from divisions and animosities creeping in, and taking root amongst the members thereof, notwithstanding their unanimity in sentiments upon material and fundamental points, which more nearly concern the promoting the interests of our blessed Lord and Saviour, the establishing the peace of the Church, and the advancement of practical godliness and true religion within the bounds of it; and, particularly, the lamentable consequences that have followed, and may yet follow, upon the separation of Messrs Ebenezer Erskine, William Wilson, Alexander Moncrieff, and James Fisher, from this Church, and judicatories thereof; and judging it their duty to endeavour, by all just and proper means, consistent with the honour and glory of God, and the maintaining the peace and authority of the Church, to restore harmony and brotherly love amongst all the members of it; therefore, the General Assembly, without further inquiring into the occasions or steps of proceeding, either on the part of the said brethren, or by the several judicatories, under whose consideration their case hath been, which may have produced that unhappy separation; but resolving that all questions upon those heads shall for hereafter be comfortably removed, have empowered, and hereby do empower, the Synod of Perth and Stirling, (before whom the exceptions to some part of the conduct of two of these four reverend brethren were first taken and tried,) upon such application made to them as they shall judge proper, to take the case of the said four brethren, as it now stands, under their consideration; with full power to the said Synod to proceed, and do therein as they shall find most justifiable and expedient for restoring the peace, and preserving the authority of this Church, and for promoting the edification of the members of the body of Christ; and, particularly, for uniting the said four brethren to the communion of this Church, and restoring them to their respective ministerial charges; but with this express direction, that the Synod shall not take upon them to judge of the legality or formality of the former proceedings of the Church judicatories in relation to this affair, or either to approve of or censure the same, but shall only, in virtue of the power and authority now delegated to them by the Assembly, proceed to take such steps for attaining the above ends for the future as they shall find just, and tending to edification: And the Assembly do hereby appoint the foresaid Synod to meet at Stirling upon the first Tuesday of July next, and from time to time, to name and appoint the place and diets of their after meetings on the said affair, as they shall see cause, until the matter shall be ripened for a final conclusion; and recommend to them to use their utmost endeavours to bring the matter, as soon as reasonably can be, to a final and happy issue.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 14, 1734.—Act concerning Ministerial Freedom in this Church.

The General Assembly, considering that some are under apprehensions, that, by the Act 7th of Assembly, 1733, concerning Mr Ebenezer Erskine and others, ministers of this Church, are laid under greater restraints, as to their ministerial freedom, than they were by the rules of this Church before the said Act was passed; therefore, they do, for the satisfaction of all, hereby declare that due and regular ministerial freedom is still left entire to all ministers, and that the same was not, nor shall be, held or understood to be anywise impaired or restrained by the late Assembly's decision in that particular process.

X.

Sess. ult., May 14, 1734.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1735.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing part of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 10, May 13, 1734.—Remit to Presbyteries concerning an Overture for Planting Vacant Churches.

Whereas the General Assembly have not now time to prepare and transmit a proper overture about the method of planting vacant churches, they recommend to and enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to take that matter into their consideration, and send up their members to the next General Assembly, instructed to propose such overtures as shall be prepared by the several Presbyteries concerning the same, to be considered by the next General Assembly.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 8, 1735.

I.

Sess. 1, May 8, 1735.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 8, 1735.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 10, 1735.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, May 16, 1735, ante meridiem.—Act reviving a former Recommendation for raising a Fund in each Synod for Maintaining the indigent Widows and Orphans of Ministers therein.

The General Assembly, having considered a scheme proposed for one general fund, to be managed by the General Assembly and their deputies, for maintaining all the widows and orphans of ministers within this National Church; as also, considering the scheme for Synodical funds for that effect, established by the 4th Act of the General Assembly, 1718, and judging that the said scheme for Synodical funds should be adhered to, and vigorously advanced, as being free of several great difficulties which would necessarily occur, both in raising and managing of the more general fund; and there being now no prospect of any success in the said scheme for a general fund; and whereas the project for the said general fund has, for some years past, very much interrupted the usual and ordinary contribution to the Synodical funds, which are, by the above Act of Assembly, 1718, required to be paid in by every minister within two years after his ordination or admission; and whereas the General Assembly, by their 10th Act, 1723, did, with consent of the contributors, enlarge the time formerly allowed for receiving new contributions for one year further, after Whitsunday 1723: The General Assembly, for the encouragement of all who are now desirous to contribute to the said fund, and have neglected it in the time appointed, do again grant a further enlargement of time for that effect, in the manner mentioned in the said 10th Act, Assembly, 1723; and accordingly recommend to ministers, within the several Synods and Presbyteries of this National Church, who have already contributed, that they would consent yet to admit such others to join with them as shall be willing to pay in the *decima* of their stipend to the said fund, betwixt and the term of Whitsunday 1736, with the annual rent thereof from the time it should first have been paid, conform to the foresaid Acts of Assembly made to that effect.

V.

Sess. 11, May 17, 1735.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, finding that there are divers weighty affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Alexander Anderson at St Andrews, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned, with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

VI.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1735.—Act and Recommendation concerning Students in Divinity.

The General Assembly recommends to all Presbyteries and ministers, when they come to know any error or vice in students of divinity, to give notice thereof to the Professor of Divinity under whom such students are taught, with an account how the same can be proved; and also recommends to them not to be rash or hasty in receiving reports to the prejudice of students, but to be careful to discourage groundless or malicious reports, and to protect the characters of such as do not appear to be

truly guilty. And the Assembly recommends it to Professors of Divinity to be diligent to inquire concerning the principles and practice of the youth under their care; and do renew their former recommendation to Professors of Divinity, contained in the 22d Act of the General Assembly, 1696, concerning the requiring testimonials from students whom they admit to exercises.

VII.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1735.—Act and Recommendation for Preserving Unity, and Preventing Error within this Church.

The General Assembly, considering, with great grief and regret, that deism, infidelity, Popery, and other gross errors, appear to be very prevalent and threatening in this island at this day; and that it is the duty of this Church to do all in her power, under Divine direction, for suppressing the same, and preventing the growth thereof; therefore, do earnestly recommend it to all ministers and others to have this matter at heart, and to do, under God, what they can for reaching the above ends; and in order thereto, and for their greater success herein, the Assembly earnestly recommend it to all ministers to maintain, as far as in them lies, brotherly love, peace, and unity amongst themselves and amongst the people under their charge; and in all their more public appearances to avoid uncharitable reflections, and all just grounds of irritation, tending to gender strife more than to promote edification.

VIII.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1735.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, finding that divers late General Assemblies had granted commissions to some ministers and ruling elders for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and management of his Majesty's royal bounty for that end; and finding that it has pleased our gracious Sovereign the King, out of his royal bounty, to renew his grant of L.1000 sterling, for the ends foresaid, this year; therefore, they do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Alexander Anderson at St Andrews, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for managing the royal bounty for the end foresaid, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1735.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 13th day of that month, in the year 1736.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing part of the 102d Psalm, from the 16th to the 18th verses, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

(Here follow four overtures—Anent Preaching—Anent Electing the Members of the Commission—Anent Acts Rescissory—and anent Lists of Probationers, to be annually presented to the Assembly; all of which were subsequently passed into Acts.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 13, 1736.

I.

Sess. 1, May 13, 1736.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 13, 1736.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 15, 1736.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

An Address to the King, on occasion of the Marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Edinburgh, May 15, 1736.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and most loyal subjects, the ministers and elders now met in a National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to offer to your Majesty our most sincere and unanimous congratulations, on the joyful occasion of the marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with the most serene Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha.

As the Church of Scotland has never failed to give convincing proofs of her loyalty to your Majesty, and of her steady attachment to the Protestant succession in your most august house, so it cannot but fill our hearts with joy and gratitude, when we reflect on the goodness of God, and your Majesty's fatherly care and wisdom, in thus providing for the lasting continuance of those invaluable blessings, secured to your people by the happy Revolution, and the settlement of the crown in the Protestant line.

We may expect, through the favour of God, from this auspicious alliance, that there will never be wanting princes, descendants of your Majesty, to support and assert the Protestant cause against Popery and arbitrary power, and to prove in their day what the magnanimous Elector of Saxony was in his, and your Majesty is in ours.

That a rich increase of comforts may flow upon your Majesty from this desirable event;—that all felicities may be poured out on their Royal Highnesses, and all your

royal family,—that your Majesty may long be preserved for a blessing to your people, blessed by them, and by all the Protestant Churches, till after all earthly joy and prosperity an eternal crown is conferred upon you; and that your Majesty's royal offspring may, to the end of time, fill the throne of these realms, is, and shall be, to the Almighty God, the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

LAUCHLAN M'INTOSH, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 5, May 18, 1736.—Act about Praying for the Royal Family.

The General Assembly, considering that it hath pleased God to bless this nation with an addition to the royal family, by the happy marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, do, therefore, enjoin all the ministers of this Church that they pray for her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, as well as for his Majesty King George, his royal consort the Queen, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the Royal Family; and that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales be named immediately after the Prince.

VI.

Sess. 7, May 20, 1736.

The General Assembly called for the report of the commissioners sent to London by the late Assembly to solicit and endeavour the redress of the grievance of patronage, and repeal of the Act, *anno decimo Annæ*, reimposing the same; and they produced their said report, with a copy of their address to his Majesty, the tenor of which address follows:—

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of Mr Alexander Anderson, Moderator of the last General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Mr James Gordon, Minister, and Colonel John Erskine of Carnock, Ruling Elder, commissioners appointed for that Church by the said Assembly, 1735.

May it please your Majesty,

The Church of Scotland, after great sufferings, was, at the late happy Revolution, restored, by the gracious Providence of Almighty God, to the possession of her former rights and privileges, so long contended for. His Majesty King William, of immortal memory, was then the glorious instrument of her deliverance, and, at the same time, of delivering Great Britain from Popery and slavery.

Amongst other great and worthy things done at that memorable juncture for the Church and people of Scotland, the power of patrons to present ministers to churches was abolished, by an Act of Parliament, in consequence of the Scots Claim of Right in the year 1690, for which the patrons obtained a recompence, and were also allowed to retain all the temporal benefits of patronage which they had formerly enjoyed.

By the same Act of Parliament another method of settling ministers in churches was established, in the exercise of which, that great point in the constitution of a church, viz.—the establishing of a just relation between pastor and people, was managed with much calmness, decency, and order; and the ministers thus establish-

ed, by the Divine blessing on their labour, were successful in the work of the Gospel, and religion and loyalty daily gained ground against profane principles and practices, and against disaffection to the civil government.

By the Act of Union, which passed by the Parliaments of both the British nations, and was made the fundamental constitution of the Kingdom of Great Britain, this freedom from the presentations of patrons, and the said method appointed for settling ministers in churches, did, with the other rights and privileges of the Church and people of Scotland, become an essential and fundamental part of the foresaid constitution of Great Britain.

Notwithstanding whereof, certain disaffected persons, at a time when the most valuable rights and interests of Britain were thought to be in imminent danger, had the address to procure an Act of Parliament, in the 10th year of the late Queen Anne, rescinding the foresaid Act of Parliament, 1690, that abolished the power of patrons to present ministers, and established the method of their settlement in churches; and that this was done in resentment against the Church of Scotland; and that further threatenings were by these persons breathed out against her, for her firm and loyal adherence to the Revolution interest, and especially to the succession of the crown in your Majesty's royal Protestant family, was not then denied, but boasted of; and is still remembered by all who observed those times.

The bad effects which have thence proceeded to the interests of religion and loyalty, none but an utter stranger to Scotland can be unacquainted with, nor with the grounds of fear that these evils may mightily increase till the cause be removed.

The Church of Scotland having long waited for redress of this heavy grievance, and not having as yet obtained the same, did humbly believe it her duty now again to lay the case, with the utmost dutifulness, before your Majesty, and to implore your most gracious and royal favour and justice, for relieving her from these hardships, which are the more affecting, because of the lamentable consequences thereof, that seem to multiply and increase. Discontents and division appear to be growing upon the one hand, as does disaffection upon the other, whereby irreligion and licentiousness are like to prevail.

As no Act of Parliament can be made or repealed but by your Majesty and Parliament, we, as commissioned by your Majesty's subjects of the Church of Scotland, (whose unshaken loyalty is testified even by her enemies,) do, with hearts zealous for your royal person, family, and government, and zealous also, we hope, for the glory of God and the success of the Gospel, presume most dutifully to approach your sacred person, as the nursing-father of the Church of Christ, and the guardian of your people's rights and privileges, and in name and behalf of our constituents, most humbly to implore,

That it may please your most excellent Majesty to favour the repeal of the foresaid Act of the 10th of Queen Anne, that so the Church and people of Scotland may be restored to their just right and privilege, as to the settling of ministers, secured to them by the above mentioned Act of Union; and that Almighty God may greatly bless and prosper your Majesty's royal person and family, and may remarkably countenance your government, and direct the same to his own glory. your Majesty's honour, and the welfare of your people, is the hearty prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful and most loyal subjects,

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.
JAMES GORDON.
JOHN ERSKINE.

VII.

Sess. 8, May 21, 1736.—Act concerning Preaching.

The General Assembly, being moved with zeal for the honour of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, especially at a time when the Christian revelation is openly impugned, and infidelity, deism, and other errors, do so much prevail; they do hereby recommend to all ministers and preachers seriously to consider and observe the Directory of this Church, concerning the preaching of the Word, which is approved by the General Assembly, 1645; and in particular, that they be careful to warn their hearers against any thing tending to Atheism, Deism, Arianism, Socinianism, [Arminianism, Bourignonism, Popery, superstition, Antinomianism, or any other errors; and that in their sermons they insist frequently upon the truth, necessity, and excellency of supernatural revelation, the supreme Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost as well as of the Father, together with the oneness of the Godhead; our sinful and lost estate by nature, the necessity of supernatural grace, and of faith in the righteousness of Christ, without which the best works cannot please God; and that they make it the great scope of their sermons to lead sinners from a covenant of works to a covenant of grace for life and salvation, and from sin and self to precious Christ. And the General Assembly recommends to all who preach the Gospel, when they handle the doctrines of God's redeeming love, and of his free grace in the justification and salvation of sinners, the blessings of the Redeemer's purchase, and privileges of the new and better covenant, to study to manage these subjects so as to lead their hearers unto an abhorrence of sin, the love of God and our neighbours, and the practice of universal holiness, seeing it is one great end of the Gospel to destroy the works of the devil, and to teach men to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Upon which account, it is incumbent on all who preach the Gospel to insist not only upon the necessity and excellency of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, but also upon the necessity of repentance for sin and reformation from it, and to press the practice of all moral duties, both with respect to the First and Second Tables of the Law, as indispensably necessary in obedience to God's command to testify our gratitude to him, to evidence the sincerity of our faith for the benefit of human society, the adorning the profession of religion, and making us meet for eternal life, seeing without holiness no man can see the Lord.

And the Assembly do seriously recommend to all ministers and preachers of the Gospel, that in pressing moral duties or obedience to the law, they show the nature and excellency of Gospel holiness, and enforce conformity to the moral law both in heart and life, not from principles of reason only, but also, and more especially, of revelation; and in order to attain thereto, it is necessary to show men the corruption and depravity of human nature by their fall in Adam, their natural impotence for and aversion to what is spiritually good, and to lead them to the true and only source of all grace and holiness, viz., union with Christ by the Holy Spirit's working faith in us, and renewing us more and more after the image of God; and to let their hearers know that they must first be grafted into Christ, as their root, before their fruit can be savoury unto God; that they must have a new principle to animate, and a new end to direct, them, before their actions become gracious and acceptable in the sight of God; and that they teach them the necessity of living by faith on the Son of God, in a constant looking to and dependence upon him as the great author of all gracious influences for the performance of every duty; and with all, that after their best performances and attainments, they must count them but loss and dung in point of justification before God, and to make it their great desire only to be found in Christ and his righteousness. And that ministers, in application of their sermons, do endeavour rightly to divide the word of truth, speaking distinctly to such various cases of the converted and unconverted, as arise natively from the subjects they have been handling; and that in the whole of their discourses they take care to suit themselves to the capacity of their hearers, as to matter, method, and expression, and to the prevailing sins of the time and place, with all prudent and zealous freedom and plainness; as also, that they make Gospel subjects their main theme and study, and press, with

all earnestness, the practice of moral duties in a Gospel manner: And that they forbear delivering anything in public that may tend more to amusement than edification, and beware of bringing into their sermons and public discourses matters of doubtful disputation, which tend to gender strife, rather than to promote the edification of Christians. And the Assembly exhort all to study to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

And, finally, the General Assembly recommends to all professors of divinity to use their best endeavours to have the students under their care well acquainted with the true method of preaching the Gospel, as above directed; and that Presbyteries, at their privy censures, inquire concerning the observation of this act.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 21, 1736.—Act anent Acts rescissory.

The General Assembly appoints and enacts that no Act rescissory of any standing Acts of the General Assembly be passed, until such Acts rescissory be first transmitted to the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their general opinion had for rescinding the same.

IX.

Sess. 8, May 21, 1736.—Act appointing Lists of Probationers to be annually presented to the General Assembly.

Whereas the commissioners to the General Assembly from the several Presbyteries within this Church are, by Act of Assembly, the 4th of January 1697, appointed to bring in lists of all the students of divinity who have passed their trials in order to the ministry, to be annually presented to the General Assembly, and recorded in their register; and whereas an overture was transmitted by the last General Assembly to the several Presbyteries for the more exact and effectual execution of the said Act; and whereas the commissioners to this Assembly, from several Presbyteries, have brought up instructions with them, wherein they agree to several of the regulations overtured for the better execution of the said Act; therefore, the General Assembly, in conformity to the said instructions reported to them by their committee, did, and do hereby, enact and appoint, *1mo*, That every probationer residing for the space of two months, betwixt this and the next Assembly, within the bounds of any Presbytery in this Church, and, in like manner, annually hereafter, shall, within the said time, present his licence to the said Presbytery; and that the said Presbytery shall cause to be marked in their register the said probationer's name, and likewise the Presbytery which licensed him. *2do*, That each Presbytery shall extract from their records annually, in March or April, a complete list of all the probationers then residing within their bounds, or that resided therein for the space before mentioned, immediately preceding either of the said months, mentioning in the said extracts, first, the names of the said probationers licensed by themselves, and then the names of the rest residing as above, together with the names of the Presbyteries that licensed them. *3tio*, That the said extracts be annually made out upon the same schedule which bears the Presbytery's commission to the members sent yearly to the General Assembly, and be signed in like manner by the moderator or clerk; and that the said extracts further mention the names of such students as are presently under trials before the said Presbyteries. *4to*, That the committee for examining Commissions to the members of Assembly shall annually make up a roll of the said probationers and students from the above mentioned extracts, according to the printed orders of the several Synods and Presbyteries: and that the said roll be presented to the General Assembly as a part of the said committee's annual report, and be recorded in the Assembly's register.

X.

Sess. 8, May 21, 1736.—Act and Recommendation for preserving Purity of Doctrine, and concerning Professor Campbell.

The General Assembly, having resumed the consideration of the affair relating to Mr Archibald Campbell, Professor of Divinity and Ecclesiastical History in the University of St Andrews, they caused to be again read the report of a committee, appointed by the Commission of the late Assembly for purity of doctrine, brought in upon Tuesday last; and which report had been since under consideration of the Committee for Overtures, joined with the other members of Assembly, who thought fit to attend their meetings, and by that committee amended and transmitted with their approbation to the Assembly, as follows:—

Report of the Committee for Purity of Doctrine.

Edinburgh, March 16, 1736.

The committee having, at several different meetings, considered the explications offered by Professor Campbell to the excerpts out of his writings, which had been excepted against by several in this Church; and having given him opportunity of declaring his mind in the fullest manner concerning them, in order to his giving full satisfaction to the objections proposed against him, (as their minutes do show,) did this day agree to make the following report:—

“That at the last meeting of the committee in January, the heads of his writings objected to were reduced to four.

“The first, Concerning the inability of men by their natural powers to find out the being of a God.

“The second, Concerning the law of nature’s being sufficient to guide rational minds to happiness.

“The third, Concerning self-love’s being the sole principle and motive of all virtuous and religious actions.

“The fourth, Concerning the sentiments the Apostles entertained of our blessed Saviour between the time of his death and the day of Pentecost.

“As to the first of these, the committee are of opinion, that though the same, as it is delivered by the Professor in his ‘*Oratio Academica*,’ is justly exceptionable, as tending to darken and render doubtful the truth of natural religion, and as appearing not to agree with our Confession of Faith, Chap. i. § 1, and Chap. xxi. § 1, and Larger Catechism, Quest. 2, nor with the doctrine of the apostle, Rom. i. 19, 20, 21; yet, having heard his explications and defences upon this head, and being persuaded that he had no intention, by teaching such doctrine, to enervate natural religion, or to give any handle or countenance to the enemies of it, but rather to show the necessity of a supernatural revelation; therefore, it is their judgment, that this should not be insisted upon further than to recommend to him, in the strongest terms, not to teach, by preaching or writing, this doctrine in any time coming.

“As to the second, viz. ‘That the laws of nature are in themselves a certain and sufficient rule to direct rational minds to happiness,’ which was apprehended by some to mean that a supernatural revelation of a Saviour, and faith in him, were not necessary to the happiness of fallen man; the committee having heard and considered his explications, as well those contained in his books, as those offered to the committee, it does not appear to them that this was his meaning, he having declared fully his persuasion of the necessity of a Saviour and faith in him, in order to our justification and salvation; although they cannot but wish he had better guarded his expressions upon this point in the preface to his discourse, ‘The Apostles no Enthusiasts.’

“As to the third, viz. ‘Self-love’s being the sole principle and motive of all virtuous and religious actions,’ which was apprehended to make the glory of God only a subordinate end, and a regard to it only a subordinate motive to the desire of our own happiness; the committee having read and considered his explications, and he having

also declared before them, that by his saying, that the chief or sole motive to virtuous and religious actions was the desire of our own happiness, he meant no more but that our delight in the honour and glory of God was that chief motive. They therefore judge, that though the expressions objected against are too high on the side of self-love, (particularly his asserting it to be the sole principle, standard, and motive of all religious actions,) and cannot approve of several other too high expressions he uses on this subject, and are of opinion it may be recommended to him to abstain from using such high expressions in time coming; yet they hope, from what is above mentioned, he has had no unsound meaning in them.

“As to the fourth head, in which it is taken notice of that Professor Campbell had affirmed, ‘That the disciples, during our Saviour’s life, only expected and hoped for a temporal deliverance and worldly kingdom; and that between his death and resurrection they concluded him to be a cheat and an impostor;’ and further, ‘That before his resurrection they had no notion of his divinity;’ the committee, although they are of opinion that Professor Campbell has no just ground for these sentiments, and that they are too disrespectful to Christ’s disciples, whom he honoured to be his apostles, and not consistent with several passages of the Gospel history upon that subject; yet, considering that they contain only his conjectural opinions concerning the inward sentiments of other men, and that our Confession and Catechisms teach nothing concerning these matters; as also, that his design was to give the greater strength to his arguments for vindicating the apostles from enthusiasm; are, therefore, of opinion, that it may be sufficient to recommend it to him, in time coming to abstain from speaking so incautiously upon this subject, and always to maintain the honour that is due to the memory of these eminent instruments of propagating the Christian faith through the world.”

The General Assembly having heard the report of the committee for purity of doctrine in relation to some writings of the Rev. Professor Campbell’s, and having at great length heard Mr Campbell himself upon it, as likewise several members of the committee, and many other members of this Assembly; and finding, that with respect to the *first* article of the report, the committee have declared, in the report itself, their being persuaded that Mr Campbell had no intention, by teaching the doctrine to which that article relates, to enervate natural religion, or to give any handle or countenance to the enemies of it, but rather to show the necessity of supernatural revelation. And with respect to the *second* article, that it does not appear to them that it was Mr Campbell’s meaning that a supernatural revelation of a Saviour and faith in him were superfluous, and not necessary to the happiness of fallen man. And with respect to the *third* article, concerning self-love, that he had declared he meant no more but that our delight in the honour and glory of God was the chief motive of all virtuous and religious actions. And with respect to the *fourth* article, that the sentiments to which it relates contain only Mr Campbell’s conjectural opinions concerning the inward sentiments of other men; and that our Confession and Catechisms teach nothing concerning these matters; as also, that his design was to give the greater strength to his argument for vindicating the apostles from enthusiasm; are of opinion, that the examining and stating the matter, as has been done by the committee for purity of doctrine, is sufficient for cautioning against the errors that some at first supposed Mr Campbell was guilty of, without giving any judgment or formal sentence upon the report; and therefore do resolve and appoint that the matter rest here. And do recommend to the said Professor Campbell, and to all ministers and teachers of divinity whatsoever within this National Church, to be cautious in their preaching and teaching, or writing, not to use doubtful expressions or propositions, which may be constructed in an erroneous sense, or lead the hearers or readers into error, however sound such words or propositions may be in themselves, or however well intended, but to hold fast the form of sound words.

XI.

Sess. 10, May 24, 1736.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing divers Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, finding that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh, minister of the gospel at Errol, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of the two immediately preceding years, with this addition:)—And the Assembly do further empower and direct the said Commission to make due application to the King and Parliament for redress of the grievance of patronage, in case a favourable opportunity for so doing shall occur during the subsistence of this Commission.

XII.

Sess. 10, May 24, 1736.—Act anent the manner of Electing the Members of the Commission, and concerning their Powers.

The General Assembly enacts, that for hereafter the committee for naming the members of the Commission be appointed to observe that due proportion betwixt ministers and elders, which obtains in the Assembly; and that care be taken by them that such of the nobility, Officers of State, Lords of Session, and Barons of Exchequer, who are to be superadded to the nomination, be in time coming named from the several Presbyteries or burghs which they are to represent in Assemblies; and that such others of them alienarily be superadded, who cannot be named as above; and that this may be evident to the members of the Assembly, the clerks be appointed to extend the rolls in the same order with the rolls of Assembly. *2do*, That when any Presbytery of this Church do not comply with the sentences of the Commissions relating to settlement of ministers, or shall not give the same a full execution, in that case the Commission be discharged to execute the same by appointing any correspondent meetings, but shall allow the matter to lie over till the ensuing Assembly. *Lastly*, And if any Presbytery refuse to obey the sentences of the said Commission, they are hereby required to give their reasons to the next General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable for their conduct therein; and they are hereby declared to be *ipso facto* sisted before the then next General Assembly.

XIII.

Sess. 18, May 24, 1736.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh, at Errol, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for management of the royal bounty given for that end, according to and in terms of his Majesty's grant; and the General Assembly do hereby renew the powers granted to the said committee by the 8th Act of the late General Assembly, and whole acts therein mentioned, and former commissions to the foresaid committees; any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four to be ministers; and the foresaid committee are appointed to have their meetings in the place and at the times mentioned in the foresaid 8th Act of the late General Assembly; and with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and to keep a correspondence with the Commission of this Assembly, and the Society for

Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and the Synods and Presbyteries concerned; and the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate, commission, and appoint, Mr William Grant, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same, as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules.

XIV.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1736.—Act against Intrusion of Ministers into vacant Congregations, and Recommendation to Presbyteries concerning Settlements.

The General Assembly, considering, from Act of Assembly, August 6, 1575, Second Book of Discipline, Chap. iii. § 4, 6, and 8, registered in the Assembly Books, and appointed to be subscribed by all ministers, and ratified by Acts of Parliament, and likewise the Act of Assembly, 1638, December 17 and 18, and Assembly, 1715, Act 9, that it is, and has been since the Reformation, the principle of this Church—that no minister shall be intruded into any parish contrary to the will of the congregation—do, therefore, seriously recommend to all judicatories of this Church to have a due regard to the said principle in planting vacant congregations; and that all Presbyteries be at pains to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and to avoid every thing that may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person that may be proposed to be their minister, in the present situation and circumstances of the Church, so as none be intruded into such parishes, as they regard the glory of God, and edification of the body of Christ.

XV.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1736.—Act against Perjuries in Custom-houses in Scotland.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the crying and multiplied abominations of perjury in many of the custom-houses of Scotland, especially in the French wine trade, to the great reproach of religion, the offence of all sober and good men, a wasting of conscience, and diffusing of most pernicious example; and that methods hitherto used for the suppressing of it, according to the Act of Assembly, 1719, have not had the effect that might have been justly expected from it, do not only renew their former testimony against it, in the name of this Church, but also do order and enjoin all the judicatories thereof, as there shall be occasion, to use their best endeavours to put a stop to it, by the conscientious and impartial use of all the means appointed by the Lord Jesus against scandals of such an heinous nature.

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1736.—Act for better Observation of former Acts of Assembly concerning Students in Divinity and Probationers.

The General Assembly enjoins Presbyteries to take care of the more punctual and exact execution of the Acts of the General Assembly concerning students in divinity, and the time of their studying, licensing probationers, and anent intrants to the holy ministry; and that none coming licensed from abroad be allowed to preach in Scotland till they be re-examined, and come under the engagements, and sign the formula, according to the 10th Act of the General Assembly, 1711; and refers it to the Commission to consider the state of the bursaries, and bring in their opinion concerning the same to the next General Assembly.

XVII.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1736.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1737.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing part of the 46th Psalm, from the beginning to the 6th verse, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

(There follows in the original edition an overture concerning the election of members to the General Assembly, which was passed into an Act in 1738.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 12, 1737.

I.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1737.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1737.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. After the repeated proofs which you have given of your zeal for the advancement of true religion and piety, the prosperity of the Church of which you are members, and the good of your country, we cannot but be persuaded you will continue to pursue those measures which may most effectually contribute to the attaining of those desirable ends in this your present meeting, which we therefore most willingly countenance with our royal approbation and authority; and as we are well satisfied of your loyalty and affection for us and our royal family, so you may be assured of our constant resolution to support and maintain the Church of Scotland established by law, in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges.

The dependence which we have on your coming together with these good dispositions and intentions, leaves us no room to doubt of your employing your best endeavours to bring about the great and good purposes for which you are now assembled, by conducting all in your power to the peace and welfare of the Church, the increase of piety and virtue, the preventing of the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of profaneness and immorality, wherein you may rely upon our countenance and encouragement. And as you must be sensible the success of your councils and deliberations will, under God, chiefly depend upon the wisdom, moderation, and charity, with which they are conducted, we earnestly recommend to you to avoid all disputes and contentions among yourselves, and to proceed upon the business proper

for your consideration, with that unanimity and brotherly love, as may justly be expected from so venerable a body, and which cannot fail to recommend you to our further favours.

The experience you have had of the capacity and abilities of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, William Marquis of Lothian, will, we doubt not, render the choice very agreeable to you which we have made of him to represent our royal person in your Assembly, being induced thereto by the knowledge we have of his zeal and loyalty for our service, of his affection and concern for the Church of Scotland, and of his qualifications for the discharge of so great a trust, wherein we hope the prudence with which you will dispatch the business before you will be of great assistance to him. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 23d day of April 1737, in the tenth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

Directed thus.—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 14, 1737.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The great honour done us by your Majesty's most gracious letter, and your royal goodness in condescending to take notice of the zeal of former Assemblies for the advancement of true religion and piety, the prosperity of this Church, and the good of our country, is most encouraging to us, and cannot but animate us warmly to pursue those measures which may most effectually contribute to the attaining the desirable ends of our meeting, which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to countenance with your royal approbation and authority.

It gives us the most sensible joy that your Majesty has been pleased to express your satisfaction with our loyalty and affection for your royal person and family, which we may, with great confidence, assure your Majesty, possesses the hearts of all the members of this Church; and we entirely depend upon the royal assurances you are pleased to give us of your constant resolution to support and maintain the Church of Scotland, established by law, in the full enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges. And we humbly hope, by your royal goodness, to obtain in due time redress of the grievance which has been represented to your Majesty by former Assemblies.

The confidence your Majesty has expressed of our coming together with these good dispositions and intentions, cannot but oblige us to employ our best endeavours to bring about the great and good purposes for which we are now assembled, by conducting all in our power to the peace and welfare of this Church, the increase of piety and virtue, the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of profaneness and immorality; and for our happy success therein, next to the Divine assistance, we rely upon your Majesty's countenance and encouragement. And as the success of our councils and deliberations must, under God, also greatly depend upon the wisdom, moderation, and charity, whereby they are conducted, so we are obliged to own that we should not act agreeably to the spirit of our holy religion, and the character we bear, if we paid not the highest regard to your Majesty's earnest and pious recommendations, to avoid all disputes and contentions among ourselves, and to proceed upon the business proper for our consideration, with that unanimity and brotherly love which may so justly be expected from us, and which also we are so graciously assured cannot fail to recommend us further to your royal favour.

The experience we have had of the capacities and abilities of the most Honourable the Marquis of Lothian, of his zeal and loyalty for your Majesty's service, of his affection and concern for the Church of Scotland, and of his qualifications for the discharge of so great a trust, renders your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly most acceptable to us; and we hope we shall conduct ourselves in the dispatch of the business before us in such a manner as may render the duties of his high station easy to him.

Your Majesty's High Commissioner has delivered to us your royal warrant for the renewal of your charitable donation towards the reformation of the Highlands and Islands for the twelfth year, which we most thankfully receive and acknowledge, as a fresh instance of your Majesty's tender concern for the spiritual as well as temporal interest of your subjects in these more remote and less civilized parts of your British dominions; and as this royal bounty has produced very good effects among them, and has served as an useful mean to counteract the Popish emissaries trafficking in these parts, it shall be our care to employ the same in exact conformity to your royal intentions, that the fruits of it may more and more appear to your Majesty's satisfaction.

That your Majesty's precious life, which is so great a blessing to all your people, and the whole Protestant interest, may be long preserved; that the best of Heaven's blessings may be plentifully poured out upon your royal person, and her Majesty the Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the rest of your royal family; and that, after the crown has long flourished upon your head, you may at length, through Jesus Christ, inherit immortal glory, are, and shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by
NIEL CAMPBELL, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 10, May 23, 1737.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Niel Campbell, Principal of the College of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of the year preceding.)

V.

Sess. ult., May 24, 1737.—Act relating to the Tenth Act of the General Assembly, anno 1736.

The General Assembly, considering that the instructions of some of the Presbyteries presented to this Assembly do represent that several have taken offence at the Act of the late Assembly, in the process against Mr Archibald Campbell, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of St Andrews, as if that Assembly had adopted some of his expressions, which were reckoned offensive, on the head of self-love; therefore, for satisfaction to all concerned, this Assembly does declare, that as the last Assembly, in their Act, say, That they gave no judgment or formal sentence upon the report of the committee, and therefore could not be constructed to adopt any of his expressions, so this Assembly do stedfastly adhere to the doctrine of our

Church on that head, expressed in our Standards, particularly in the answers to that question in our Shorter and Larger Catechism, "What is the chief end of man?"

VI.

Sess. ult., May 24, 1737.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Niel Campbell, Principal of the College of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing of Popery, superstition, and profanity, and for management of the royal bounty given for that end, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant to this Assembly, and the 13th Act of the late General Assembly, and whole Acts therein mentioned, and in former commissions to the said committee; any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof four to be ministers; and the said committee to have their meetings in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock afternoon; and also the first lawful day after adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be on Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on Monday next thereafter, with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and to keep a correspondence with the Commission of this Assembly, and Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee. And the General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint Mr William Grant, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 24, 1737.—Act superseding the Obligations upon Synods and Presbyteries to maintain Bursars.

The General Assembly, considering that through the multitude of probationers in this Church the reasons of Synods and Presbyteries maintaining bursaries do now cease, the Assembly does supersede the obligation upon Synods and Presbyteries to maintain, as bursars, students in divinity, until the Assembly see fit to revive the same, and leaves it to Synods and Presbyteries, meantime, to apply these funds to other charitable and pious uses as they shall see convenient; but appoints that such as are preferred to bursaries in Synods or Presbyteries shall enjoy them till their ordinary time be run out.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 24, 1737.—Act concerning the Qualifications of Elders, Members of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, considering the instructions sent up to them from Presbyteries, do strictly enjoin all Presbyteries to be careful that all to be chosen elders of this Church be qualified according to the Acts of the Assembly; and, particularly, that they attest none as members of the Assembly but such as are qualified, not only by subscribing the formula prescribed, but likewise according to all the other qualifications required of such by former Acts of Assembly.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 24, 1737.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1738.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing part of the 72d Psalm, from the 17th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
WILLIAM GRANT, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN
AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 11, 1738.

I.

Sess. 1, May 11, 1738.—The King's Commission to William Marquis of Lothian produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 11, 1738.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 13, 1738.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 17, 1738.—Act concerning the Ministers seceding from this Church.

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the representations and complaints laid before them concerning Messrs Ebenezer Erskine at Stirling, William Wilson at Perth, Alexander Moncrieff at Abernethy, and James Fisher at Kinclaven, within the bounds of the Synod of Perth and Stirling; also concerning Messrs Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, Thomas Mair at Orwell, and Thomas Nairn at Abbotshall, within the bounds of the Synod of Fife, ministers ordained in this National Church, and admitted to their respective charges by the judicatories thereof, who have, notwithstanding, seceded from the communion of this Church, and made a positive separation therefrom; and the Assembly having too good reason to believe, from these representations, the notoriety of facts, and from the personal knowledge of many of the members of this Assembly, that the said ministers have seceded from this Church without any justifiable grounds, and are continuing in their unwarrantable secession, notwithstanding their own solemn engagements to the contrary at their ordination and admission, the clemency showed to some of them in the

year 1734, and the tenderness to all of them ever since. That, albeit their parochial charges are discontiguous, and at a considerable distance from one another, yet they have assumed a power of associating and erecting themselves into a Presbytery, and of exercising a judicial Presbyterial power, not only over their own congregations, but also over the whole Church, a power to which never any Presbytery, duly constituted in this Church, could or did lay claim. That, as a Presbytery, and in a pretended judicative capacity, they have framed, and published to the world, a printed paper, called their Act, Declaration, and Testimony, and have emitted other papers, wherein they have pretended not only to assign the grounds of their own unreasonable and irregular conduct, but also, with the air of a paramount power and authority, to condemn this Church and the judicatories thereof for their proceedings, and to cast many groundless and calumnious reflections upon her and them. That not confining themselves to their own congregations and particular charges, they dispense the ordinances to persons of other congregations, without the knowledge and consent of the ministers to which they belong, and have taken upon them, in some of these congregations, to ordain elders; and to promote their dangerous schism, they not only receive at their Presbyterial meetings such persons of whatsoever character as will accede to them from other congregations, but also the reasons of their accession, containing injurious calumnies against this Church, and the ministers thereof. And that nothing may be wanting to promote their end, they appoint and keep fasts in different corners of the country, to which there is a resort of several thousands of persons of both sexes, and too many of them, as there is good ground to think, come there with other views than to promote religion; and by these practices their proper ministerial work in their own parishes is in a great measure neglected. And, that their schism may not die with themselves, that they have authorised one of their number to teach divinity, and have taken some persons under probationary trials for the ministry.—The General Assembly did, and hereby do, unanimously resolve, declare, and enact, that although upon these, and other such accounts, this Church might now proceed, in the due exercise of discipline, to appoint these seceding and separating brethren, and their followers, to be proceeded against, and censured according to the demerit of their faults; yet this Assembly, choosing rather still to treat them in the spirit of meekness, brotherly love, and forbearance, did, and hereby do, enjoin all the ministers of this National Church, as they shall have access, and especially the ministers of the Synods and Presbyteries within which these seceding brethren reside, to be at all pains, by conference and other gentle means of persuasion, to reclaim and reduce them to their duty and the communion of this Church; and all Presbyteries and Synods to report their diligence and success, and what they can learn or observe concerning the future behaviour of these brethren, to the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly, at any of the diets thereof; which Commission is hereby authorised and appointed to take such reports or representations, with those already made to this Assembly, under their consideration; and, if they shall see cause, to take all proper steps and methods for duly sisting the separating brethren above named before the next Assembly, to answer for their irregular conduct, and all the parts thereof. And the said Commission is also empowered to do what they shall think proper to prepare and ripen the case for the decision of that Assembly. And, in the meantime, the General Assembly earnestly recommends to all the ministers, elders, and members of this Church, to endeavour, in their respective stations, and by all means proper for them, to reclaim those poor deluded people who have been carried away by this division, and to prevent the seducing of others, and the increase of this schism, which is so dangerous to the peace of this Church, so contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, so very hurtful to religion and serious godliness, to Christian charity, and brotherly love.

V.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1738.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Ramsay, minister at Kelso, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (The terms of the Act are the same as in the immediately preceding year.)

VI.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1738.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Ramsay at Kelso, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing of Popery, superstition, and profanity, and for management of the royal bounty given for that end, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant to this Assembly, and the 6th Act of the late General Assembly, and whole Acts therein mentioned, and in former commissions to the said committee; any seven of the foresaid persons are declared to be a quorum, whereof some to be ministers; and the said committee to have their meetings in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock afternoon; and also the first lawful day after adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of this Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be on Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on Monday next thereafter; with power to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find needful, and to keep a correspondence with the Commission of this Assembly, and Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee. And the General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint Mr William Grant, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules. And it is recommended to the members of the said committee, especially those who reside in or near Edinburgh, to attend the diets thereof punctually; and the clerk is hereby ordered to mark their attendance, and present the roll to the next General Assembly, with the excuses of absentees.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1738.—Act about the manner of electing Members of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, for the more regular election of members of Assembly in time coming, considering that it is already provided that the election shall be made at least forty days before the meeting of the Assembly, do hereby further enact, that hereafter each Presbytery of this Church (except those lying in Northern or Western Isles) shall make their elections yearly, within a month preceding the first of the said forty days; and that every Presbytery, without exception, shall appoint the day of election by an order of the Presbytery, at an ordinary meeting, to be entered in their minutes at least ten free days before such election; and that on the day of election, the Presbytery shall make their elections betwixt the hours of one and eight in the afternoon; and that the burghs and universities who send members to the Assembly shall, in like manner, appoint the days of their elections, at an ordinary meeting of their council or university respectively, at least ten days before the day of such elections.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1738.—Act appointing the Dist of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1739.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 10, 1739.

I.

May 10, 1739.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Hyndford produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1739.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1739.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 19, 1739.—Act concerning the Ministers who have Seceded from the Church.

The General Assembly, having considered the libel drawn up by the Commission of the last Assembly, and executed, in pursuance of an Act of the Assembly, against Messrs Ebenezer Erskine at Stirling, William Wilson at Perth, Alexander Moncrieff at Abernethy, James Fisher at Kinclaven, Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, Thomas Mair at Orwell, Thomas Nairn at Abbotshall, and James Thomson at Burntisland, ministers; together with the appearance of the said defenders before this Assembly; and that after the Moderator, in name of the Assembly, had signified to them, "That though they were called here to answer to a libel, the Assembly were very loath to be obliged to proceed upon it; and that if the said defenders would now show a disposition to return to the duty and obedience they owe to this Church, the Assembly was ready to forgive all that was past, and to receive them with open

arms ;"—the said defenders, instead of accepting or being thankful for such lenity, produced, and offered to read as their answer a paper, entitled, " Act of the Associate Presbytery, finding and declaring that the present judicatories of this National Church are not lawful nor right constituted courts of Christ ; and declining all authority, power, and jurisdiction, that the said judicatories may claim to themselves over the said Presbytery, or any of the members thereof, or over any that are under their inspection ; and, particularly, declining the authority of a General Assembly now met at Edinburgh, the 10th of May 1739." Upon which the Assembly caused the said libel to be read, and then permitted the said defenders, by the said Mr Thomas Mair, who spoke as the mouth of them all, to read the said paper, and thereafter to give in the same, to which all the defenders declared their adherence ; whereupon they were ordered to withdraw, after being directed by the moderator to attend when they should be again called upon by the Assembly ; and they having been this day again called, and not compearing, the General Assembly found, and hereby find, the said libel relevant to infer deposition ; and do find the same also proven, in its most material articles, by the said paper, produced by them as aforesaid ; and, particularly, finds it, by the said paper, proved, that the said defenders have seceded and separated from this Church, and have taken upon them to associate themselves into a presbytery, and, as such, have framed and published, and do adhere to the pretended Act, Declaration, and Testimony, libelled ; wherein they endeavour to assign the grounds of their unreasonable and irregular conduct, and take upon them to condemn this Church, and the judicatories thereof, for their proceedings, and to cast many groundless and calumnious reflections upon her and them. And, further, find that the said defenders, by the paper given in to this Assembly, have had the unparalleled boldness to appear before the highest judicatory of this Church, to which they had vowed obedience, and, instead of answering for themselves as pannels or defenders at the bar, pretended to appear as a separate, independent, and constituted judicatory, and to read or pronounce an act of theirs, condemning this Church, and the judicatories thereof, upon several groundless pretences, and to decline the authority of the same ; and that they have further, in presence of the Assembly, by their said paper, taken upon them to speak in most injurious, disrespectful, and insolent terms concerning the highest civil authority :—Therefore, the General Assembly do find and declare, that the said defenders, for the offences so found relevant and proven, do justly merit the highest censures of this Church, and particularly that of deposition ; but in respect that in this Assembly, before they proceeded to call the said defenders, an inclination had been expressed by several members not to proceed to a final sentence against them at this time, but to forbear the same yet another year, in order to give them a further time to return to their duty, and to render them still more inexcusable if they should persist in their unwarrantable separation ; and though, from their behaviour at their appearance, and the paper given in by them, there is little hope left of their being reclaimed to their duty, but they seem determined to continue in their most unwarrantable and schismatical courses, and, as far as in them lies, to ruin and destroy the interest of religion in this Church, this Assembly have thought fit to forbear inflicting the just censure upon them at this time, and to refer the same to the next General Assembly, to which this Assembly do earnestly recommend to inflict the censure of deposition, without further delay, upon such of the said defenders as shall not, betwixt and that time, either in presence of the Commission to be named by this Assembly, or of the ensuing General Assembly, retract the said pretended Act and Declinature, and return to their duty and submission to this Church. And the Assembly further recommend to all the members of this Assembly, and particularly such of them as shall be members of the next Assembly, there to urge and insist for their compliance with this recommendation, which this Assembly cannot allow themselves to doubt will be granted, as it will then be absolutely necessary, for the interest and credit of this Church, that the foresaid censure be pronounced and inflicted against such of the said defenders as shall then be persisting in their separation. And, in respect the said defenders have not appeared, though called, this diet, the Assembly order their Commission to cause cite them again to appear before the next Assembly, to abide the judgment thereof upon

the said libel, and the said paper given in by the defenders instead of an answer; to which Assembly the said libel and process is hereby continued and referred as above. And as to one of the defenders, Mr James Thomson, minister at Burntisland, who was not contained in the Act of the last Assembly, the General Assembly, without determining on the objection offered by his parish to the citation of him, did agree and resolve, that their Commission do cite him, *de novo*, to answer to the next Assembly for the matters contained in the said libel and paper given in by him and the other defenders. And, to the end the like schismatical and divisive courses, which have so much disturbed the peace and quiet of the Church and of the country, and are so very contrary to serious religion and godliness, may be, for hereafter, effectually discouraged and prevented, the General Assembly ordains all Presbyteries and Synods strictly to observe the 6th Act of the Assembly, 1708, entitled, "Act for Suppressing Schisms and Disorders in the Church," by which "It is strictly enjoined, and peremptorily appointed, that all the Presbyteries and Synods take particular notice of all their members, preachers, or others under their inspection; and if they find any ministers or others to fall into irregularities, or schismatical courses, that they duly call them to an account, and censure them according to the merits of their fault, even to deposition of ministers and elders, and to apply to the Commission for their advice, as they shall see cause." And, without derogating from the generality thereof, the Assembly ordains all Presbyteries, to whom any minister shall presume to give in a secession or separation from this Church, forthwith to give notice thereof to the moderator of the Commission of Assembly for the time, and to instruct the members of their Presbytery, who shall be members of such Commission, to ask the opinion and direction of that Commission at their first diet, after offering such secessions; to the end that, if such Presbyteries cannot, in the meantime, prevail with the brethren who shall so presume to secede, to retract their secession, such brethren may be forthwith proceeded against, according to the above Act of Assembly; and what opinions and directions of the Commission for the time, as Presbyteries shall receive, agreeable thereto, these Presbyteries are hereby strictly enjoined to follow the same. And in case any Presbytery, to whom such secession or separation shall be given in, shall fail in their duty in the premises, the Assembly ordains the Synods within whose bounds they may lie, without delay to do therein as they shall think fit, agreeable to the above Act of Assembly. And in case such Synods shall fail in their duty, the Assembly ordains the Commission to be appointed by this Assembly to take such matters into their own cognizance. And in all such cases the Presbyteries, Synods, or Commission to be appointed by this Assembly respectively, if they cannot quickly reclaim such seceding brethren, are hereby ordained to proceed against them, by way of libel, to the sentence of deposition. And the Assembly appoints that a short state of the proceedings of the judicatories of this Church, with relation to the foresaid ministers, setting forth the gentle methods used for reclaiming them, and their undutiful behaviour to this Church, be drawn up by a committee to be named for that effect, and printed, and copies thereof to be transmitted to each Presbytery: And that all the ministers of this Church shall be careful to exhort the people, both publicly and privately, to guard against all divisive courses, "and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," as they would consult the true interest of serious religion, and the quiet of their country.

V.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1739.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Bannatyne, minister at Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, &c. (Same as immediately preceding years, with this addition, viz.) And the General Assembly do enjoin their Commission,

that in passing their sentences, and in ordering the execution of the same, they strictly observe the 12th Act of Assembly, 1736.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1739.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev- Mr James Bannatyne, minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c. : to be a committee of this Assembly for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing of Popery and profanity, and for managing of the royal bounty given for these ends, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant to this Assembly, and the 6th Act of the late Assembly, and whole Acts therein mentioned, and in Acts formerly made and referred to in the Commissions granted to former committees; any seven of the persons above named are declared to be a quorum, whereof some to be ministers; but it is hereby appointed, that at the quarterly meeting of the said committee, to be held after the rising of the Commission in August next, when the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the year ensuing shall be approved and determined, nine ministers and five ruling elders at least shall be the quorum. And the said committee are appointed to have their meetings at Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated meetings of the Commission of the General Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be on Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday following next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places, as they shall find most convenient and needful; and they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly, and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and take their advice and assistance. And the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate the said Mr William Grant, Advocate, his Majesty's Solicitor, and Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the said committee, and according to their rules. And the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the distribution of the said royal bounty, and lay the same before the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable. And it is agreed that no person once employed and inserted in the scheme shall be struck out thereof for that year, but by the quorum of, at least, nine ministers and five ruling elders; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of them on the scheme, it shall not be determined at the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but shall lie on the table till another meeting, and, in the meantime, the person complained of, and the Presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted of such a complaint, and those concerned be required to send to the said committee a just account of the matter against the said next meeting. And it is further appointed, that after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the royal bounty, in manner above directed, and notice thereof given by letters to the Presbyteries concerned, such Presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answers to these letters, at farthest, with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not got done sooner; and the committee, at their meeting in May, shall name a sub-committee of their number for preparing the next year's scheme, who are to lay their draught thereof before the said meeting, immediately after the Commission in August.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1739.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 8th day of that month, in the year 1740.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 8, 1740.

I.

Sess. 1, May 8, 1740.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Hyndford produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 8, 1740.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 10, 1740.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 12, 1740.—Act and Sentence of Deposition from the Office of the holy Ministry against eight Ministers, Seceders from the Church.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, pursuant to their resolution on Saturday last, proceeded to the affair relating to the seceding ministers, viz. Messrs Ebenezer Erskine at Stirling, William Wilson at Perth, Alexander Moncrieff at Abernethy, James Fisher at Kinclaven, Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, Thomas Mair at Orwell, Thomas Nairn at Abbotshall, and James Thomson at Burntisland; and having caused all the eight to be called thrice publicly at the doors of the Assembly-House and of the New Church, and none of them compearing, nor any person for them, the Assembly caused to be read the libel drawn up by the Commission of the General Assembly, 1738, and executed against all the foresaid brethren, with the paper entitled, "Act of the Associate Presbytery," finding and declaring, "That the present judicatories of this National Church are not lawful nor right constituted

courts of Christ, and declining all authority, power, and jurisdiction, that the said judicatories may claim to themselves over the said Presbytery, or any of the members thereof, or over any that are under their inspection; and particularly declining the authority of a General Assembly, met at Edinburgh the 10th of May 1739," which paper they had delivered in at the bar of the last Assembly, in a pretended presbyterial capacity. There was also read the libel drawn up and executed against Mr James Thomson, minister at Burntisland, by order of the Commission of the last Assembly, in obedience to the 4th Act of that Assembly. After reading of which libel, with the said fourth Act of last Assembly, the General Assembly, (in respect that the relevancy and proof of the libel against all the said ministers was judged by the last Assembly, and that there was no doubt of the competency of the process as to any of the seceding ministers, except Mr Thomson, in respect of which a new libel was ordered to be raised and executed against him,) after reasoning proceeded to state the question, "Is the libel against Mr Thomson relevant and proven, as to the material articles, to infer deposition, or not?" viz. "That the said Mr Thomson has seceded and separated from this Church, and that he, with his said other brethren, associate themselves into a Presbytery, and as such have framed and published, and do adhere to the pretended Act, Declaration, and Testimony libelled, wherein they endeavour to assign the grounds of their unreasonable and irregular conduct, and take upon them to condemn this Church, and the judicatories thereof, for their proceedings; and to cast many groundless and calumnious reflections upon her and them; and that the said Mr Thomson, with the other defenders, by the paper given in to the last Assembly, had the unparalleled boldness to appear before the highest judicatory of this Church, to which they had vowed obedience, and, instead of answering as pannels and defenders at the bar, pretended to appear as a separate, independent, and constituted judicatory, and to read or pronounce an act of theirs, condemning this Church, and the judicatories thereof, upon several groundless pretences, and to decline the authority of the same; and that he, the said Mr Thomson, with the other defenders, did, in presence of the Assembly, by their said paper, take upon them to speak in most injurious, disrespectful, and indecent terms concerning the highest civil authority." And the vote being put, "Find as above?" or "Not?" And it was carried, by a very great majority, "Find." And, therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, find the said libel against the said Mr James Thomson relevant to infer deposition, and also proven as to its most material articles, as above. But the Assembly delayed further procedure in this affair till Thursday next.

Sess. 7, May 15, 1740.

The General Assembly, pursuant to their resolution of the 12th instant, resumed the consideration of the process against the eight seceding ministers; and having caused them to be again called, and none of them compearing, nor any person for them, the Assembly caused to be read the minute of their proceeding in this affair on Monday last, and also the act of the last Assembly of May 19, 1739, and then proceeded to consider, Whether, upon the libel found relevant to infer deposition, and proven as to its most material articles, by the last General Assembly, against the whole ministers therein named, and again found relevant and proven by this Assembly, in so far as concerns Mr James Thomson, upon the new libel executed against him, in pursuance of the said act of the last Assembly, this Assembly should proceed to inflict the said censure of deposition? And after full reasoning upon the expediency thereof, and prayer to God for direction how to judge in this weighty affair, and for his blessing on such decision as the Assembly should come to, it was agreed to put the question, Depose, or Not? And rolls being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a very great majority, Depose; and, therefore, the General Assembly, in respect of the articles found relevant and proven against the persons therein and hereafter named by the last and this Assembly, as aforesaid, did, and hereby do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, and by virtue of the power and authority committed by him to them, actually depose Messrs Ebenezer Erskine at Stirling, William Wilson at Perth, Alexander Moncrieff at Abernethy,

James Fisher at Kinclaven, Ralph Erskine at Dunfermline, Thomas Mair at Orwell, Thomas Nairn at Abbotshall, and James Thomson at Burntisland, ministers, from the office of the holy ministry, prohibiting and discharging them, and every one of them, to exercise the same, or any part thereof, within this Church in all time coming; and the Assembly did, and hereby do, declare all the parishes or charges of the persons above named vacant, from and after the day and date of this sentence; and ordains copies hereof to be sent to the several Presbyteries of Stirling, Perth, Dunkeld, Dunfermline, and Kirkaldy; and the said respective Presbyteries are hereby ordered to send copies hereof to the kirk-sessions of Perth and Dunfermline, and session clerks of the other respective parishes hereby declared vacant, to be communicated to the elders. And the Assembly appoints that letters be written by their Moderator to the magistrates of the respective burghs concerned, with copies of this sentence; and the Assembly recommends to the Presbyteries within whose bounds the parishes or charges, now declared vacant, do lie, to be careful in using their best endeavours for supplying the same during the vacancy, and for promoting the speedy and comfortable settlement thereof.

Sess. 8, May 16, 1740.

The General Assembly do instruct and empower the Commission to be appointed by them to take in and finally decide in any process that may come before them from any Synod or Presbytery, towards the speedy settlement of any of the parish churches declared vacant by the Assembly's sentence passed yesterday.

V.

Sess. 9, May 17, 1740.—Act discharging Presbyteries to consent to the Suppressing of Parish Churches.

The General Assembly, having heard the overture transmitted by the late General Assembly to Presbyteries, concerning their consenting to suppressing of parish churches; and finding that divers Presbyteries have given their opinion that the same be passed into an act; the General Assembly do hereby discharge all Presbyteries within this National Church to consent to, or connive at, the annexation or suppressing of parishes, without the consent or approbation of the Synod of the bounds, or the General Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 19, 1740.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr George Logan, minister at Edinburgh, their Moderator; and from the Presbytery of Dunoon, Mr Alexander M'Kay at Kilfinnan, Mr William Campbell at Kilmodan, ministers; Archibald Earl of Islay, and Sir James Campbell of Ardkinlass, Bart., ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Kintyre, Mr John M'Vicar at Islay, Mr John M'Lean at Killean, ministers; Mr Alexander M'Millan of Dunmore, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverary, Mr James Getty at Inverary, Mr Alexander Campbell there, ministers; Colin Campbell of Kilbride, Esq., and from the burgh of Inverary, Captain John Campbell, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Lorn, Mr James Stevenson at Ardchattan, Mr James Campbell at Kilbrandon, ministers; James Campbell of St Germans, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Mull, Mr John M'Lean at Kiluinian, Mr Archibald Campbell at Morvern, ministers; Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochnell, ruling elder. From the Pres-

bytery of Dunkeld, Mr John Hamilton at Kenmore, Mr Alexander M'Lagan at Little Dunkeld, Mr Adam Fergusson at Moulin, Mr Thomas Mann at Dunkeld, ministers; His Grace James Duke of Atholl, Patrick Small of Lianoch, and Mr Alexander Murray of Ladywell, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Perth, Mr James Mercer at Aberdalgie, Mr Andrew Schaw at St Madoes, Mr John Moncrieff at Rhind, Mr Alexander Mair at Forteviot, ministers; Mr Robert Craigie of Glendoig, and Mr Alexander Belches of Invermay, ruling elders; and from the burgh of Perth, the Lord Monzie, and Patrick Cree, late provost of Perth. From the Presbytery of Stirling, Mr William Campbell at Alva, Mr James Mackie at St Ninian's, Mr William Bennet at Denny, ministers; William Stirling of Herbertshire, and from the burgh of Stirling, Robert Banks, merchant there, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr Alexander Murray at Foulis, Mr Aeneas Schaw at Comrie, Mr William Moncrieff at Blackford, ministers; Mr James Graham of Damside, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunblane, Mr Michael Potter at Kippen, Mr Finlay Fergusson at Balquidder, ministers; and Sir James Campbell of Aberuchill, Bart., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr Robert Stark at Torryburn, Mr Robert Steedman at Beith, Mr David Hunter at Saline, ministers; Colonel John Erskine of Carnock; from the burgh of Dunfermline, Lord Marquis of Tweeddale; from the burgh of Culross, Mr Alexander Boswell, younger of Auchinleck; and from the burgh of Inverkeithing, Mr John Cunningham of Balbougie, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Kirkaldy, Mr John Affleck at Auchterderran, Mr Robert Balfour at Ballingrie, Mr Robert Young at Leslie, ministers; Mr Hugh Murray of Melgum; from the burgh of Kirkaldy, Dr Robert Hay of Strowie; and from the burgh of Dysart, Mr George Irvine of Newton, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Cupar, Mr William Thomson at Flisk, Mr George Gillespie at Strathmiglo, Mr George Anderson at Dunbog, Mr Patrick Maxton at Auchtermuchty, ministers; Alexander Earl of Leven, James M'Gill of Rankeillor; and from the burgh of Cupar, Commissary James Leslie, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of St Andrews, Mr James Haddow, Principal of the New College of St Andrews, Mr Thomas Tullideph, Principal of St Leonard's College, there, Mr John Cook at St Monance, Mr Alexander Walker at Kemback, ministers; James Fernie, late Dean of Guild of St Andrews, Bailie Robert Waddel in Kilrenny; for the burgh of St Andrews, Patrick Lindsay, Esq., ruling elders; and from the University of St Andrews, Mr Archibald Campbell, Professor of Church History there. From the Presbytery of Meigle, Mr James Ramsay at Bendochy, Mr Lawrence Brown at Lintrathen, Mr John Robertson at Alyth, ministers; and Thomas Gibson of Muirton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forfar, Mr Hugh Maxwell at Forfar, Mr John Martin at Oathlaw, ministers; and John Donaldson of Invereigthy, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dundee, Mr William Thomson at Strathmartin, Mr Thomas Randall at Inchtute, Mr Thomas Donaldson at Liff, ministers; and Bailie John Jobson of Dundee, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberbrothwick, Mr Robert Trail at Panbride, Mr Robert Preston at Arbirlot, ministers; and Bailie James Doig, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Brechin, Mr John Cooper at Montrose, Mr James Beattie at Marytoun, Mr Robert Stephen at Craig, ministers; and Bailie Muirison of Montrose, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordoun, Mr James Douglas at Arbuthnot, Mr William Arnot at Bervie, Mr Anthony Dow at Fettercairn, ministers; Mr Burnet, younger of Monboddoo, and from the burgh of Bervie, Mr Alexander Arbuthnot of Knox, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Aberdeen, Mr John Lumsden, Professor of Divinity in the King's College of Aberdeen, Mr James Nicolson at Banchory, Mr Alexander Shanks at Drumoak, Mr Archibald Napier at Maryculter, ministers; Mr William Chalmers, Provost of Aberdeen, Mr William Grant, His Majesty's Solicitor, ruling elders; from the King's College, Mr George Chalmers, Principal there, and from the Marischal College, Mr James Chalmers, Professor of Divinity there. From the Presbytery of Kincardine-O'Neil, Mr John M'Innes at Crathy, Mr Alexander Garden at Birss, Mr George Shepherd at Aboyne, ministers; and Sir Arthur Forbes of Craigievar, Baronet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Alford, Mr William Miln at Kildrimmy, Mr Patrick Reid at Clatt, Mr Theodore Gordon at Kinnethmont, mini

sters. From the Presbytery of Ellon, Mr James Burnet at Ellon, Mr John Rose at Logie, ministers; and the Lord Strichen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Garioch, Mr Francis Downie at Kennay, Mr George Gordon at Bourtie, Mr James Darling at Kintore, ministers; Lord Drumore, and from the burgh of Kintore, Mr James Erskine of Grange, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Deer, Mr James Leslie at St Fergus, Mr William Hay at Crimond, Mr James Walker at Peterhead, ministers. From the Presbytery of Turriff, Mr Thomas Scott at Fyvie, Mr William Milne at Inverkeithny, ministers; Mr David Bannerman, probationer, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordyce, Mr Walter Morison at Deskford, Mr James Anderson at Boyndie, ministers; and Robert Stewart, Provost of Banff, and from the burgh of Cullen, Mr Charles Hope-Vere of Craigiehall, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr Thomas Fairbairn at Gartly, Mr Patrick Gordon at Rhynie, ministers; and Mr William Duff of Crombie, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberlour, Mr Alexander Fraser at Inveraven, Mr Hugh Grant at Knockando, ministers; and the Lord Elchies, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abernethy, Mr William Blair at Kingussie, Mr George Grant at Kirkmichael, ministers; and Ludovick Grant, younger of Grant, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Elgin, Mr William Douglas at New Spynie, Mr John Bowar at Duffus, ministers; and Ludovick Dunbar of Westfield, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forres, Mr John Squire at Forres, Mr Robert Dunbar at Dyke, ministers; and Mr James Brodie of Whitehill, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverness, Mr Robert Thomson at Kirkhill, Mr James Leslie at Moy, ministers; and Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Esq., Lord President of the Court of Session, and from the burgh of Inverness, John Hossack, Provost thereof, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Chanonry, Mr John Monro at Suddy, Mr John Robertson at Killearnan, ministers; and Mr Alexander Gordon of Ardeoch, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tain, Mr Hugh Munro at Tain, Mr John M'Arthur at Logie Easter, ministers; and Mr John Gordon, younger of Invergordon, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dingwall, Mr Thomas Chisholm at Kilmorack, Mr James Fraser at Alness, ministers; Mr Albert Munro of Coull, and from the burgh of Dingwall, Sir Robert Munro of Foulis, Baronet, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Abertarff, Mr John Stewart at Kilmanivaig, minister; and Alexander Fraser of Balnain, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Skye, Mr Archibald M'Queen at Snizort, Mr Daniel M'Aulay at Bracadale, ministers. From the Presbytery of Gairloch, Mr Æneas Sage at Lochcarron, Mr Æneas M'Aulay at Applecross, ministers. From the Presbytery of Dornoch, Mr Robert Kirk at Dornoch, Mr John Sutherland at Golspie, ministers; and Andrew M'Culloch, bailie and merchant in Dornoch, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tongue, Mr Walter Ross at Tongue, Mr Murdoch M'Donald at Diurness, ministers; and George Lord Reay, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Caithness, Mr James Oswald at Dunnet, Mr Alexander Oliphant at Bower, ministers; and the Lord Murkle, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr John Ballantyne at South Ronaldshay, Mr Thomas Galloway at Deerness, ministers; and James Earl of Morton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Zetland, Mr William Maxwell at Dunrossness, Mr William Archibald at Unst, ministers; and Captain James Craigie, merchant in Lerwick, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Mr John Thorburn at Kirknewton, Mr John Goudie, Professor of Divinity in the College of Edinburgh, Mr James Bannatyne at Edinburgh, Mr John Glen there, Mr George Gibson at Colinton, Mr George Fordyce at Corstorphine, ministers; John Osburn, late Provost of Edinburgh, Mr Alexander Nisbet of Northfield, Mr James Davidson of Hiltrie, ruling elders. From the City of Edinburgh, Bailie Charles Hope, merchant, and Convener George Cunningham, surgeon. From the University of Edinburgh, Mr Patrick Cuming, Professor of Church History there. From the Scottish Church of Campvere, Mr James Yair, minister; and Archibald M'Aulay, Lord Conservator of the Scottish Privileges there. From the Presbytery of Linlithgow, Mr James Nasmith at Dalmeny, Mr Robert Dalglish at Linlithgow, Mr Robert Boyd at Muiravonside, Mr Patrick Bennet at Polmont, ministers; the Earl of Buchan and the Lord Napier, ruling elders. From the burgh of Linlithgow, the Lord Torphichen. From the burgh of Queensferry, the Laird of Dundas. From the Presbytery of Biggar, Mr John Thomson at Liberton,

Mr Andrew Richardson at Broughton, ministers; Mr John Dickson, younger of Kilbucko, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Peebles, Mr Alexander Coupar at Traquair, Mr Alexander Robertson at Eddleston, Mr Alexander Duncan at Traquair, ministers; Alexander Williamson of Chapelhill, ruling elder. From the burgh of Peebles, Baron Clerk. From the Presbytery of Dalkeith, Mr David Lindsay at Cockpen, Mr William Smith at Cranston, Mr James Primrose at Crichton, ministers; the Lord Arniston and Mr Robert Dundas, younger of Arniston, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Haddington, Mr Archibald Lundie at Salton, Mr John Cuming at Humbie, Mr Archibald Blair at Garvald, ministers; Alexander Hamilton of Pencaitland, Esq., and from the burgh of Haddington, Mr Charles Cockburn, advocate, Provost thereof, and Sir Hugh Dalrymple of Northberwick, for the burgh of Northberwick, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Dunbar, Mr John Cluny at Whitekirk, Mr John Lundie at Oldhamstocks, ministers; Mr Thomas Hamilton, advocate, and from the burgh of Dunbar, Ludovick Cant of Thurston, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Dunse, Mr James Lawrie at Langton, Mr Robert Monteith at Longformacus, ministers; William Earl of Home, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chirnside, Mr Robert Park at Foulden, Mr Robert Waugh at Hutton, Mr James Allan at Eyemouth, ministers; Mr John Stewart, advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kelso, Mr James Ramsay at Kelso, Mr Charles Baxter at Sprouston, ministers; Mr Charles Binning of Pilmore, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Jedburgh, Mr John Gilchrist at Bedrule, Mr Robert Bell at Crailing, Mr James Winchester at Jedburgh, ministers; the Lord Minto, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Earlston, Mr John Bell at Gordon, Mr David Duncan at Stow, ministers; Robert Kennedy of Greenknow, and from the burgh of Lauder, the Earl of Lauderdale, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Selkirk, Mr William Bannatyne at Yarrow, Mr Henry Erskine at Robertson, ministers; Mr Andrew Ker of Kippilaw, and from the burgh of Selkirk, Gideon Schaw of Lauriston, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Middlebie, Mr Robert Malcolm at Ewes, Mr James Garth at Graitney, ministers; Mr Robert Scot of Burnhead, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochmaben, Mr John Allan at Kirkmichael, Mr John Irvine at Wamphray, Mr John Nimmo at Johnston, ministers; Mr William Kirkpatrick of Ellisland, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Penpont, Mr Simon Riddel at Tinron, Mr William Moodie at Glencairn, ministers; Alexander Ferguson of Craigdarroch, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dumfries, Mr Robert Wight at Dumfries, Mr Andrew Beveridge at Carlaverock, Mr John Dickie at Dunscore, ministers; Charles Erskine of Tinwald, Esq., Lord Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Mr Robert Donaldson at Balmaclellan, Mr John Lamont at Kelton, Mr Nathaniel M'Kie at Crossmichael, ministers; Sir Thomas Gordon of Earlston, Baronet, and from the burgh of Kirkcudbright, Alexander Gordon of Carleton, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Wigton, Mr James Maitland at Sorbie, Mr William Campbell at Kirkinner, ministers; Dr Alexander Martin, Physician, and from the burgh of Whithorn, Bailie Hugh Hathorn, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Stranraer, Mr James Tweeddale at Glenluce, Mr Thomas Mutter at Leswalt, ministers; Mr Andrew M'Dowal of Kingseat, advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Ayr, Mr John Hunter at Ayr, Mr John Steel at Cumnock, Mr George Reid at Ochiltree, Mr John Steel at Stair, Mr Hugh Hamilton at Girvan, ministers; Colonel William Dalrymple of Glenmore, and Mr James Boswell of Auchinleck, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Irvine, Mr Andrew Cuming at Largs, Mr John Adam at Kilbride, Mr Malcolm Brown at Kilmarnock, ministers; Hugh M'Bride of Baidland, and from the burgh of Irvine, John Earl of Glasgow, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Paisley, Mr Robert Mitchell at Paisley, Mr William Pollock at Kilellan, Mr John Warner at Kilbarchan, ministers; Sir John Maxwell of Pollock, Baronet, and from the burgh of Renfrew, Archibald Campbell of Elderslie, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Hamilton, Mr John Scott at Stonehouse, Mr James Millar at Hamilton, Mr Thomas Cleland at Cambusnethan, ministers; John Muirhead of Braidisholm, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lanark, Mr John Orr at Lanark, Mr John Wilson at Carstairs, Mr William Hamilton at Douglas, ministers; Sir James Lockhart of Carstairs, Baronet, and Alexander Wilson, town-clerk of Lanark, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Glas-

gow, Mr John Hamilton at Barony Kirk, Mr John Warden at Campsie, Mr William Fleming at Kirkintulloch, ministers; John Orr of Borrowfield, from the city of Glasgow, Archibald Hamilton, merchant, ruling elders. From the University of Glasgow, Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of the College of Glasgow; from the burgh of Rutherglen, Mr James Bogle, Remembrancer in Exchequer, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Mr John M'Alpin at Arroquhar, Mr George Sinclair at Balfron, Mr George Buchanan at Drymen, ministers; William Cuninghame of Ballindalloch, and from the burgh of Dumbarton, Commissary Smollet, ruling elders; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners or their quorum, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as those of the immediately preceding years.)

VII.

Sess. 10, May 19, 1740.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby commission and appoint the Rev. Mr George Logan, minister of the Gospel at Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly, for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing of Popery and profanity, and for managing the royal bounty given for these ends, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant to this Assembly, and the 6th Act of the late Assembly, and whole Acts therein mentioned, and in Acts formerly made and referred to in the commissions granted to former committees; any seven of the persons above named are declared to be a quorum, whereof some to be ministers; but it is hereby appointed, that at the quarterly meeting of the said committee, to be held after the rising of the Commission in August next, when the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the year ensuing shall be approved and determined, nine ministers and five ruling elders at least shall be a quorum; and the said committee are appointed to have their meetings at Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at three o'clock in the afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of the General Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except when it falls to be Friday or Saturday, and then the meeting is to be on the Monday following next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find most convenient and needful; and they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly, and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and take their advice and assistance. And the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate the said Mr William Grant, Advocate, his Majesty's Solicitor, and Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same, as he shall be directed and ordered by the said committee, and according to their rules; and the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the distribution of the said royal bounty, and lay the same before the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable; and it is agreed, that no person once employed, and inserted in the scheme, shall be struck out thereof for that year but by the quorum of at least nine ministers and five ruling elders; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of them on the scheme, it shall not be determined at the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but shall lie on the table till another meeting; and, in the meantime, the person complained of, and the Presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted of such a complaint, and those concerned be required to send the said committee a just account of the matter against the said next meeting. And it is further appointed, that after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the royal bounty is settled, in manner above directed, and notice thereof given by letters to the Presbyteries concerned, such

Presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answer to these letters, at furthest, with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not got done sooner; and the committee, at their meeting in May, shall name a sub-committee of their number, for preparing the next year's scheme, who are to lay their draught thereof before the said meeting, immediately after the Commission in August.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 19, 1740.—Act for the Maintenance of Mr Nicodemus Bieniaszeuski, Student in Divinity from Lithuania.

Whereas the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, by their Act dated the 22d May 1736, appoint the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, and the Synod of Fife, to pay their Synodical burse, and the Synod of Glasgow to pay their Presbyterial burse, towards the maintaining of Mr Andrew Kurnatousky, the late Lithuanian bursar, for the space of four years immediately succeeding Martinmas 1735.

And whereas the Synod of Lithuania, in consequence of the Assembly's resolution, dated the 23d of May 1738, did, in September last, send hither Mr Nicodemus Bieniaszeuski to succeed as bursar to the said Mr Kurnatousky for the next four years thereafter.

And whereas it is reasonable and equal that the said public burden should be laid upon the several Synods in their turns; therefore, the General Assembly, conform to the overture and opinion of the Commission of the late General Assembly, dated the 15th of November last, did, and hereby do, appoint the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, the Synod of Dumfries, and the Synod of Galloway, to pay their Synodical burse, and the Presbytery of Ayr to pay their Presbyterial burse, towards the maintaining the said Mr Bieniaszeuski, the present Lithuanian bursar, for the space of four years immediately succeeding Martinmas 1739; and they further appoint the moderators of the said Presbyteries for the current half year to collect, each in his own Presbytery, the first year's proportion of the said burse, and send in the same to the general collector of the said bursary, the one half of the said year's burse at or before the quarterly meeting of the Commission in August next, and the other half thereof at the quarterly meeting of the Commission in November next; and that the moderators of the said Presbyteries for the half-year after Martinmas next collect and send, in like manner, the said half-year's burse at the quarterly meeting of the Commission in March next, or, at furthest, before the Whitsunday thereafter; and so on termly, at Martinmas and Whitsunday, yearly thereafter, for the space of the above said four years. And the Assembly do instruct and empower their Commission to take special care of the premises; and remit to the said Commission to name a proper person to be general collector of the said bursaries.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1740.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1741.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 102d Psalm, from the 13th to the 17th verses, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

(There follows in the original edition an Overture concerning the Licensing of Probationers. See 1741 and 1742. There is also appended to this an Overture

concerning the Form of a Licence to Probationers, same as that transmitted in 1724, and which is given at p. 569.—*Ed.* 1843.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1741.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 14, 1741.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven
produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 14, 1741.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 16, 1741.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 9, May 23, 1741.—Act and Recommendation for the observation of a Fast within
the Bounds of the several Presbyteries of this Church.*

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration, and being deeply affected with the distressed state of the land, by reason of the scarcity and famine we are groaning under; the dangerous and expensive war we are engaged in; with many other tokens of the Lord's wrath against us; and all these justly inflicted by a righteous God, for our many sins, grievous backslidings, and provocations, did judge it their duty speedily to call persons of all ranks to humble themselves before the Lord, acknowledging our transgressions, and flying, by faith and repentance, to the blood of Jesus Christ, that a merciful God may, for his sake, pity us, and not give us over to the will of our enemies abroad, nor consume us with famine and other judgments at home: Therefore, the Assembly did, and hereby do, recommend to, and appoint all the several Presbyteries, at their first meeting, to fix upon a day most expedient for their respective bounds; and that this day be, at least, within the month of June next; and that where Presbyteries lie at such a distance as this Act cannot reach them before their first meeting, that the moderator shall call a Presbytery for this effect, and appoint a day with all convenient speed: That Presbyteries consider not only the general causes, but the particular sins most prevalent among them, that they may be confessed and mourned over before the Lord; and all persons be called to repentance, and amendment of heart and way, as they would escape, through the Lord's mercy, the judgments hanging over our heads, and heavier strokes being yet inflicted.

V.

Sess. 9, May 23, 1741.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Ramsay, minister of the Gospel at Kelso, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 23, 1741.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr James Ramsay, minister at Kelso, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners to this General Assembly, to the effects after mentioned; with power, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of the immediately preceding years, and no change takes place for a long period.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1741.—Congratulatory Address to his Majesty, upon occasion of taking the Forts near Carthagera.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in a National Assembly, beg leave, with hearts full of joy and thankfulness to Almighty God, to approach your sacred person, to congratulate your Majesty on the successful progress of your arms against your insolent enemies, the Spaniards; and, particularly, on the late signal victory obtained at Carthagera; in which there appear evident marks of the powerful interposition of the good providence of God, in favour of your Majesty and these kingdoms, by protecting your fleet, under the command of the brave and victorious Admiral Vernon, and by animating your sailors and soldiers with uncommon courage and resolution, which gives us the agreeable prospect that this may be a means of further advancing the glory of your Majesty's reign, by humbling the hearts of your haughty enemies, and procuring a speedy, honourable, and lasting peace, which may secure the rights and privileges, the trade and navigation, of your subjects, and prevent the further effusion of human blood.

May God long preserve your Majesty to promote the good of mankind, to be the guardian of the peace and liberties of Europe, and of all the valuable rights and privileges of your subjects, and to be the protector of the Protestant interest at home and abroad. May he bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, the issue of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all your royal family! That God may continue to direct your councils, and prosper your arms, watch over you while abroad, and return you with safety and honour to these your dominions; and that, after your Majesty hath been long honoured to be an instrument of doing great good upon earth, you may be crowned with everlasting happiness, is, and shall be, the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES RAMSAY, *Moderator.*

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1741.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the first Thursday of May next, being the 6th day of the said month, in the year 1742.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*May 23, 1741.—Overture about the Manner of Purging of Scandals.**

There was brought in to the General Assembly, from their committee for overtures, an overture for establishing an uniform rule for deciding in cases of scandal; which being read, the General Assembly recommend to the several Presbyteries to consider the rules already set down in the Form of Process, or other Acts made upon that subject; and send their opinion to the next General Assembly upon what relates to the manner of purging of scandals.

May 23, 1741.—Overture about Members of Inferior Judicatories judging in Superior Courts.†

An overture, brought in from the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, having been yesterday transmitted from the committee for overtures, was this day again called for and read; and after being reasoned upon at full length, the General Assembly transmitted the same to the several Synods and Presbyteries of this National Church, that they may send their opinions thereupon to the next General Assembly. The tenor whereof follows:—

Edinburgh, May 7, 1741.

The Provincial Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale do unanimously agree, that such of their number as are members of the ensuing General Assembly shall represent to the venerable Assembly, That there appears to this Synod many obvious inconveniences attending the present practice of this Church, whereby the members of inferior judicatories are considered as parties before the Superior Courts, when any cause in which they have given judgment comes to be viewed upon an appeal; and seeing this is likewise contrary to the practice of all other courts, this Synod humbly move, That the Assembly shall take this matter under their consideration, and transmit an overture to the several Presbyteries, that they may give their opinion as to the proposed alteration.

May 25, 1741.—Overture for an Act concerning Licensing of Probationers for the holy Ministry.‡

* It does not appear that this overture led to any subsequent proceedings.

† This overture was not passed. The subject was revived in 1754, and an overture again transmitted, but not passed. It was again revived in 1771, and an overture transmitted for several years, but no enactment took place.—*Ed.* 1843.

‡ An enlarged, and more matured overture, on this subject, was brought forward in the following year, and passed into an interim Act. (See Act 6th, Assembly, 1742.)—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 6, 1742.

I.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1742.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 6, 1742.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 8, 1742.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3. May 8, 1742.—Act disjoining the Presbytery of Long-Island, and erecting the same into two distinct Presbyteries.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, from their committee for bills, a scheme prepared by the Presbytery of Long-Island, upon a commendation of the Synod of Glenelg, who had consented to the disjunction of the said Presbytery, and erecting the same into two distinct Presbyteries. And the General Assembly having heard the said scheme read over, with the opinion of the committee for bills thereupon, did, and hereby do, according thereto, disjoin the parishes of Lochs, Stornoway, Barvas, and Uig, from the Presbytery of Long-Island, and do erect these four parishes into a Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Lewis, and to have their meetings for ordinary at Carlway; and did, and hereby do, erect the parishes of Harris, North Uist, South Uist, and Barra, into another Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Uist, and to have their ordinary meetings at Carinish; and that the Presbytery of Lewis shall, at the first meeting after their crection, appoint the ministers of Stornoway and Uig for that year as their correspondents; and, at their first meeting in the ensuing year, the ministers of Lochs and Barvas, and so on, in all succeeding years, by turns to attend the meeting of the Presbytery of Uist, at Scarista in Harris, when, upon any emergency, they shall be called to meet with them there; and do appoint that the Presbytery of Uist, in like manner, appoint the ministers of Harris and Barra for the first year, and the ministers of North and South Uists for the next year, and so on, in all subsequent years, by turns, as correspondents, to attend the meetings of the Presbytery of Lewis, at Scarista in Harris, as the importance of any affair depending before them shall require; and that each of these Presbyteries have right to be represented in the General Assembly; and the Assembly do authorise the Synod of Glenelg to appoint the time of the first meeting of the above mentioned Presbyteries of Uist and Lewis. And the Assembly

declare these Presbyteries to have the same powers and privileges which any other Presbytery have, by the Word of God and constitution of this Church.

V.

Sess. 9, May 15, 1742.—Act for the better Attendance of Members on the Commission of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly do enjoin the several Presbyteries to the observance of the 6th Act of Assembly, 1703, and the 6th and 15th Acts, 1705, "For the better Attendance of Members on the Meetings of the Commission;" and that the Presbyteries read over these Acts at their first meetings after the Assembly, and enjoin the observation of them on their members; and that the Presbyteries, after every quarterly meeting of the Commission, take account of the attendance of their members, and to inquire into the reasons or excuses of such as have not attended, and to censure them who have been absent without sufficient cause.

VI.

*Sess. 10, May 17, 1742, ante meridiem.—Act and Overture about the Manner of Licensing Probationers.**

The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the danger that ariseth to this Church, and to the souls of people, by licensing any to preach the Gospel who are not duly qualified, according to the rules laid down in the Holy Scriptures; and considering that the several Acts made by former General Assemblies lie so scattered in many separate articles, at great distance from one another, that the directions therein given are in danger of being overlooked by Presbyteries: Therefore, the General Assembly renew all former Acts, and strictly ordain them to be observed by Presbyteries in all time coming, in manner following, viz. :—

1mo, That no Presbytery admit any person to probationary trials but such as are found to be of good report, of sufficient learning, sound principles, of a pious, sober, grave, and prudent behaviour, and of a peaceable disposition, and well affected to the government in Church and State; and of whom they have sufficient grounds to conceive that they shall be useful and edifying in the Church; and that careful inquiry be made thereant; and that, without respect of persons, such as are esteemed to be light and vain in their behaviour, imprudent, proud, worldly-minded, or unacquainted with the power of practical godliness, be kept back from that sacred work.

2do, That none be admitted to trials, in order to be licensed, but such as have attended the profession of divinity for six years, or have closely followed the study of divinity and of the languages for that space, at least, after they have passed their full course of philosophy at the College; and that the usual school degrees be inquired after, and made proficiency therein, in case their circumstances did not allow them to attend the profession; though it were to be desired they should attend the profession of divinity much of that time. But this shall not be extended to students having the Irish language, providing, that before any Presbytery license such students within six years, they first consult the Synod of the bounds.

3tio, The General Assembly, considering the reproach that may be brought on religion in general, and particularly on this Church, by the unworthy behaviour of such as follow the study of divinity, do earnestly recommend to the Presbyteries, professors of divinity, and ministers and members of this Church, to keep a watchful eye on such students during the said six years. And, further, that when any student comes to attend the profession of divinity in any university, he shall produce to the Professor, and to the minister of the parish where he is to reside during the

* This interim Act and Overture, although transmitted to Presbyteries for several successive years, does not appear to have been passed into a standing law. An Overture similar to the above was again brought forward in 1777, and ultimately enacted in 1782.—*Ed.* 1848.

time of his attendance on the profession, a testimonial from the minister from whence he comes; and, when he leaves the profession, he shall carry back testimonials from the minister of the parish, of his grave and suitable behaviour becoming his character, and from the Professor, testifying the same; and also his regular attendance on the diets of the profession, and the time he has attended. And when any Professor of Divinity shall think fit to recommend a student, in order to probationary trials, his testimonials shall bear not only his proficiency in his studies, but his judgment of his moral and Christian character; and that, in his opinion, such an one may be useful and edifying in the work of the ministry, on producing whereof, the Presbytery, after due consideration, shall admit him or not, as they shall see cause.

4^{to}, The General Assembly do appoint and ordain, that no Presbytery admit any student to probationary trials, except such as have resided within their bounds for the space of six years, or do produce to them sufficient testimonials from the Presbyteries in whose bounds they have lived, or for the most part resided, expressly, that it is the desire of these Presbyteries that these students should be entered upon trials. And such students as come from abroad shall produce satisfying testimonials from the professors under whom they studied, and the time of their being abroad shall be accounted a part of the said six years; but none of these students shall be entered upon trials for the space of a whole year after they come to Scotland.

5^{to}, When any student is proposed to a Presbytery, in order to be taken on trials, the proposal shall lie on the table till the next ordinary meeting, before they give judgment therein, that diligent inquiry may be made, and information had concerning the said student's qualifications and behaviour; and the Presbytery shall be alone both when the proposal is made and judged on. And the General Assembly recommends to all students to take all opportunities of cultivating an acquaintance with the ministers of the Presbytery where they reside; and, particularly, during the said interval, they are hereby appointed to attend such of the ministers as shall desire to discourse with them in private.

6^{to}, When the Presbytery, after serious inquiry and mature deliberation, shall agree to take the proposed candidate on trials, before his entry thereto, the General Assembly appoints them, by themselves, or a committee of their number, to take a private and previous trial of the progress he has made in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages; in the study of philosophy, and his knowledge in divinity, theoretical, polemical, and practical, especially such points as shall be matter of the present debates and controversies; his acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and what impression he has of religion on his own soul; his knowledge of the constitution of the primitive Christian Church, and also of our own, and of the government and discipline thereof; and of his spiritual wisdom to deal with the several sorts of persons he may have to do with, namely, Atheists, despisers of religion, careless and secure persons, weak and tender consciences, and others, wherein the great difficulty of the pastoral charge lies; and, particularly, anent his ends and intentions in entering upon the preaching of the Gospel; and that they appoint three or four of their number for managing the said trials. And the General Assembly further appoint the several Presbyteries concerned to take special care that these trials be not managed in an overly and superficial manner, but as in the sight of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of his Church; and either to reject or delay to further trial such as are found not sufficiently qualified.

7^{mo}, The General Assembly appoints the same method to be observed, and trials to be taken in all the above particulars, before any Presbytery recommend a student to pass trials in another Presbytery; and that the student so recommended shall not be entered on trials in any other Presbytery, until he has resided at least half a year within their bounds.

8^{vo}, The General Assembly do also appoint and ordain that, the above space of six years being expired, and testimonials produced, and previous trials taken in manner above directed, the Presbytery, before they prescribe any part of public trials, shall write letters to all the Presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod, three months at least before the sitting of the Synod, acquainting them with their design; and, at the next meeting of the Synod, they shall also acquaint the Synod

thereof, and obtain their special advice and judgment in that particular; and that the members of the said Presbytery and Synod may be ripely advised thereanent, the General Assembly appoints the said letters to be duly and carefully transmitted to the several Presbyteries, and that intimation thereof be publicly made at the second diet of the Synod, to lie on the table till another diet, and then particular inquiry be made whether any person have any thing to object against the students being entered on trials for preaching the Gospel.

9^{no}, The General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries, that, before any student is entered on trials, the engagements required by Act 10, Assembly, 1711, of such as are to be licensed, be read to them; and that the Presbytery take promise of them that they will subscribe to and punctually observe the same, in case the Presbytery see cause to license them; and that this promise be recorded in their books.

10^{mo}, The General Assembly appoints the public probationary trials of students, who are to be licensed probationers, to be these following, viz.: 1^{mo}, The public catechetic trials to be renewed in presence of the Presbytery on all the heads mentioned in the previous trials, and that previously to all the other parts of public trials; 2^{do}, A homily in English on a Scripture text; 3^{tio}, An exegesis in Latin, on a controverted head of divinity, and sustaining a thesis and dispute thereon; 4^{to}, An exercise and addition; 5^{to}, A lecture on a large portion of Scripture; 6^{to}, A popular sermon on a particular text of Scripture; 7^{mo}, A trial on chronology and Church history, especially the history of our own Church. Lastly, Interpreting a portion of the Old Testament in Hebrew, and of the New in Greek, *ad aperturam libri*.

11^{mo}, The General Assembly judging it fit that the same method should be followed in all Presbyteries, as to questions put to and engagements taken of probationers when licensed; and that the said probationers should not only give sufficient proof of their piety, literature, and other good qualifications for the sacred ministry, but also come under the strictest engagements to adhere to and maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church, do, therefore, enact and appoint that the questions appointed by Act 10, 1711, be put to all such as pass trials; and, likewise, that they shall subscribe the formula set down in the said Act, before they be licensed to preach the Gospel. And the General Assembly strictly prohibits the licensing any person whatsoever, who shall not give explicit and satisfying answers to these questions, and subscribe the said formula, and discharges any Presbytery to make use of any other questions or formula.

12^{mo}, When any Presbytery who, with the Synod's allowance, has entered, or who is about to enter a student on trials, shall receive a letter from any Presbytery, showing their dissatisfaction with the student entered, or to be entered on trials, and giving relevant grounds for the same, which they offer to verify to the Presbytery at their next meeting, the said student shall not be licensed until the matter be tried. And the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries who shall receive such letters anent students, from any other Presbytery, to write a return with the first post after their meeting, acquainting them of their next diet.

13^{mo}, The General Assembly, considering that some persons, who, upon application to the judicatories of this Church, have not been admitted on trials, or have not been found fit and worthy to be licensed to preach, do yet retire out of the bounds of this Church, where they are not so well known, in order to enter upon trials, and after they have been licensed do not recommend themselves by a holy life and ministerial conversation, to the reproach of the Church of Scotland, where they were educated: Therefore, the General Assembly do hereby inhibit and discharge all young men, educated in this Church, or students of divinity, to go to foreign places, and offer themselves to trials for licence to preach the Gospel, without testimonials and recommendations from their Presbyteries as above directed. And further, order and appoint that no student whatsoever, coming from abroad, shall be allowed to preach within this Church, as one of our probationers, until it appear documented that they have followed the study of divinity for six years after their finishing their course of philosophy, and until they undergo anew their catechetic trials, and come under the engagements, and sign the formula appointed by the 10th Act, Assembly,

1711, and it appear by their licence, that the said probationers have been licensed by a regularly constituted Presbytery or classical meeting.

14^{mo}, For the better observation of this Act, it is particularly recommended to the Professors of Divinity to communicate the contents thereof to their students, in a public meeting annually, at such time in the month of January as to them seem most convenient. And all Presbyteries and Synods are peremptorily appointed to observe the same in all its parts. And it is strictly enjoined, that the visitors of Presbytery-books make strict inquiry how the several Presbyteries do observe the same.

The General Assembly do appoint, that the above overture have the force of an Act for the space of one year from this date; and do order that all Presbyteries shall read this Act when they are about to take any young man on trials, and shall, in the licences they grant, express the particular trials the candidate has passed in terms of this Act; and if the Presbytery shall not report any material objections or alterations to the next Assembly thereupon, this Assembly are of opinion that the next General Assembly may fitly pass the same into a standing Act.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 17, 1742, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1742.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Thomas Tullideph, Principal of St Leonard's College, at St Andrews, their Moderator, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of the immediately preceding years.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 17, 1742, post meridiem.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 12th day of that month, in the year 1743.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 12, 1743.

I.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1743.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1743.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that we reflect on the wise and prudent behaviour of the former Assemblies of the Church of Scotland; and as we are persuaded that you come together with the same zeal for the glory of God, and the advancement of true religion and piety, for the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice, we most willingly countenance this your present meeting with our royal approbation and authority.

The steady loyalty and affection which the Church has, on all occasions, shown to our person and government, and her firm adherence to the Protestant interest in general, and to the cause of virtue and religion in particular, are reasons sufficient to induce us to give fresh assurances of our resolution to protect and maintain the Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all her rights and privileges, as by law established.

You may be fully assured of our readiness to concur in whatever may tend to promote true religion, suppress vice and immorality, and secure the peace and prosperity of the Church, not doubting but that you, on your part, will sincerely endeavour, to the utmost of your power, to do every thing that can conduce to our service and the welfare of our people; and that your debates and proceedings be managed with a spirit of meekness becoming so venerable an assembly, carefully avoiding whatever may create unhappy divisions, which are the most effectual means that the enemies of our happiness and tranquillity can lay hold of, to disappoint the good ends for which you are assembled.

The experience you have already had of the abilities and integrity of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, Alexander Earl of Leven, of his concern for the Church, and his zeal for our service, will, we doubt not, render our choice of him to represent our royal person in this Assembly agreeable to you. And we are persuaded, that his diligence and application in the discharge of so important a trust will be assisted and encouraged by the unanimity and dispatch with which you will go through the several affairs that shall come under your consideration. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 23d day of April 1743, in the sixteenth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

TWEEDDALE.

Directed—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 14, 1743.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The General Assembly of this Church have been honoured with your Majesty's most gracious letter, and acknowledge, with the greatest thankfulness, the countenance you are pleased to give to our meeting at this time.

As it is with great pleasure and satisfaction we observe your Majesty's approbation of the conduct of former Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, and the confidence you place in us, we hope on this occasion to show the same zeal for the glory of God, and the advancement of true religion and piety, for the preventing the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice, which has appeared in former Assemblies; and that the proceedings of this Assembly shall likewise be favoured with your Majesty's royal approbation.

The repeated declarations your Majesty is pleased to give of your resolution to protect and maintain the Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all her rights and privileges, as by law established, greatly encourage us to persevere in that steady loyalty and affection to your Majesty's person and government, for which this Church has been remarkable on all occasions; and as we are persuaded the security of the Protestant religion, and of our liberties, does, under God, depend on the preservation of your Majesty's government, your Majesty may firmly rely on our unshaken loyalty, and that we will promote the same loyal principles among the people.

The assurances your Majesty gives us at this time of your readiness to concur in whatever may tend to promote true religion, suppress vice and immorality, and secure the peace and prosperity of the Church, are extremely agreeable, and must be powerful motives to excite us on our part sincerely to endeavour, to the utmost of our power, to do every thing that may promote such valuable ends, and can conduce to your Majesty's service and the welfare of our country. We should much neglect our true interest, and be unworthy of the character we bear, if we did not carefully avoid whatever may create unhappy divisions, and manage our debates and proceedings with that spirit of meekness your Majesty recommends.

We look on the continuance of your royal bounty, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, and preventing the increase of Popery in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as a fresh instance of your paternal regard, and of your generous designs for the good and prosperity of your subjects. It shall be our care to manage this your royal donation in such manner as may best answer the good ends proposed by your Majesty.

The abilities and integrity of the Earl of Leven, his zeal for your Majesty's service, his sincere regard to the interest of this Church, and his prudent conduct in former Assemblies, render your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly most agreeable to us. And your Majesty may be firmly persuaded that nothing shall be wanting on our part to assist and encourage him in the discharge of his important trust, by going through the several affairs that shall come under our consideration with a becoming unanimity, and all possible dispatch.

That God may abundantly bless your Majesty, and long preserve you for the happiness of these nations;—that he may make your reign prosperous, direct your councils, and render your arms successful for redressing the injuries done to your subjects, restoring the peace and preserving the liberties of Europe;—that he may eminently bless the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, the issue of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the branches of your royal family;—that he may protect you while you are abroad, and restore you in peace and honour to your British dominions; and that, after a long and happy reign on earth, over a flourishing and free people, your Majesty may inherit an immortal crown, are the sincere and hearty prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT WALLACE, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 21, 1743.—Act and Overture about the manner of Licensing Probationers.

There was transmitted, from the committee for overtures, an overture and interim act, passed by the General Assembly last year, with relation to the licensing of probationers, with their opinion that the same be continued in force as an Act for another year, and that before next Assembly Presbyteries, particularly those in the Highlands, do give their opinion on the following amendment proposed to be made thereto, viz., That there be no exception of students having the Irish language, as to the time of their studying divinity. The General Assembly having heard the said overture and opinion, agreed thereto in the above terms, and do enact for one year, from the meeting of this Assembly; and also transmit the same as an overture to the several Presbyteries accordingly.

V.

Sess. 9, May 21, 1743.—Act Disjoining certain Parishes of the Presbyteries of Middlebie, Lochmaben, and Jedburgh, and erecting the same into two new Presbyteries, to be called the Presbyteries of Annan and Langholm.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their committee for bills, the petition of the Presbytery of Middlebie, representing that the said Presbytery consists of eleven parishes, of which six are in Annandale, viz., Annan, Hoddam, Dornock, Middlebie, Kirkpatrick, and Graitney; the other five are in Eskdale, viz., Langholm, Ewes, Westerkirk, Eskdalemuir, and Canonbie: That by reason of the great distance of many of these parishes from the Presbytery seat, the badness of the roads through mossy or marshy ground, and other inconveniences, more particularly set forth in the said petition, the said Presbytery seldom meets at Middlebie, but the members were in use to meet sometimes at Annan, Langholm, Halfmorton, and other churches, wandering about from one place to another, without any order, whereby a great many difficulties and inconveniences ensued, of which the Synod of Dumfries was so sensible that they advised them to meet at Annan and Langholm by turns, in winter, and at Middlebie and Halfmorton in summer; and yet this, with all other expedients, have been tried without effect. They therefore proposed that the six parishes in Annandale be erected into a Presbytery, to meet at Annan; and that Cummertrees and Ruthwell, in the Presbytery of Lochmaben, (which at present consists of fifteen parishes,) be added to them, of which the first is two miles from Annan, and the other four. That this will effectually remove all the hardships which affect that part of the Presbytery; they will have good accommodation at Annan, the remotest church is not above six miles from it, and the road is always good. They further proposed that the five parishes in Eskdale be erected into another Presbytery, to meet at Langholm, (where they will have the like advantages as at Annan,) and that the parish of Castleton (which at present belongs to the Presbytery of Jedburgh, where there are fifteen parishes) be annexed to them, which will be likewise highly convenient for the minister of this parish, as he lies sixteen miles from Jedburgh, and only eight from Langholm. The said petition further sets forth, that the Synods of Dumfries, and of Merse and Teviotdale, and the Presbyteries of Lochmaben and Jedburgh, had, for their respective concerns, consented to the aforesaid disjunctions and new erections, as appears by extracts of their several sentences produced. The General Assembly, having heard the said petition, and opinion of their committee for bills thereupon, and

having had the consents of the above mentioned Presbyteries and Synods produced before them, did, and hereby do, according thereto, disjoin the six parishes in Annandale, viz., the parishes of Annan, Hoddam, Dornock, Middlebie, Kirkpatrick, and Graitney, from the Presbytery of Middlebie, and the parishes of Cummertrees and Ruthwell from the Presbytery of Lochmaben, and do erect these eight parishes into a Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Annan, and to have their meetings for ordinary at Annan; and did, and hereby do, disjoin the five parishes in Eskdale, viz., the parishes of Langholm, Ewes, Westerkirk, Eskdalemuir, and Canonbie, from the said Presbytery of Middlebie, and the parish of Castleton from the Presbytery of Jedburgh, and do erect these six parishes into another Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Langholm, and to have their ordinary meetings at Langholm. And the Assembly do authorise the Synod of Dumfries, at their first meeting, to appoint the time of the first meeting of the above mentioned Presbyteries of Annan and Langholm; and the Assembly declare these Presbyteries to have the same powers and privileges which any other Presbytery have, by the Word of God and constitution of this Church.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 23, 1743.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 23, 1743, ante meridiem.—Instruction to the Commission of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly appoints that all questions concerning the settlement of parishes, not already depending before this Assembly, but that may be brought before the Commission, in pursuance of a general reference, shall not be decided by them otherwise than by appeal or reference from the Synod within which the vacant parishes lie.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1743, post meridiem.—Act appointing the Places of Meeting of the Synod of Perth and Stirling.

There being presented and read to the General Assembly an Act of the Synod of Perth and Stirling, (to whom it was remitted by last Assembly to agree upon their stated places of meeting, and report,) appointing their ordinary fixed meetings to be at Perth in October, and at Stirling in April, yearly, *per vices*, in all time coming; the General Assembly, having heard the said Act, did, and hereby do, interpose their authority thereto, and do appoint the meetings of the said Synod accordingly.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1743, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Robert Wallace, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of the immediately preceding years.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1743, post meridiem.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, in the year 1744, being the 10th day of that month.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*May 23, 1743.—Overture about the Manner of deciding Causes before the Commission.**

The following overture being proposed, viz., That hereafter it be an instruction to the Commission, that all causes brought to the Assembly by appeal directly from Presbyteries, and not decided by the Assembly, be determined by the Commission at their meeting in May, or otherwise be remitted to the Synod of the bounds, and receive their judgment, from which the same may be brought to the Commission in November or March. The General Assembly transmit the said overture to the several Presbyteries for their opinion thereupon, which they are appointed to send up to the next General Assembly.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 10, 1744.

I.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1744.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1744.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1744.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

* This Overture does not appear to have been passed into an Act.—*Ed. 1843.*

IV.

Sess. 7, May 17, 1744.—Act appointing Presbyteries to keep separate Records, for inserting Particulars relating to the Scheme for a Provision for Ministers' Widows, &c.

The General Assembly, considering that by an Act of Parliament, passed in the 17th year of the reign of his present Majesty, King George the Second, entitled, "An Act for Raising and Establishing a Fund for a Provision for the Widows and Children of Ministers of the Church of Scotland, and of the Heads, Principals, and Masters of the Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow, and Edinburgh," it is, among other things, provided, "That Presbyteries shall, from time to time, make up certain lists therein specified;" as also, all other lists that shall be found necessary by the trustees, which lists are to be "attested by the moderator and clerk of every Presbytery, and transmitted to the trustees' clerk residing at Edinburgh, under a certain penalty therein mentioned:" Therefore, that the said Act of Parliament may be executed in the most easy and effectual manner, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint and ordain every Presbytery to keep a separate register, wherein they shall record the names and the parish churches of all the ministers, now members of their respective Presbyteries, with a particular account, if such ministers be married, with the dates of their present and future marriages; and shall also therein record the dates of their first ordination or admission to a benefice in the Church of Scotland, the names of all their present children, the day, month, and year of the birth of such of them as are under the age of sixteen, the names and dates of the birth of such of their children as shall hereafter be born; and likewise the time of their present or future children's death, as the same shall happen.

Further, the General Assembly hereby enjoin and ordain every Presbytery to record the names and parish churches of the several ministers, who shall hereafter be admitted to a benefice within their bounds, with the particular dates of their respective admissions; and an account if such ministers be married, with the dates of their then marriages, or such of them as shall happen after their admissions; and shall also record the several facts relating to their children in like manner, as above appointed, with respect to ministers, now members of the Church.

The Assembly likewise hereby enjoin and ordain Presbyteries to record the time of the deaths of ministers, as the same shall happen, with the names of their respective widows, and also the dates of the marriages or deaths of ministers' widows, residing at the time of their death or marriage within their bounds; as also the dates of the several vacancies that were vacant on the 25th of March last, or which have since happened, or shall happen hereafter within their bounds, with the causes of the vacancies: And in general, the Assembly hereby ordain Presbyteries to record, from time to time, all other things that shall be found necessary by the trustees, for the more easy execution of the said Act; and they also ordain and appoint all the ministers now entitled, or who shall be hereafter admitted to a benefice in the Church of Scotland, to lodge, from time to time, in the hands of the clerk of their respective Presbyteries, a particular condescendence of the facts relating to their respective cases, as the same shall happen; all which facts are hereby appointed and ordained to be entered distinctly by Presbytery clerks in the said separate register, under proper columns, and regularly signed by moderators and clerks, and by the ministers respectively concerned, from which the Presbyteries may annually make up the list necessary for each year, and transmit the same, duly attested, to the trustees, as directed in the said Act of Parliament.

V.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1744.—Act and Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VI.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1744.—Act about Electing of Members to the General Assemblies, and attesting their Commissions.

The General Assembly, considering that they have at this time set aside several commissions by Presbyteries and burghs to their representatives in the Assembly, as not being in terms of the Acts of Assembly, do hereby recommend to and enjoin Presbyteries, in time coming, to take care that all commissions be in due form, according to the Acts of Assembly; and in order to this, that they be at all due pains to get themselves informed that the elders sent up by them to the Assembly, or attested by them, as sent up by burghs, be qualified in these terms; and the Assembly do recommend to sessions to take all proper care to ordain only such to be elders as they know to be thus qualified.

VII.

Sess. 11, May 19, 1744.—Act and Recommendation against the sinful Practice of Smuggling of Goods.

The General Assembly recommend it to all the ministers of this Church, &c., to discourage, so far as in them lies, by their discourses and example, the sinful and pernicious practice of smuggling; and do appoint that the 9th Act of Assembly, 1719, and 15th Act of Assembly, 1736, be reprinted, and forthwith transmitted to Presbyteries and ministers; and ordain that the same be read from the pulpits of all the parish churches within Scotland, betwixt and the first of August next.

VIII.

May 21, 1744.—An Address to his Majesty, upon occasion of the present Critical Juncture of Affairs.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in our National Assembly, take this first opportunity of concurring with your Majesty's other faithful subjects, in testifying our abhorrence of the late intended invasion of your Majesty's kingdoms, in favour of a Popish Pretender, supported by a French power.

As the Church of Scotland, ever since the settlement of the British Crown in your Majesty's illustrious house, have considered all their interests, sacred and civil, as inseparably connected with that happy establishment, we should, of all others, be most unworthy of our invaluable privileges, if, on this occasion, we did not express the warmest resentment of such an audacious attempt.

Great Sir,

We reflect, with particular pleasure, that the ministers and members of this Church have always distinguished themselves, by their firm and zealous adherence to the Protestant succession in your Majesty's royal family; and we can assure your Majesty that, no less sensible of our present happy situation, influenced by the same loyal principles, and equally concerned for the security of the reformed religion, we shall steadily pursue the laudable example our predecessors have set us, and hope to show, even in times of the greatest danger, that we count nothing too dear in support of your Majesty's auspicious government, the great bulwark, under God, of our religion, laws, and liberties.

That our gracious God, by whom kings reign, may continue to direct your Majesty's councils, and give success to your arms—may dispose all the friends of liberty and the Protestant religion to imitate your great example, in defence of the common

cause;—that the same kind Providence which has hitherto protected your Majesty's person and government in the most remarkable manner, may make your reign long and prosperous, may entail the happiness of it upon these kingdoms to latest posterity in your august house; and that, after a long and happy reign on earth, over a brave, a free, and loyal people, you may inherit immortal glory, is, and shall be, the fervent prayers of,

Most gracious Sovereign,

Your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN ADAMS, *Moderator.*

IX.

May 21, 1744.—Act concerning Mr William Leechman, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow.

The General Assembly having called for the report of the committee named to consider the case about Professor Leechman, and caused to be read the remarks of the committee of the Presbytery of Glasgow, upon the passages in the Professor's sermon excepted against by them, with his answers thereto; there was also read a paper given in by the said Professor to the said committee of the Assembly, explaining himself further on the occasion of the said sermon, and on the subject of a passage thereof, taken notice of by the said committee; of which paper the tenor follows, viz.:—"One main occasion of publishing this sermon on Prayer, was to prevent the bad effects of a late pamphlet, which represents Prayer as an absurd and unreasonable, nay, as an impious and blasphemous practice. For that wicked pamphlet being spread in the part of the country where I live, and having had observable bad influence upon young and unthinking minds, I was persuaded by some friends, who are zealous for the interests of religion, to publish this sermon (which they had occasionally heard me preach) as a proper antidote to the poison of it. As the pamphlet which occasioned the publication of this sermon did attack only one part of Prayer, viz., offering up our desires to God; but did not attack the other part of it, viz., the offering them up in the name of Christ, the discourse is therefore mainly limited to the explication and the vindication of this first part of Prayer, without explaining and vindicating the second part of it; which I considered as a separate subject, or, at least, a different branch of the same subject; so that the omissions complained of in that performance did not proceed from any disregard of these important and fundamental doctrines of Christianity—the offering up our desires to God in the name of Christ, and the merits and satisfaction of the Mediator, as the only grounds of our acceptance with God, and of our obtaining the pardon of sin; but from a persuasion that it is necessary to convince men of the reasonableness of offering up their desires to God, before you can convince them that it is a reasonable thing to offer them up in the name of Christ; and from a persuasion that it might be of some use (through the Divine blessing) to endeavour to do the first of these at the time when, and in the place of the country where I attempted it.

"If, therefore, any passages of this sermon have been so incautiously expressed, as naturally to lead any to think (which I am not yet convinced they are) that I meant to assert that the necessity of the Christian religion itself is superseded by the light of nature; or that the light of nature is sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of his will, which is necessary to salvation; that praying in the name of Christ is not the duty of Christians, or a foreign and superfluous circumstance; or that the merits and propitiation of Jesus Christ are not the only grounds of a sinner's acceptance with God, and of his obtaining the forgiveness of sin; and that the only end of punishment is the reformation of the offender; I honestly declare,

I had no such intention in these passages; and that this is really so may be further confirmed from this certain fact, that this sermon, which is now printed, was only one sermon enlarged out of eight or nine, delivered from the same text, at the same time this sermon was first preached, when I spoke at considerable length on the doctrine of the intercession of Jesus Christ; besides, it is well known to the Presbytery of Irvine, that I preached regular courses of sermons on the particular doctrines of Christianity in my own congregation, as well as I frequently preached abroad on the same subjects, as occasion offered; and as I have already subscribed the Confession of Faith, where these doctrines are taught in the strongest manner as the confession of my faith, I am still willing to do the same again. (*Subscribitur*,) WIL. LEECHMAN." The above paper being read over, parties were fully heard, and removed. Then the Assembly caused to be read the report and overture of their committee; the tenor whereof follows, viz. :—

That from the importance of this case, and the steps taken by the Presbytery of Glasgow, the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr had sufficient reasons to take into their own hands the cognizance of the inquiry touching the sermon.

That the judgment passed by the Synod, notwithstanding that no appeal was taken against it, does not make it a *res judicata*, or preclude this Assembly from deliberating, whether the sermon affords a just occasion for trial or censure against the Professor, in respect that there was no libel against, or formal trial of the Professor, but a preliminary inquiry in order to such trial, in case sufficient cause should be found for it.

That the committee having considered the sermon, and particularly the passages thereof chiefly excepted against; and having read and considered the remarks of the Presbytery of Glasgow, and the Professor's answers to the same; and having heard the parties, and received and considered a paper voluntarily offered by the Professor, explaining himself farther on the occasion of the sermon, and on the subject of the passages excepted to; and again called the parties, and read that declaration in their presence, and heard the members of the Presbytery of Glasgow thereupon, are of opinion, that the Professor has given abundant satisfaction concerning the orthodoxy of his sentiments; and that there is no ground or occasion remaining for any further trial of the said Professor, in respect of that sermon; and that the Presbytery of Glasgow be prohibited to commence or carry on any farther or other proceedings against the Professor on account of that sermon.

The General Assembly, having heard the said report and overture, did, without a vote, agree to approve thereof, with this explanation, that by the expressions in the narrative, viz. :—"And particularly the passages chiefly excepted against," no more was intended by the committee, (as by several members thereof was declared,) nor is intended or meant by this Assembly, in approving their overture above inserted, than that the committee, and thereafter the Assembly, considered the passages in the said sermon that had been remarked upon by the Presbytery of Glasgow; and another passage taken notice of by some members of the committee of Assembly; but not that either the committee or the Assembly had read over or considered the whole of that sermon. And parties being called, the premises were intimated to them, whereupon Professor Leechman took instruments; and the members from the Presbytery of Glasgow, appellants, declared their acquiescence in the said sentence.

X.

Sess. 13, May 21, 1744, post meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr John Adams, minister of the Gospel at Dalrymple, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee, &c. (The terms of the Act are the same as those of the immediately preceding years, with the exception of the concluding words, which run thus:—"Who

are to lay their draught thereof before a subsequent meeting." No further change in the terms of this Commission appears to have taken place till 1757.—*Ed.* 1843.)

XI.

Sess. 13, *May* 21, 1744.—*Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.*

The General Assembly, &c.

XII.

Sess. ult., *May* 21, 1744.—*Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.*

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 9th day of that month, in the year 1745.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 72d Psalm, from the 17th verse to the close, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 9, 1745.

I.

Sess. 1, *May* 9, 1745.—*The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, *May* 9, 1745.—*The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The sincere and constant zeal you have shown for the glory of God, and the advancement of true religion and piety, and the remarkable loyalty and affection you have ever expressed for our person and government in your former Assemblies, fully persuade us at this time, you will be directed by the same laudable spirit; and, therefore, we most willingly countenance your present meeting by our approbation and royal authority. And we take this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of our firm resolution to support and maintain all the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as by law established.

As we make no doubt but you now come together with the like good dispositions

and intentions, so you may depend upon our protection and assistance in all your endeavours to promote the true interest of religion, to prevent the growth of Popery, and to discourage and suppress profaneness and immorality; and as you must be sensible of the great importance of a good agreement and unanimity among yourselves in all your proceedings, so we hope your debates will be conducted with all moderation, brotherly love, and charity.

We have again made choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, Alexander Earl of Leven, to represent our royal person in this Assembly. His known zeal for our service, and his firm adherence to the principles of the Church of Scotland, and concern for its prosperity, will always render him acceptable to you. And as we have the greatest confidence in his capacity, diligence, and application in the discharge of so important a trust, we are persuaded that you, on your part, will contribute every thing in your power towards the unanimous and speedy dispatch of the business proper for your consideration, and the attaining the good and desirable ends for which you are now convened. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 18th day of April 1745, and in the eighteenth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

TWEEDDALE.

Directed,—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 11, 1745.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The very gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour us was received with all the duty and thankfulness becoming loyal subjects, sensible of the great happiness they enjoy under your benign and auspicious government.

That your Majesty is pleased so willingly to countenance our meeting in this Assembly, by your royal approbation and authority, cannot but affect us with the more warm and lively sense of gratitude, that it is supported by such honourable sentiments of the zeal shown for the glory of God, and the advancement of true religion; and the loyalty and affection expressed for your Majesty's person and government in our former Assemblies, and such a full persuasion that we will be directed by the same laudable spirit in this Assembly. So obliging a confidence in us must render us utterly inexcusable, if, by any neglect of our duty, we should disappoint it, and should forfeit the applauses our Sovereign discovers such forwardness to bestow on us.

Your Majesty's renewed assurances of your firm resolution to support and maintain all the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as by law established, oblige us, in the strongest manner, to renew our humble and dutiful expressions of the most inviolable affection and loyalty to your Majesty's person and government, of our entire reliance on your royal assurances, and of our firm confidence in your protection and favour.

Your Majesty's goodness, in entertaining such a firm persuasion of the good dispositions and intentions with which we are now come together, and so strongly encouraging our dependence upon your royal protection and assistance, in our endeavours to do what is our unquestionable duty, lays us under additional obligations to use our best endeavours for promoting the true interest of religion, for preventing the growth of Popery, and for discouraging and suppressing profaneness and immorality. And the sense we must have of the great importance of a good agreement and unanimity among ourselves in all our proceedings, and that

our debates be conducted with all moderation, brotherly love, and charity, highly recommend to us such a compliance with your Majesty's kind and gracious injunctions, as may answer your favourable hopes.

The continuance of your royal bounty, for promoting the knowledge of true religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we most thankfully receive, as a fresh instance of your paternal regard, and of your generous designs for the greatest good of your subjects, which obliges us to the strictest care in managing this your royal donation in such manner as may best answer the purposes of so tender a nursing-father.

Your Majesty's repeated choice of the Earl of Leven to represent your royal person in this Assembly, could not fail to be most agreeable to us, and to be regarded by us as a further proof of your royal favour. His known zeal for your Majesty's service, and his firm adherence to the principles of the Church of Scotland, and concern for its prosperity, must always render him acceptable to us. And it is with the greatest satisfaction we observe the just confidence your Majesty has in his capacity, diligence, and application, in the discharge of so important a trust. We should be highly culpable if we were wanting on our part to contribute every thing in our power towards the unanimous and speedy dispatch of the business proper for our consideration, and the attaining the good and desirable ends for which we are now convened.

That God may long preserve your Majesty for the good of all your people, and the maintaining the true Protestant interest, the liberties of mankind, and the balance of Europe;—that your sacred person and valuable life may always, and everywhere, be under the protection of his good and watchful Providence;—that he may abundantly bless the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the branches of your royal family;—and that there may never be wanting one of your most illustrious house to sway the sceptre of these realms while sun and moon endure;—that he may prosper your arms, and those of your allies, against the common disturbers of the peace of Europe;—and that, after a long and prosperous reign over a free and happy people, you may at last inherit a crown of glory that fadeth not away, are, and shall be, the hearty and unfeigned prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILL. WISHART, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 8, May 17, 1745.—Act concerning the Fund for a Provision to the Widows and Children of the Ministers of this Church.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, having had laid before them a representation of the trustees, nominated and appointed by the late Act of Parliament, for managing the Fund for a Provision to the Widows and Children of the Ministers of the Church of Scotland, and of the Heads, Principals, and Masters of the Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, setting forth, that by the delay of several Presbyteries in transmitting timeously the lists of particulars necessary to be known by the trustees, it was with the utmost difficulty that they could make the charge on the collector in due time, which delay was occasioned, in a great measure, through Presbyteries not keeping a separate register, according to the fourth Act of the late General Assembly, appointing every Presbytery to keep a separate register, and therein to record the names and parish churches of the several ministers, members of their respective Presbyteries, with the particular dates of their admissions and marriages; and also the dates of the birth or death of their children, and of several other facts; as the said act more fully bears. And the Assembly, considering the great inconve-

niences that may arise, through Presbyteries not duly keeping, and regularly filling up, the several particulars in their said separate register in an uniform manner, out of which the facts may, from time to time, be taken, and in the most authentic manner attested and transmitted to the said trustees, did, therefore, and hereby do, renew the foresaid 4th Act of last General Assembly, and strictly enjoin the observation thereof; and to the end the same may be more regularly and uniformly observed, do appoint the several Presbyteries to keep the said separate register according to the plan this day agreed upon by the Assembly, and recorded in their register. And each minister is hereby required duly to report to the Presbytery, either by himself or by letter, any alteration which shall happen from time to time in his family, at the first diet of Presbytery immediately subsequent to such alteration; or in case of an unavoidable necessity preventing his then notifying such alteration, he shall intimate the same as soon as possible. And the Assembly do appoint the several Synods to call for the said separate registers at least once a year, and carefully inspect the same, and attest that they are kept according to the plan referred to in this Act; which attestation shall also be marked in the Synod's records. And for the better securing, and more regular transmission of the foresaid annual lists to the trustees, the General Assembly do enact and ordain, that every Presbytery shall meet annually on such day, betwixt the 11th of November and the 11th of December, as they shall respectively judge most convenient, (the Presbyteries in the Western and Northern Isles excepted;) and shall, at such meeting, prepare and transmit to the trustees' clerk, at Edinburgh, their respective lists for the preceding year, to the end the trustees may be the better enabled with accuracy to carry on the scheme. And the General Assembly do recommend to and enjoin the several Presbyteries to be careful in uplifting and transmitting to the collector-general of the fund the rates due out of vacant parishes, and out of the annats in their several bounds. And the Assembly further appoints the several Presbyteries, so soon as this Act shall come to their hands, to insert the same, and also the 4th Act of Assembly, 1744, in their separate register; and to acquaint such of their members as are absent of the contents of this Act.

V.

Sess. 8. May 17, 1745.—Act prohibiting Synods to disjoin or annex Parishes from one Presbytery to another.

The General Assembly, considering the inconveniences that may arise, by Synods passing acts for annexation or disjunction of parishes from one Presbytery to another, did, and hereby do, prohibit Synods to disjoin any parish from a Presbytery, and annex the same to another, without first having the authority of the General Assembly; and that what shall be done in virtue of such authority be reported to the Assembly next following, and have their approbation to any such annexation or disjunction.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 18, 1745.—Act and Overture about some pieces of Sacred Poesy.

The General Assembly had laid before them, by their committee, some pieces of sacred poesie, under the title of Translations and Paraphrases of several Passages of Sacred Scripture, composed by private persons; and though the Assembly have not sufficient time to consider these poems maturely, so as to approve or disapprove of them, yet they judge the same may be printed; and do remit the consideration of them to the several Presbyteries, in order to their transmitting their observations to the next General Assembly, that they, or any subsequent Assembly, may give such orders about the whole affair as they shall judge for edification; and the Assembly appoint this their resolution to be prefixed to the impression.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1745.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1745.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

*Sess. ult., May 20, 1745.—Act concerning the Character and Behaviour of Ministers and Probationers. **

The General Assembly, considering how much it is for the honour of God and edification of the Church, that all ministers and preachers of the Gospel be persons of good life and character, do earnestly recommend to and enjoin all Presbyteries to take care that all ministers behave themselves as becomes their character; and to be strict in adverting that young men whom they license to preach the Gospel, be persons of good report, and carefully observe their behaviour after they are licensed; they do also appoint that the rules of the Form of Process, Chap. vii., with respect to informations against ministers of this Church, be extended to probationers.

X.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1745.—Act and Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1745.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 8th day of that month, in the year 1746.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 122d Psalm, from the 6th verse to the close, and pronouncing of the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

WILL. GRANT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

* The last clause of this act was afterwards transmitted as an overture. See 11th Act, 1746.—Ed. 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 8, 1746.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 8, 1746, ante meridiem.—The Meeting of the General Assembly.**

Which day, after sermon by Dr William Wishart, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, Moderator of the last General Assembly, the ministers and ruling elders, commissioners from Presbyteries, burghs, and universities, to the General Assembly of this National Church, did convene in the Assembly-House, and after prayer by the said Principal Wishart the names of the said commissioners were read out from their several commissions, and a roll, made up by the sub-clerk, was laid before the Assembly.

II.

*Sess. 4, May 16, 1746, ante meridiem.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.**

This day, the General Assembly being convened, there was produced to them, by the Right Honourable Alexander Earl of Leven, his Majesty's Commission, sealed with the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and used in Scotland in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, making and constituting him his Majesty's High Commissioner and representative in this Assembly, which Commission being publicly read with all due honour and respect, was appointed to be recorded in the books of Assembly; the tenor whereof follows:—

GEORGIUS, &c.,

III.

Sess. 4, May 16, 1746.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well. The experience we have at all times had, and the fresh proofs you have given on occasion of the present unnatural Rebellion, of your steady attachment to our person and government, and of your zeal for the support of the Protestant succession, engage us to return you our hearty thanks; and we do most readily countenance with our royal authority your meeting at this time, not doubting but you will continue to give us marks of your loyalty and affection to us, by exciting the people under your charge to a due sense of the blessings they enjoy under our government, and to a just abhorrence of the pernicious designs of those who have endeavoured to overturn our most holy religion, to subvert the laws and constitution of this kingdom, and to introduce Popery and arbitrary power.

We have again made choice of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, Alexander Earl of Leven, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our person in this

* The Assembly met on the 8th of May, according to adjournment; but, in the confusion of the times, the Royal Commission to the Earl of Leven had not been forwarded. Principal Wishart was continued in the chair for the first and second diets. Before the third diet, May the 10th, the Royal Commission had arrived, but it did not authorise the commission to act till the 16th. The Assembly, however, proceeded on that day to choose a Moderator, and having appointed Mr John Lumsden, Professor of Divinity, King's College, Aberdeen, to that office, and having named the usual committers for the dispatch of business, the Assembly adjourned to the 16th, when the Earl of Leven produced his Commission. This accounts for the Assembly meeting on the 8th of May, and the King's Commission not being produced till the 16th.—*Ed. 1843.*

Assembly, who, from his known zeal for our service, his firm adherence to the true interest of his country, and the fidelity and prudence with which he has already discharged this important trust, we are persuaded will be acceptable to you. We do, on this occasion, repeat to you the assurances of our unalterable resolution to maintain the established Church of Scotland in the possession of all their just rights and privileges; and as we promise ourselves, by the blessing of Almighty God, that a speedy and effectual end will be put to the Rebellion, the peace and tranquillity of the country restored, and all our subjects again made happy, in the full enjoyment of their civil and religious rights; we have the firmest reliance on your doing every thing on your parts that may contribute to the attaining of these desirable ends. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 30th day of April 1746, in the nineteenth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's command,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 17, 1746.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

It is with unspeakable joy we received your Majesty's most gracious letter. As our attachment to your Majesty's person and government, and the Protestant succession in your royal family, is the effect of principle, duty, and interest, so your Majesty's great condescension, in taking notice of our conduct during the present wicked and unnatural Rebellion, and in putting so high an honour upon us, as to give us thanks for doing what we were unquestionably bound to do, we look upon as a great proof of that distinguishing goodness which makes so bright a part of your princely character. The security of our religion and liberty is so closely interwoven with the stability of your throne, that we can claim no merit when we fall in with our unquestionable duty.

The ready countenance which your Majesty is graciously pleased to give to our meeting at this time, cannot fail to animate us to give all possible evidences of our unshaken loyalty and inviolable affection to your Majesty; and, particularly, by exciting the people under our charge to a due sense of the blessings they enjoy under the best government, together with a just abhorrence of the worst, and of all the pernicious designs which tend to subvert our holy religion and good laws, in order to introduce Popery and arbitrary power.

We esteem the choice your Majesty has again made of the Earl of Leven to represent your royal person in this Assembly, as another instance of your Majesty's goodness to the Church of Scotland. His known zeal for your Majesty's service; his firm adherence on all occasions to the true interest of his country, and especially during its late calamitous state; his great affection to this Church, and the many and recent proofs given of his eminent abilities for discharging this high trust, render your Majesty's choice of him most acceptable to us.

The repeated assurance of your Majesty's unalterable resolution to maintain the Church of Scotland in the possession of all her just rights and privileges, is a further proof of your Majesty's royal favour, and, under God, the great security against the invasions of those who are equally disaffected to the Crown and this Church. As we do entirely confide in the assurances your Majesty gives us, so they cannot but prompt us to exert ourselves in making all the returns of gratitude and duty in our power.

When we reflect upon the dismal scene of blood, rapine, and oppression, which so lately filled this land with horror; when we view our happy constitution, lately threatened with destruction, and our religion and liberty ready to be offered up victims to

superstition and tyranny; and now have the happy prospect of seeing a speedy and effectual end put to the present Rebellion, the peace of our country restored, and your Majesty's subjects again fully possessed of their civil and religious rights; we cannot but offer our sincere and humble thanks to Almighty God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for such inestimable blessings, and contribute every thing in our power for attaining these desirable ends. We must ascribe our present tranquillity, under the Divine Providence, to your Majesty's care, vigilance, and wise administration, and to the conduct and valour of your heroic son, Prince William Duke of Cumberland, our second deliverer, and restorer of those blessings procured us by another glorious prince of that name at the late happy Revolution.

Your Majesty having been graciously pleased, by your High Commissioner, to signify your royal intention of continuing your pious donation in order to reform the barbarous parts of our country, whereof some have lately made the most unworthy requital, engages us by the strongest ties to return your Majesty our most humble and hearty thanks, and to promise our continued care to manage this royal donation in such manner as may best answer the good ends proposed by your Majesty.

That your Majesty may be always under the Divine care, and long preserved for the defence of our holy religion, and the happiness of all your subjects;—that their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, with their issue, and all your royal family, may be highly favoured of God, and made public blessings to their country;—that Almighty God may make his Royal Highness the Duke an eminent instrument, under your Majesty, for repressing the insolence of arbitrary power and tyranny, and vindicating the liberties of Europe in general, and of your Majesty's dominions in particular;—that He may direct your councils, and prosper your Majesty's arms, both by sea and land, with remarkable success;—that a speedy end may be put to this unnatural Rebellion, peace and order restored, and the seeds of disloyalty may be forever rooted out of the minds of your Majesty's subjects; and that the crown may descend in your royal Protestant line to latest posterity, are, and shall be, the hearty prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN LUMSDEN, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, May 19, 1746.—Congratulatory Address to his Majesty upon the Victory obtained by his Army, under command of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, over the Rebels in this Country.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to approach your throne, with sincere expressions of our utmost detestation of the present wicked and unnatural Rebellion, to testify our unfeigned thanks to the Almighty, and to congratulate your Majesty on the happy success of your arms, by which we have the greatest hopes of seeing a solid and lasting peace quickly re-established in your kingdoms, and your loyal subjects restored to the full enjoyment of all their just rights and privileges.

The gloomy prospect lately set before our eyes, by the ungrateful disturbers of your Majesty's mild and just government, makes us reflect with horror on the pernicious plot contrived by the policy, and fomented by the power and interest, of the avowed enemies of our country, its religion, laws, and liberties, and of the balance of power in Europe.

It raises our astonishment and indignation, that any who have tasted of the manifold blessings of your indulgent administration, should have attempted to exchange their religion and liberty for tyranny and lawless power, superstition, and slavery; and, by violating the most solemn obligations of oaths, and ties of gratitude, become tools to the declared enemies of their native country.

Now, that we are, by the good providence of God, sheltered, under the protection of your auspicious government, from the storm that threatened our happy constitution, we behold, with pleasure, the remarkable success of your Majesty's arms, under the wise conduct, and by the intrepid valour of your heroic son the Duke, dispelling the cloud and defeating the rebels, who, hopeless of escaping the vengeance of your victorious arms, sink under their own confusion.

Great Sir, it affords us the highest satisfaction to observe, that notwithstanding the calamities of our country, and the traitorous practices of too many of our infatuated countrymen, the ministers of this Church have, by Divine grace, manifested a firm, zealous attachment to your Majesty's person and government; and as it is our duty, so it is our unalterable resolution, to persevere in our loyalty to your Majesty, and steady adherence to the Protestant succession in your royal family; and it shall be our constant prayer to God, that he may unite the minds of all your subjects into a just sense of the happiness they enjoy under the best of kings.

May the same Providence that has hitherto preserved your sacred person and protected your dominions, continue to watch over your Majesty and your royal family, for a blessing to all Protestant Churches, and the peculiar happiness of your subjects.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JO. LUMSDEN, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 7, May 20, 1746.—Congratulatory Letter to his Royal Highness William Duke of Cumberland.

SIR,

That the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has met at this time in a state of peace and security exceeding our greatest hopes, is, under God, owing to his Majesty's wisdom and goodness, in sending your Royal Highness, and to your generous resolution in coming to be the deliverer of this Church and nation. We might, therefore, be justly charged with ingratitude to the glorious instrument of Divine Providence, if we neglected to pay your Royal Highness our most humble and thankful acknowledgments for that happiness we enjoy.

As, for some months past, the many fatigues you endured, and the alarming dangers you ran, in pursuing an ungrateful and rebellious crew, filled our minds with the greatest pain; so the complete victory now obtained over them by the bravery of your Royal Father's troops, led on by your wise conduct, and animated by your heroic example, gives us the highest joy.

Every loyal subject, every sincere lover of the religion, laws, and liberty of his country, is ready to express his just gratitude to your Royal Highness, by whom these inestimable blessings are preserved to us. The Church of Scotland are under peculiar obligations to offer their most thankful acknowledgments to Almighty God, who has raised you up to be the brave defender of your Royal Father's throne, the happy restorer of our peace, and, at this time, guardian of all our sacred and civil interests.

The many instances of your favourable regard to the ministers of the Church of Scotland, and of that entire confidence you have placed in us, ever since this part of Great Britain has been blessed with your presence, must for ever excite us to give the strongest proofs that we have not been unworthy of that countenance you have been pleased to give us, and of that trust with which you have honoured us.

That the Lord of Hosts, who has hitherto covered your head in bloody battles,

may still guard your precious life amidst those dangers to which you may be yet exposed, in leading armies against the common invaders of the liberties of Europe, and crown you with the same glorious success over our enemies abroad which you have obtained over traitors at home ;—that your illustrious name, so dear to us, may be transmitted still with greater glory to latest posterity ;—and that you may share at last in that eternal happiness and glory, bestowed by the Divine mercy, in a distinguished manner, upon those who have been eminent examples of virtue, and the happy instruments of communicating public blessings to mankind, are, and shall be, the prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, your most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servants, the Ministers and Elders met in a General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, presence, and at our appointment, by

JO. LUMSDEN, *Moderator.*

VII.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act and Overture about the Licensing Probationers for the holy Ministry.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act and Recommendation about the Manner of Singing of Psalms.

The General Assembly do recommend to private families, that in their religious exercises, singing the praises of God, they go on without the intermission of reading each line ; And do recommend to schoolmasters in the several parishes that they be careful to instruct the youth in singing the common tunes.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act for Reprinting an Abbreviate of the Laws against Profaneness and Immorality.

The General Assembly appoint, that the abbreviate of the laws and Acts of Parliament against profaneness and immorality be reprinted, and copies thereof sent to the several ministers of this Church, to be read from the pulpits of their respective churches.

X.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act about the Office-bearers in this Church and others, concerned in the Rebellion.

The General Assembly do appoint the several Presbyteries duly to inquire into the behaviour of the office-bearers in this Church during the late unnatural Rebellion, and to commence and carry on the proper processes against offenders ; and, in case of difficulty, to take the advice of the Synod of the bounds, or Commission of the General Assembly. And the Commission is hereby instructed to receive, cognosce, and finally determine, in any reference or appeal that may be brought before them

from Synods or Presbyteries, with respect to persons that may be accused of having been guilty in the said Rebellion. And the Assembly recommend to ministers and Presbyteries to call before them all others that may have been guilty as aforesaid, and to censure them according to the degrees of their offence, and as they shall judge for edification; and that ministers and Presbyteries take care that all teachers of youth within their bounds be qualified in terms of law, and that Presbyteries inquire concerning this at ministers, and Synods at Presbyteries, at their privy censures.

XI.

*Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act and Overture about Processes against Probationers for the Ministry.**

The General Assembly agreed to transmit to the consideration of the several Presbyteries the last clause of the 9th Act of the last General Assembly, which appoints that the rules of the Form of Process, Chap. vii., with respect to informations against ministers of this Church, be extended to probationers; and Presbyteries are enjoined to send up their opinion thereupon to the next General Assembly; and, in the mean time, the Assembly appoint that the same have the force of an Act.

XII.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act and Recommendation for keeping Registers of the Dead.

The General Assembly do recommend to and appoint the several kirk-sessions to have a register, in which they shall record the names of every person dying within their respective parishes, and interred in their ordinary burying-places, and the times of their death.

XIII.

Sess. 9, May 22, 1746.—Act against Profaneness and Immorality.

The General Assembly, taking into their most serious consideration how much profaneness and immoralities of all sorts abound, to which we ought to impute all our troubles and national calamities; and considering, on the other hand, the many most gracious deliverances wrought for us, particularly by the late victory; and that these various providences loudly call on all ranks (after such public judgments and deliverances) to exert themselves, suitably to their several stations, to promote public reformation; the Assembly judge it highly seasonable, at this juncture, to revive the various Acts of former Assemblies against profaneness and immoralities; and particularly, the 11th Act of Assembly, 1697, which “seriously recommends to ministers and members of kirk-sessions, from a true zeal for God, to hold hand to the delating, informing against, and punishing of all profane transgressors, without respect of persons, by civil punishments, conform to the Acts made in that behalf; and that they record their diligence in their session-books, that the same may be seen by their Presbyteries, who are hereby required to make inquiry therein at their visitations.” And the Assembly further appoints, that the abstract of the laws against profaneness and immoralities be reprinted, and that all kirk-sessions provide themselves with copies thereof, and have meetings at stated times, on purpose to consider of the most proper methods for obtaining the execution of these laws; and that ministers frequently preach sermons, on purpose to persuade and direct Christians in general to contribute their endeavours, according to their several stations, and to take the best methods to strengthen one another’s hands in this important work; and that Presbyteries and

* This overture was transmitted for several years, but does not appear to have passed,—*Ed.* 1843.

Synods inquire (at the diet of privy censures) into the diligence of ministers and sessions in this matter. And the Assembly instruct their Commission to have under their view the Act of Parliament of Great Britain, now preparing, against profane swearing and cursing, and other Acts formerly made; and to frame a proper Act against vice and immorality, and to point out some of the proper expedients for discouraging it, and promoting true religion and godliness.

XIV.

Sess. 10, May 22, 1746, post meridiem.—Act for a Thanksgiving.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into their serious consideration the surprising deliverance a good and gracious God has been pleased to bestow upon us in this land, from the late wicked and unnatural Rebellion, carried on by an infatuated party amongst ourselves, and supported and encouraged by the Popish powers abroad, the declared enemies of our peace and happiness, and of the liberties of Europe; which Rebellion, if it had succeeded, would at once have stripped us of our religion and liberty, and subjected us to the cruel yoke of Popery and arbitrary power. And the Assembly, considering how God has thus mercifully interposed for us, when we were most unworthy of the least favour from his bountiful hand, being a people laden with iniquity, and highly ungrateful to him for former deliverances of this kind, and particularly for the late glorious and never to be forgotten Revolution, and the continued peace and tranquillity we have enjoyed since; do judge it their duty to call all ranks and degrees of persons in this National Church to stir up their souls, and all that is within them, to bless and praise the God of our salvation for this and all his wonders of mercy that he has wrought for us, both formerly and of late; and to give unto the infinitely wise God the glory of his free and undeserved goodness; taking shame and confusion of face unto ourselves, because of our highly aggravated iniquities; searching and trying our ways, and turning again to the Lord, from whom we have deeply revolted, as the only way to secure to ourselves the continuance of those blessings we are presently possessed of. And the General Assembly do seriously call and exhort all within this Church, to join, with their humble and hearty thanksgiving, earnest prayers to the God of all grace, to turn us to himself, in his dear Son, our only propitiation, and to one another in the ways of truth and holiness: That he would eminently bless, and long preserve our only rightful Sovereign King George, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the royal family: That he would, in a remarkable manner, protect and defend his Royal Highness the Duke, who, under God, has at this time been the instrument of our deliverance: That he would kindly direct and influence the public councils of the nation at this critical conjuncture; give success to his Majesty's arms, and those of his allies, by sea and land, against the enemies of our religion and liberties, and of the peace of Europe: That he would assist and enable all ranks and degrees of persons within this Church to make a right improvement of the mercies bestowed upon us: That he would, in his infinite mercy, continue to give us favourable weather, and at last crown the year with his goodness; and, above all, that he would give us grace to fear him and serve him, inclining our hearts to obey his voice, that he may not be provoked to turn and do us hurt, after all the great good he hath done us. And the General Assembly appoints the said thanksgiving to be observed in all the parishes within this National Church, upon the fourth Thursday of June next; and that humble application be made to his Majesty for his royal sanction, in order to the more effectual and due observation of the said day. And the Assembly further appoints, that this their Act be read from the pulpits of all the parish churches within Scotland, upon the Sabbath day immediately preceding the foresaid fourth Thursday of June, with suitable exhortations to the people.

XV.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1746.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1746.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

XVII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1746.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the first Thursday of May next, being the 7th day of that month, in the year 1747.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

May 22, 1746.—Overture about the Psalmody.

The General Assembly, considering that the several Presbyteries have not transmitted to this Assembly their observations upon some pieces of sacred poesy, under the title of "Translations and Paraphrases of several Passages of Sacred Scripture," which had been remitted to their consideration by the last General Assembly, do therefore remit the same to the further consideration of the several Presbyteries, that they may report their opinion thereof to the next General Assembly.

Letter from his Royal Highness William Duke of Cumberland to his Grace the Commissioner.

The following letter not having come to hand till after the rising of the General Assembly, could not be printed among the public Acts, but it is here subjoined by direction of the committee for revising the minutes.

Inverness, May 21, 1746.

My Lord Commissioner,

The meeting of the venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland furnishes an occasion I have wished for, of expressing publicly the just sense I have of the very steady and laudable conduct of the clergy of that Church, through the whole course of this most wicked, unnatural, and unprovoked Rebellion.

I owe it to them in justice to testify, that, upon all occasions, I have received from them professions of the most inviolable attachment to his Majesty's person and government, of the warmest zeal for the religion and liberties of their country, and of

the firmest persuasion that these blessings could not be preserved to the nation but by the support of his Majesty's throne, and of the succession in his royal family; and, in support of the sincerity of their professions, I have always found them ready and forward to act, in their several stations, in all such affairs as they could be useful in, though often to their own great hazard; and of this I have not been wanting to give due notice from time to time to his Majesty.

I must desire your Grace to assure the venerable the General Assembly of the very sincere acknowledgment I shall always feel for the particular marks of good-will and affection I have received every where from the clergy, of my regard and esteem for their body, and of my good wishes for all its members.

I heartily wish success to the good work you are upon for the service of his Majesty, and the true benefit of his faithful subjects. I am,

My Lord Commissioner,

Your Grace's most affectionate Friend,

WILLIAM.

Directed thus—To his Grace the Lord Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 7, 1747.

I.

Sess. 1, May 7, 1747.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 7, 1747.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The signal proofs you have given in your former Assemblies of your zeal for the advancement of true religion, and the experience we have had of your loyalty and affection to our person and government, and especially on occasion of the late unnatural Rebellion, which, by the blessing of God, is now happily extinguished, leave us no room to doubt but that you are now come together with the same good dispositions and intentions; and we do, therefore, most willingly countenance this your meeting with our approbation and royal authority; and we gladly take this opportunity to assure you of our firm resolution to protect and maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges.

As we have always had entire satisfaction in the fidelity and abilities of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, Alexander Earl of Leven, and as we have the firmest dependence on his diligence and prudence in the discharge of so important a trust, we have again made choice of him to represent our person on this occasion,

being fully persuaded that the knowledge you have of his steady attachment to our service, and of his zealous adherence to the Church of Scotland, will render him acceptable to you. We promise ourselves that nothing will be wanting on your part that may tend to the advancement of religion and piety, and to the attaining those good ends for which you are at this time assembled. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 28th day of April 1747, and in the twentieth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

HOLLES NEWCASTLE.

III.

Sess. 3, May 9, 1747.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's goodness in taking notice, in your gracious letter to this General Assembly, of the loyalty and affection of the Church of Scotland to your royal person and government, particularly on occasion of the late unnatural Rebellion, the happy extinction of which gives us the highest joy, we esteem as the greatest honour that could be done us; and as our unshaken zeal for the service and support of your Majesty's government and royal family is the natural and just effect of your Majesty's unwearied care for the support, defence, and protection of your subjects, in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, both sacred and civil, we look on it as our duty to manifest it on all occasions, especially in the meetings of our General Assembly, and place on it our hopes of the continuance of your royal favour to us, and of our happiness under your auspicious reign; which we pray God may long continue and prosper.

Your Majesty's kind assurances of maintaining and protecting the Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all their rights and privileges, do lay such obligations on us to our duty, as we shall endeavour better to express in the course of our actions, than now we are able to do by words.

Your Majesty's choice of the Right Honourable the Earl of Leven, to represent your royal person in this Assembly, is most acceptable to us—he, following the example of his noble ancestors, having given the Church of Scotland many proofs of his adherence to their interest, as well as of fidelity, abilities, diligence, prudence, and affection, to your Majesty, in the discharge of that important trust.

We shall, on our part, be wanting in nothing that may be necessary for attaining the wished-for success to your Majesty's tender care and concern for the advancement of religion and piety; and hope, by the blessing of God, to attain those good ends for which we are at this time assembled.

We acknowledge, with humble thankfulness, your Majesty's great goodness in renewing, at this time, your royal bounty for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and committing the distribution of it to our care, of which your Majesty's High Commissioner has given us notice; and we shall endeavour to execute that trust with fidelity, prudence, and exactness, suitable to the confidence your Majesty is graciously pleased to repose in us.

We beg leave to add, that we daily put up our fervent prayers, in private and public, to Almighty God, that as Divine Providence was graciously pleased to place your royal family on the throne of these realms, for their deliverance, protection, and defence, from the threatened calamities of Popery, slavery, and arbitrary power, it may likewise please the Divine goodness, in reward of your Majesty's tender and fatherly care for the religion, laws, and liberties of your subjects, to pour down in abundance heavenly blessings on your sacred person; on his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales,

his Princess, and royal issue ; and on all the branches of your royal house : And, in particular, for the safety and preservation of his Royal Highness the Duke, now in the field at the head of your armies ; and that victory and success may attend the distinguished courage, wise conduct, and indefatigable application with which his Royal Highness generously exposes his precious life, for the religious and civil interests of his native country, and the liberties of Europe. And are, with the greatest gratitude, and most profound respect,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT KINLOCH, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 8, May 15, 1747.—Act concerning the Fund for a Provision to Ministers' Widows, &c., and enjoining Presbyteries to transmit to the Trustees regularly their Annual Lists.

The General Assembly having had laid before them, and considered the report of the trustees, appointed by Act of Parliament, for managing the fund raised and established for a provision to the widows and children of the ministers of the Church of Scotland, setting forth, That their trust is become almost insupportable, through the many inaccuracies in the annual lists transmitted to them from several Presbyteries, and cannot be discharged with that exactness which is absolutely necessary in the due execution of such a plan : And further, representing that the fund sustains a considerable loss, by ministers not calling from the collector for the L.30 sterling ordered for them by the trustees, according to the directions of the Assembly ; therefore, the General Assembly do hereby enjoin the strict observation of the Acts of former Assemblies, respecting what is thereby required from Presbyteries, for the more effectually bringing the purposes of the foresaid Act of Parliament into execution ; particularly the keeping separate registers in the several Presbyteries, and the making out therefrom, and timeously transmitting to the trustees, annually, before Candlemas, lists of all the particular facts that shall, from time to time, be found necessary to be known by the trustees. And whereas, by the 4th Act of the Assembly, 1745, it is appointed, that the several Synods call for the said separate registers, at least once every year, and carefully inspect the same, and attest that they are kept according to the plan therein referred to,—it is hereby further required, that the said Synods do report their diligence to each General Assembly ; and it is also hereby appointed and ordained, that the annual lists, to be transmitted from time to time to the trustees, shall be drawn up in the precise words, columns, and order, contained in the specimens that have been or shall hereafter be prepared by the said trustees, and sent to the several Presbyteries. And in case Presbyteries shall fail in making their annual returns at the time, and in manner foresaid, the Assembly do recommend to the trustees to exert those powers the law has put into their hands, for obliging Presbyteries to transmit their lists in a regular and uniform manner. And the General Assembly do likewise appoint and ordain each minister to transmit to the collector his bond for L.30, according to the form established by the General Assembly, so soon as notice shall be given him by the trustees or their clerk, that there is money in the collector's hands for payment of the same, as such minister shall be answerable to the General Assembly.

V.

Sess. 8, May 15, 1747.—Act for preventing the Growth of Popery.

The General Assembly do appoint the several Presbyteries of this Church to take an account of the number of Papists within their respective bounds, and of the names of Popish priests who haunt among them, and where they hold their meetings; and to lay the same before the Commission in November next, or as soon as possibly they can. And the Commission is hereby empowered and enjoined to make proper representations concerning them to the civil government.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 18, 1747.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 18, 1747.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 12th day of that month, in the year 1748.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing of the 133d Psalm throughout, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

May 15, 1747.—Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

Overture about Processes against Probationers.

(See Act 11th, 1746, re-transmitted.)

Overture about the Psalmody.

The General Assembly, considering the overture with respect to the Translations and Paraphrases of several Pieces of Sacred Scripture, did agree to appoint the committee which formerly had this affair under consideration to meet at the times in which they were in use to meet before, viz., in the Society Hall, upon Tuesday before each quarterly meeting of the Commission, at ten o'clock forenoon, and at other times and places as they see cause; and appoint that all instructions relating to it, that have been sent up to this Assembly, shall be laid before them; and that Presbyteries shall send up what further instructions they think proper to the said committee, who shall report the same, with their opinion, to the next Assembly.

May 16, 1747.—Overture about the Calling of Ministers to vacant Parishes. .

(See Act 4th, Assembly, 1748.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN
AND BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 12, 1748.

I.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1748.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 12, 1748.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 14, 1748.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 18, 1748.—Act concerning the Qualifications of Persons claiming to vote in the Calling of Ministers to Vacant Parishes.

The General Assembly do enact, appoint, and declare, that, in the moderation of calls to ministers, for supplying vacant parishes, no persons shall be admitted to vote, or, if claiming a vote, shall have any regard paid to their votes, who have either twice heard sermon in any meeting or congregation not allowed by the laws, or attended divine worship performed by any Non-jurant minister, or preacher professing himself to be of the Episcopal communion, or where his Majesty King George and the royal family were not prayed for in express words, within twelve calendar months immediately preceding the vacancy of the church to be supplied; or who, during any part of the said twelve calendar months, have received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper dispensed by such ministers, or allowed their children to be baptized by any of them; and that it shall be competent to prove the said facts by the judicial declaration of the person claiming a vote, and objected to; or by any other mean of proof known and competent in law; and that if the person objected to shall refuse to give his declaration when required, he shall be held as confessed. Further, that the proposed declaration to be given by any person claiming a vote as above, shall contain at length the particular exceptions, viz. "That they have not twice heard sermon, or attended divine worship, performed by a Non-jurant minister, or preacher professing himself to be of the Episcopal communion, in any meeting or

congregation not allowed by the laws ; or where his Majesty King George and royal family were not prayed for in express words, within twelve calendar months immediately preceding the vacancy of the church to be supplied ; and that they have not, during any part of the said calendar months, received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper dispensed by such ministers, nor allowed their children to be baptized by them ;" and that the declaration shall not be admitted upon its having reference in general to these exceptions. That no proxy from any person claiming a vote shall be sustained, unless there be annexed to the commission of proxy a subscribed declaration in the terms above mentioned ; and that, though a party do claim a vote by proxy, and send a declaration in manner and terms before mentioned ; yet, if any person shall object to him, as falling under the exceptions above inserted, it shall be competent to such person to bring a proof of his objection, notwithstanding such declaration.

V.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1748.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1748.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 23, 1748.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 11th day of that month, in the year 1749.

The General Assembly was concluded with prayer, and singing a part of the 89th Psalm, from the 15th to the 19th verse, and pronouncing the blessing.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ROBERT HAMILTON, *Cls. Eccl. Scot. Dep.**

Sess. 7, May 19, 1748.—Overture about Processes against Probationers.

The committee for overtures transmitted to the Assembly an account of the reports of Presbyteries sent up this year, anent the overture concerning processes against probationers, bearing, that fourteen of the Presbyteries are for passing it into an act, three are for it with amendments, twenty-one are against it, and one for delaying it. And the Assembly having caused to be read the 9th Act of the Assembly, 1697, as also the certifying clause at the end of the foresaid overture, did, after long reasoning, agree, without a vote, to transmit the said overture again to the several Presbyteries of this Church without the said certifying clause, and in place thereof, in time coming, appoint the following rule to be observed, viz :—" That all Presbyteries

* Mr George Wishart, Clerk to the Assembly, being this year Moderator, Mr Robert Hamilton, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, acted as his substitute.—*Ed.* 1843.

shall be put in mind by their several Synods, at such of their stated meetings as shall first be held after the rising of each Assembly, to report their diligence in preparing their opinions and answers, concerning all overtures, (to be reported to future General Assemblies,) to such meetings of their Synods as shall be held immediately preceding the meetings of the General Assembly respectively; and in case, upon inquiry, any Presbytery shall be found to have neglected this part of their duty, by preparing no such answer, the Synod finding such instance of neglect, and no valid excuse offered and sustained, shall censure the Presbytery so neglecting."

Sess. 8, May 20, 1748.—Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. 8, May 20, 1748.—Overture and Recommendation about Sermons on the Principles of the Reformation and Revolution.

(See Act 4th, Assembly, 1749.)

Sess. 9, May 21, 1748.—Overture about the Psalmody.

Upon report of the committee for overtures, the General Assembly agreed to remit the Translations and Paraphrases of Passages of Sacred Scripture, with all the amendments offered thereupon, to the consideration of the committee named by the last and preceding Assemblies for that end, and added Mr George Blackwell to their number; which committee are hereby instructed to prepare a state of the whole, to be laid before the next General Assembly. And it is recommended to Presbyteries, or particular members, to have this matter under consideration, and correspond thereanent with the committee, as they shall see cause. And the Assembly appoints that the remarks sent up at this time be put in the hands of the said committee.

*Sess. ult., May 23, 1748.—Proposals about Voters in Elections of Ministers.**

There was transmitted to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, from their committee for overtures, a proposal for distinguishing the respect, in the calling of ministers, due to such as are known to express a suitable regard to religion and Gospel ordinances, and excluding those who are of a contrary character. And the General Assembly, judging that this is a matter which requires deliberation, in order to concert the most proper terms in which an overture to the above effect should be conceived, before it be transmitted from the Assembly to Presbyteries, agreed that the above proposal be referred to the Commission of this Assembly, that they may take it under consideration, and be empowered to receive what helps may be transmitted to them from the several Presbyteries of this Church, in order to their forming an overture, to be laid before the next Assembly, that they may transmit it to the several Presbyteries to have their opinion reported, in order to the establishing a standing rule on this subject, if they shall see meet. And it is appointed that this be printed at the end of the Acts of this Assembly, and that the Commission take it under consideration, at farthest, at their meeting in August or November next.

* It does not appear that any Overture on this subject was laid before the Assembly of 1749.—Ed. 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 11, 1749.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 11, 1749.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced,
and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 11, 1749.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 13, 1749.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 8, May 19, 1749.—Act and Recommendation for Preaching on the Principles of the
Reformation and Revolution.*

The General Assembly, considering the strong evidence we had, in the late wicked Rebellion, of the obstinacy and restless spirit of the enemies of our happy constitution, the continued enmity they still show to the best of governments, and the vigilance and art with which they endeavour to lessen people's zeal for the Protestant religion, and to carry them off from their adherence to the interests of the Revolution, and their fidelity and allegiance to our most gracious Sovereign King George; and at the same time being sensible, from past experience, how apt even the friends of our happy establishment are, in the continued enjoyment of peace, to fall into security, and thereby to give advantage to our vigilant enemies, do therefore earnestly beseech and obtest all the ministers of this Church to continue to be diligent in instructing the people committed to their care in those principles of pure Christianity that are particularly opposite to the errors and corruptions of Popery, and in the grounds and reasons of the Reformation, and the principles on which the late glorious Revolution, and our present happy establishment, are founded, and to stir up all to a grateful sense and suitable improvement of the inestimable blessings we enjoy, by the free exercise of the pure religion of Jesus, and the security of our liberties and properties under a legal government. And for these purposes, and perpetuating the memory of the great things God has done for us in these lands, the General Assembly do warmly recommend to all the ministers of this Church to preach expressly, and on purpose, on the subjects above mentioned, or some of them, at least four Lord's Days every year, with proper exhortations to their people, and suitable prayers and praises to our most gracious God, in the name of the only Mediator between God and man, our Lord Jesus Christ. And further, the Assembly do earnestly recommend to all Presbyteries to take a watchful inspection of schools within their bounds, and of the character and behaviour of schoolmasters, and to take care that they be qualified, by taking the oaths

to the government, and that they instruct the youth in just principles of religion and loyalty.

V.

Sess. 9, May 20, 1749.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 20, 1749.—Act appointing Presbyteries to hold Visitations for settling Parochial Schools.

There was brought into the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, from their committee for bills, the petition of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, representing that the Society have, since the year 1709, been constantly employed in carrying on the ends of their erection, by settling schools, and employing schoolmasters in the large parishes of the Highlands of the Northern and Western parts of Scotland, and their endeavours have, by the blessing of God, been attended with remarkable success: That the Society were sorry to represent to the Assembly, that, notwithstanding the good laws made for establishing parochial schools and providing salaries, with school-house and other accommodations for the master at every parish church, yet several Presbyteries have for some time past, and particularly of late, neglected to hold visitations, and take the proper steps for bringing these laws into execution, but seem totally to depend upon the charity schools established by the said Society. This being not only a manifest disregard of those beneficial rules established by the legislature, but also a direct misimprovement of the good intentions and effects of the said Society, a matter of great importance to the country in general, it was judged proper to send letters to the several Presbyteries in whose bounds any of the Society's charity schools are settled, requesting them to use their endeavours forthwith to settle a public school in every parish; and at the same time informing them that otherwise the Society would not fail to withdraw theirs, which were never meant to supersede any mean of instruction whatever, far less a mean established by law. And in order to enforce the certification, and to prevent its taking effect, the Society could not but hope that this Assembly, upon due consideration, would interpose their authority thereto, and enjoin all the Presbyteries in this Church to do their duty in this respect; and, therefore, humbly craving to the effect after mentioned. The General Assembly having heard and considered the said petition, and opinion of their committee for bills thereupon, did, and hereby do, recommend to and enjoin the several Presbyteries of this Church to hold visitations of parishes where public schools are wanting, and to take all proper and legal steps for settling such schools therein, with competent salaries and building of school-houses, as the law directs.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1749.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them,

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1749.—Congratulatory Address to his Majesty upon occasion of the General Peace.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, humbly beg leave to approach your throne with our most hearty congratulations on the happy return of the national tranquillity.

While, warmed with a just sense of the Divine goodness, we adore the Almighty hand which hath turned war into peace, how ungrateful should we be, did we not acknowledge your Majesty as the great instrument, under God, of procuring to us this inestimable blessing.

Ambitious to express on every occasion the most dutiful and affectionate regard for your sacred person and government, we embrace with joy this first opportunity of testifying our unfeigned satisfaction in the success of your Majesty's arms and councils, by which, through the Divine favour, we are now so happily secured in the undisturbed exercise of the best religion, and the full enjoyment of all the blessings of a British constitution.

Permit us, Great Sir, to say, that while other countries, amidst the continued oppression of despotic power, scarce feel relief from the calamities of war, it is our distinguished privilege to be the subjects of a Prince, no less ready to bless his people with the comforts of peace, than to draw the sword in defence of their just rights and liberties; and we should doubtless be most unworthy of your royal favour, if we did not, in our stations, contribute our best endeavours to improve the public tranquillity, for promoting religion, virtue, and loyalty, which alone can render peace truly valuable to us, and the nation happy and glorious.

Permit us, likewise, to assure your Majesty, that the late increase of your royal family affords us the sincerest joy. We cease not to give thanks to our God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, for every new accession of strength to your illustrious house; whence we have the more abundant hope that peace shall remain within the walls of our Jerusalem, and prosperity in all her palaces.

And it is our constant prayer to the Father of mercies, that your Majesty may be long preserved to be the protector of the religious and civil rights of mankind, and to make Britain still more happy and glorious in the enjoyment of peace and liberty; that you may be high in the special favour of God; that he may abundantly bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, the issue of the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the royal family; that, after you have acted a shining part on earth, as the father of your people, and the faithful servant of God, you may inherit a crown of glory that fadeth not away; and that your posterity may fill the British throne with honour and renown to latest ages. These are the fervent, unfeigned prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful, and most loyal subjects.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

PATRICK CUMING, *Moderator.*

IX.

Sess. ult., May 22, 1749.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 10th day of that month, in the year 1750.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 8, May 19, 1749.—Overture about the Psalmody.

The committee for overtures transmitted to the Assembly their opinion concerning the overture with respect to the Translations and Paraphrases of Sacred Scripture; and the Assembly, considering that amendments have been proposed by several Presbyteries, but that by far the greatest part of them have as yet sent up no opinion; and it being represented, that, in the confusions of the late Rebellion, many Presbyteries had lost the copies which had been sent them, the General Assembly do again remit this matter to the committee named for the same purpose by preceding Assemblies; and do instruct them to consider the amendments which have been offered, and to admit such of them as they judge proper and material, and to cause print a new impression of the collections so amended, and send copies of the same to the several Presbyteries, who are hereby appointed to send up their opinion to the next General Assembly.

Sess. 8, May 19, 1749.—Overture about the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

(An Act on this subject was passed in 1751.)

May 22, 1749.—Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(This overture is again given at length in the original edition of the printed Acts, and with some amendments on the overture of 1742.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, HOLDEN AND
BEGUN AT EDINBURGH, MAY 10, 1750.

I.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1750.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 10, 1750.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 12, 1750.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 7, May 17, 1750.—Act and Resolution concerning an Application to Parliament for an Augmentation to Ministers' Stipends.

The General Assembly, considering the distressed circumstances of many ministers of this Church, arising from the smallness of their stipends, the expense of processes for augmentations, and the dilatory payment of stipends, do resolve on an humble application to be made to the King and Parliament for the following purposes:—That in raising of summonses for modification, locality, or augmentation of stipends, instead of the usual method of summoning by a messenger, it shall be sufficient that a general citation be made by every parish clerk from his desk, upon a Lord's Day, immediately after divine service in the forenoon, and that letters be written, by the Moderator of the Presbytery, to the absent heritors, except such as are forth of the kingdom, who are to be summoned by a messenger, at the market cross of Edinburgh, pier and shore of Leith: That it shall be in the power of the Moderator, with consent of the Presbytery, to pursue for modification, locality, or augmentation, whether there be a minister settled in the parish, or the parish be vacant: That ministers' stipends, if not paid within the year, shall bear interest from the first half year after they become due: That power be given to the Commission of Teinds to suppress parishes which they find not proper to be continued separate parishes, and to annex them to one or more of the adjacent parishes: That the said Commission have likewise a power to alter the divisions of parishes, on a view to divide them as they see cause. The General Assembly instructs those to be commissioned by them most humbly to pray for relief in the premises, and for such further relief as to his Majesty and the two Houses of Parliament shall, in their great wisdom, seem meet. And it was declared by the Moderator from the chair to be the mind of the Assembly, that, by this last clause, it was understood, that the commissioners to Parliament might apply for an increase of the *minimum*.

V.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1750, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 21, 1750, ante meridiem.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750, post meridiem.—Congratulatory Address to his Majesty, on the late increase of the Royal Family, by the birth of a Prince.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, humbly beg leave to approach your sacred person, with our sincere and hearty congratulations on the birth of a young Prince in your illustrious and royal house.

We cheerfully embrace this opportunity to assure your Majesty, that the increase of the family of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales gives us the highest and most sensible pleasure, as it is, under God, a pledge of all the happiness of a good government, of all the blessings of religion and liberty to us and to our latest posterity, as it is the firmest security of the Protestant interest, and of the peace and freedom of Europe; and as it tends to prevent our fears, and to extinguish the hopes of the enemies of our country, and of our present happy constitution.

In this, as in many other happy events, we contemplate and adore the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Providence, and cease not, with most thankful acknowledgments, daily to present our earnest and ardent prayers to the Sovereign of the universe, and our merciful Father in Christ Jesus, to make us, with all the subjects of your Majesty's happy government, worthy of those instances and proofs of Divine favour.

That your Majesty may be long preserved to reign in the hearts of a free and flourishing people, and at last receive a crown of unfading glory;—that their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, blest in a numerous progeny, his Royal Highness the Duke, and all the branches of your august family, may live long the objects of the love and affection of all your faithful subjects; and, having finished a course of honour and virtue here, may receive the reward of immortal glory, are the constant and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT PATOUN, *Moderator.*

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750, post meridiem.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 9th day of that month, in the year 1751.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750.—Overture about the more frequent Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

(See Act 7th, Assembly, 1751.)

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750.—Overture about the Psalmody.

The General Assembly finding, that, with respect to the overture about the Psalmody, as the Translations and Paraphrases of Sacred Scripture were not transmitted to Presbyteries since last Assembly, no reports were sent up to this Assembly; but it being informed that it is now reprinted, with amendments, at sight of the committee of last Assembly, the General Assembly do transmit the same, as amended, to the several Presbyteries, that they may report their opinion thereupon to the next General Assembly.

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750.—Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(See 1742 and 1749. This overture is again transmitted, with another slight alteration.)

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750.—Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Overtures transmitted to them by the Assembly.

(See Act 7th, Assembly, 1752.)

Sess. ult., May 21, 1750.—Overture anent Processes against Probationers.

(See 1746 and 1748. Overture re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED
AT EDINBURGH, MAY 9, 1751.

I.

Sess. 1, May 9, 1751.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 9, 1751.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 11, 1751.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 15, 1751.—Act and Resolution concerning Lawyers who are Members of the Court appearing, as Procurators, to plead in Causes at the Bar of the General Assembly or Commission.

The General Assembly, considering that they have a title to the assistance of all their members as judges in all causes brought before them, they being expressly commissioned by their constituents to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that shall come before the Assembly; as also, that those who are appointed members of the Commission of the General Assembly are obliged by that appointment to concur in cognoscing and determining in every matter referred to them, do, therefore, resolve, enact, and declare, that in time coming none who are constituent members of the Court shall act as counsel or procurators in any causes which come before the Assemblies or Commissions thereof.

V.

Sess. 9, May 18, 1751.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 18, 1751.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Act anent the more frequent Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The General Assembly renews the 11th Act of Assembly, 1712, appointing the more frequent celebration of our Lord's Supper; and in order to the better observance of the said Act, every Presbytery, at their privy censures, before the winter Synod, are hereby appointed to inquire at each of their brethren, whether they have administered that sacrament, once at least, the preceding year, and in case any of them have not done it, their excuses shall be marked in the minutes, and what the Presbytery has done in approbation or disapprobation thereof, and report the same in writing to the Synod; and in case of the absence of any member of the Presbytery from the diet for privy censures, such member shall send up his excuse in writing, either to that diet, or to the next ensuing Synod; and in the event of brethren failing in both the before mentioned injunctions, it is hereby appointed that the Presbytery next after the Synod shall call such brethren to an account, and report to the next Synod, that they may do therein as they shall see cause.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in

this place, upon the second Thursday of May next, being the 14th day of that month, in the year 1752.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Overture about the Psalmody.

The General Assembly, finding that several of the Presbyteries have not sent up any opinion to this Assembly concerning the Psalmody, notwithstanding a new edition, with amendments, of the Translations and Paraphrases of Sacred Scripture was transmitted to them, do again transmit the same, requiring such Presbyteries as have hitherto been deficient to send up their opinions to the next Assembly; and, in the meantime, the Assembly recommends the said Psalmody to be used in private families, and that Presbyteries be careful to have a sufficient number of copies of the said last edition thereof within their bounds.

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Overture about Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Overtures transmitted to them by the Assembly.

(See Act 7th, Assembly, 1752.)

Sess. ult., May 20, 1751.—Overture anent Processes against Probationers.

(See 1746 and 1748. Overture re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED
AT EDINBURGH, MAY 14, 1752.

I.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1752.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 14, 1752.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 16, 1752.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, May 22, 1752.—Act Deposing Mr Thomas Gillespie, Minister at Carnock, from the Office of the holy Ministry within this Church, and appointing the Presbytery of Dunfermline to admit Mr Andrew Richardson as Minister of the Parish of Inverkeithing.

The General Assembly, in pursuance of the orders given on Monday last to the Presbytery of Dunfermline, proceeded to call for the ministers of the said Presbytery to give an account of their conduct in consequence of the appointment then laid upon them to admit Mr Andrew Richardson as minister at Inverkeithing. The warrant to summon all the members of that Presbytery to meet at Inverkeithing, upon Thursday the 21st of May, for the said admission, and to summon each of the ministers of the Presbytery to appear at the bar of this House this day, together with a written execution of the same, were produced and read. The said ministers being called, there compeared Mr Robert Stark at Torryburn, Mr James Thomson at Dunfermline, Mr Thomas Fernie there, Mr David Hunter at Saline, Mr Robert Stark at Kinross, Mr James Stoddart at Culross, Mr Thomas Gillespie at Carnock, Mr Alexander Daling at Cleish, and Mr John Spence at Orwell. The Moderator produced and read a letter from Mr John Liston, minister at Aberdour, representing, that, according to the Assembly's appointment, he did attend at Inverkeithing yesterday, but could not appear before the Assembly this day because of his present indisposition; also, a letter from Mr James Bathgate, minister at Dalgettie, showing that he, in like manner, attended at Inverkeithing, but could not appear before the Assembly on account of the indisposition of his family. There was also produced and read a letter from Mr Robert Steedman, minister at Beith, together with an attestation from his physician, showing the bad state of his health, which made it unsafe for him to travel, so that he was not in condition to obey the Assembly's appointment concerning the admission of Mr Richardson, which otherwise he would willingly and cheerfully have submitted to. Then the ministers present being called upon, one by one, to give an account whether or not they had obeyed the Assembly's appointment, Mr James Thomson represented, that, according to the Assembly's appointment, he came to Inverkeithing yesterday at ten o'clock, and there met with Mr John Liston and Mr James Bathgate;—that they ordered the church bell to be rung between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock forenoon;—that immediately upon the ringing of the bell they went to the session-house within the church of Inverkeithing, and there waited till two o'clock afternoon;—that they were required, under form of instrument, by Colonel Arthur Forbes and others, callers of Mr Richardson, to admit him as minister there, but found they were not empowered to proceed, there being only three of them, whereas the Act of Assembly required five to make a quorum, for the purpose of the said admission;—that to show their readiness to execute the said sentence before they left the church, they intimated to all present, and ordered the Presbytery officer to intimate at the most patent church door, that they were to stay an hour or more in town, in a house which they named, in order to meet with any other ministers, in case more should appear, so as to make a quorum; all which was contained in the instrument of protest taken by Colonel Forbes, and now lodged in the clerk's hands; and, accordingly, they waited in town till five o'clock at night. Mr Robert Stark at Torryburn represented, that he went to Inverkeithing yesterday morning, in order to converse with the elders, and others, opposers of Mr Richardson's settlement, and endeavour so far to reconcile them to his admission,

as to give him clearness to join in it;—that having met with them, he did all in his power to soften them, but to no purpose; so that he left the place;—that he had nothing further to offer but what was contained in a representation signed by him and other five brethren, to which he referred. Mr James Stoddart being called upon, acknowledged that he was not at Inverkeithing, and pled his peculiar situation, as, by a sentence of the Court of Session, he was found to have no title to the legal benefice in the parish of Culross, for which reason he had chosen to behave himself in the manner that appeared to him the most inoffensive, and had acted no part in the present question, or in other affairs, which came before the Presbytery. Then Messrs David Hunter, Thomas Gillespie, Alexander Daling, Thomas Fernie, and John Spence, being called upon, acknowledged they had received the summons; that they had not obeyed the Assembly's appointment, and for the reasons of their conduct, they gave in a representation signed by them, and Mr Stark at Torryburn, whereof the tenor follows, viz:—"Unto the very Reverend the Moderator, and the Reverend and Honourable Members of the Venerable Assembly of the Church of Scotland, met at Edinburgh 1752, the humble Representation of the Members of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, whose names are hereunto subjoined. We cannot but be deeply affected with our present situation, in being obliged to stand at the bar of this Venerable Assembly, to answer for non-compliance with any of their appointments; but as this court is so good as to allow us to speak in our own behalf, we shall therefore beg leave humbly to represent some of those things which have all along straitened us in the execution of the orders we received, and which still lay such difficulties in our way as we are not able to surmount; and this we hope to do with that plainness and honesty, and, at the same time, with that decent and dutiful respect to the supreme judicatory of this Church, which it is so justly entitled to expect from us. We need scarce observe how unjustly we have been represented, as having no other difficulty but the unreasonable fear of opposing the ill-grounded prejudices of our people; nor need we inform this House, that ever since the Act restoring patronages, in the end of Queen Anne's reign, there has been a vehement opposition to all settlements by presentations, where there was but small concurrence; which settlements have already produced a train of the most unhappy consequences, greatly affecting the interest of religion; and if turned into the stated and fixed rule of procedure, will, in all probability, be attended with every fatal effect. Now, under such a view and apprehension as this, was it any wonder, or was it inconsistent with that obedience with we owe to our earthly superiors in the Lord, that we should demur and stop short in carrying a settlement into execution, where, in our apprehension, there was by no means such a concurrence of persons residing in the parish as might give sufficient weight and influence for promoting the great ends of the ministry? The Assembly know well, that it appears, from their own Acts and resolutions, entered into their records, that the law of patronage has been considered as no small grievance to this Church, not to say as inconsistent with our Union settlement; and we find it declared, Act 25th of May, 1736, that it is, and has been, since the Reformation, the principle of this Church, that no minister shall be intruded into any parish contrary to the will of the congregation; and, therefore, it is seriously recommended by the said Act to all judicatories of this Church to have a due regard to the said principle, in planting vacant congregations, so as none be intruded into such parishes, as they regard the glory of God and the edification of the body of Christ; which recommendation we humbly apprehend to be strongly supported by the principles of reason, and the laws of our Lord Jesus Christ. Permit us to inform the Assembly, that after repeated endeavours used by committees of the Presbytery, to lessen the opposition to Mr Richardson in the parish of Inverkeithing, matters still remain in such a situation, that we are brought to this unhappy dilemma, either of coming under the imputation of disobedience to a particular order of our ecclesiastical superiors, or contributing our part to the establishment of measures, which we can neither reconcile with the declared principles, nor with the true interest of this Church. On the whole, we cannot help thinking, that by having an active hand in carrying Mr Richardson's settlement into execution, we should be the unhappy instruments, as matters now stand, to speak in the language of Holy Writ, of scattering the flock of Christ, not to mention what might be the fatal consequences

of such settlements to our happy civil constitution. If the Venerable Assembly shall, on this account, judge us guilty of such criminal disobedience as to deserve their censure, we trust they will at least allow that we acted as honest men, willing to forego every secular advantage for conscience-sake. In such an event, this, through grace, shall be our support, that not being charged with any neglect of the duties of our ministry among those committed to our care, we are to suffer for adhering to what we apprehend to be the will of our great Lord and Master, whose we are, whom we are bound to serve in all things, and on whom we cast all our care. **ROBERT STARK, DAVID HUNTER, THOMAS GILLESPIE, ALEXANDER DALING, THOMAS FERNIE, JOHN SPENCE.** Mr Robert Stark, minister at Kinross, being called upon, said he had not received the summons;—that he was in Inverkeithing yesterday morning, but did not meet with the three brethren who were there, in order to execute the Assembly's appointment, for which he offered his reasons *viva voce*. But, afterwards, of his own proper motion, he signified to the Assembly that he was so sensible of the straits his brethren were in, and of the bad effects of disobeying the authority of the Church, that he was willing to expose himself to all hazards, and concur with the other three brethren who had shown their readiness in obeying the Assembly's appointment, in case they thought proper to renew the same. Then the Moderator earnestly recommended it to the six brethren who gave in the above Representation, to consider seriously the situation they were now in, and take the opportunity they as yet had of saving themselves from the displeasure of the Church. And being again called upon, and asked, one by one, if they had any more to offer, they declared they had nothing further to add; whereupon they were removed. The Assembly then caused read over again the Representation given in by the six ministers above mentioned, and proceeded to consider what was proper for them to do in the present case; and after long reasoning, it was proposed that the General Assembly should now resolve that one of the six disobedient brethren shall be deposed. Whereupon, the question was agreed to be put, Depose or Not? it being understood, that if it carried Depose, the Assembly's resolution should be as above. Then the rolls being called, and votes marked, it carried by a considerable majority, Depose. Accordingly, the Assembly did, and hereby do, resolve that one of the said six ministers shall be deposed, and they adjourn till to-morrow the consideration of what remains to be done in this matter; and the ministers of the Presbytery of Dunfermline being called in, the above resolution of the Assembly was intimated to them, and they were ordered to attend to-morrow.

Sess. 9, May 23, 1752.

The Assembly proceeded to the cause respecting the brethren of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, and having caused to be called the six ministers who had subscribed the Representation given in yesterday, they all compeared; after which they were removed, and then were severally called in, one by one, and asked, if they had any thing further to offer before the Assembly should proceed to consider their case, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly yesterday. Mr Robert Stark at Torryburn answered, That he hears there will be some further accession to Mr Richardson in the parish of Inverkeithing, which, if he finds to be such as may clear his way, that will open his eyes in that matter. Mr Thomas Fernie answered, That as matters now stand, he has no freedom to have an active hand in the settlement. What he may do in the case of a change of circumstances he could not say till that change appears. Mr David Hunter answered, That as there is no alteration in the case since yesterday, as little can there be any change in his mind and sentiments. If an agreeable accession happen, it will be neither his inclination nor interest to be backward. Mr Alexander Daling answered, That he had nothing further to add. Mr John Spence, That he choosed to add nothing. Mr Thomas Gillespie read at the bar a Representation, expressing his adherence to the Representation given in yesterday, and said, that he had nothing further to add upon the subject. Then, after prayer for light and direction to the Assembly in their procedure and decision of this matter, it was put to the vote, which of the six brethren above mentioned shall be deposed, in pursuance of the resolution of yesterday; and the roll being called and votes marked, it was carried, Mr Thomas Gillespie. And, therefore, the General Assembly did, and here-

by do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole King and Head of the Church, and by virtue of the power and authority committed by him to them, depose Mr Thomas Gillespie, minister at Carnock, from the office of the holy ministry, prohibiting and discharging him to exercise the same, or any part thereof, within this Church in all time coming; and the Assembly did, and hereby do declare, the church and parish of Carnock vacant from and after the day and date of this sentence. Then the Assembly proceeded to consider the case of the other ministers, members of the said Presbytery of Dunfermline, and, without a vote, came to the following resolution, viz.: They do hereby acquit Mr James Stoddard, minister at Culross, in respect of his special circumstances. They sustain the excuse of Mr Robert Steedman at Beith for not complying with the appointment of this Assembly, and not compearing at the bar yesterday, in respect of his bad state of health: And find, that Messrs James Thomson at Dunfermline, John Liston at Aberdour, and James Bathgate at Dalgettie, did their duty in attending at Inverkeithing, and showing their readiness to execute the Assembly's orders in case there had been a quorum, and the Assembly sustains the excuses of the said Messrs Liston and Bathgate for not attending at the bar of this Assembly; and because of the declaration yesterday emitted by Mr Robert Stark at Kinross at the bar, the Assembly pass from any censure upon him for his conduct hitherto. And the General Assembly, taking into their consideration the case of the remaining five disobedient brethren of the Presbytery of Dunfermline who have signed the Representation to this Assembly, and that, by the deposition of Mr Thomas Gillespie at Carnock, they not only have asserted the authority of this Supreme Court, but have inflicted upon him a censure adequate to repeated acts of disobedience adhered to tenaciously when at the bar; and that albeit the remaining offenders may have deserved the same censure, as being involved in the same transgression, yet being desirous to mix mercy and lenity with their judgment, do therefore remit to the Presbytery of Dunfermline to settle and admit the said Mr Andrew Richardson as minister of the parish of Inverkeithing, on or before the 18th day of June next to come, and ordain an exact list of the ministers who shall be present on that day, for the effect foresaid, to be made up and entered into the minutes of the Presbytery, with such excuses as may be made by any of them who shall happen to be absent; and the Assembly empowers and requires the Synod of Fife, at their first meeting after the said admission, to consider the said excuses, and either to sustain or reject the same; and the General Assembly hereby suspends such of those who shall be absent, and shall not send excuses from and after the day of the said admission, and such of them whose excuses shall be rejected by the said first meeting of the Synod after their admission, from and after the date of such sentence of the Synod, from the exercise of their offices in all Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies, ay and until they shall respectively testify their sorrow for their disobedience to the Acts and ordinances of the General Assembly, either to their own Presbytery or Synod, or to any Assembly or Commission thereof, upon entering of which into the minutes of the Presbytery, Synod, or Commission, they are empowered and required to take off this sentence of suspension, and to repon them, or any of them, respectively, to the full exercise of their office in their judicative capacity. And it is hereby declared, that it shall be competent for any member of the said Synod to dissent from the judgment of the Synod, sustaining or rejecting the excuses offered, and that such dissent shall be a sufficient foundation for reviewing that sentence in the ensuing General Assembly. And the ministers above named, of the said Presbytery of Dunfermline, being called, and all of them compearing, the foresaid sentence of deposition was pronounced and intimated in the words before mentioned, to the said Mr Thomas Gillespie, by the moderator from the chair, and the foresaid judgment and resolutions of the Assembly, with respect to the other brethren, were likewise intimated to them; and it being represented to the Assembly, that the next ordinary meeting of the Presbytery of Dunfermline is to be held on the first Wednesday of June, the General Assembly appoint the said Presbytery, at that meeting, to fix the particular day for the admission of the said Mr Richardson at Inverkeithing, in pursuance of this Act and appointment; which being also intimated to the

parties at the bar, promoters of Mr Richardson's said settlement, Mr Archibald Murray, Advocate, in their name, took instruments thereupon in the clerk's hands.

V.

Sess. 9, May 23, 1752.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1752.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, considering that there are divers affairs which they cannot overtake, do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Mr Patrick Cuming, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator; and from the Presbytery of Annan, Mr Alexander Orr at Hoddam, Mr James Gaat at Graitnay, ministers; Mr Robert Dalrymple, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. Burgh of Annan, John Johnston, provost thereof. From the Presbytery of Langholm, Mr James M'Garroch at Eskdalemuir, Mr Robert Petrie at Canonbie, ministers; Matthew Irvine, merchant in Langholm, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochmaben, Mr Gabriel Gulan at Dryfesdale, Mr James Lindsay at Lochmaben, Mr David Imrie at St Mungo, ministers; Peter Halliday in Barntimpan, ruling elder. Burgh of Lochmaben, Mr James Erskine, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Penpont, Mr William Moodie at Glencairn, Mr John Irvine at Sanquhar, ministers; James Orr, clerk of Sanquhar, ruling elder. Burgh of Sanquhar, the Honourable Patrick Boyle of Shewalton, Esq., one of the Senators of the College of Justice. From the Presbytery of Dumfries, Mr Andrew Beveridge at Carlaverock, Mr John Ewart at Troqueer, Mr James Hog at Kirkbean, ministers; the Right Honourable Charles Erskine of Tinwald, Lord Justice-Clerk. Burgh of Dumfries, James Gilchrist, merchant there. From the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Mr John Lamont at Kelton, Mr Peter Yorston at Kells, Mr David Forbes at Borgue, ministers; Robert Nasmyth, younger of Earlsbaugh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Wigton, Mr Edward Boyd at Wigton, Mr James Maitland at Sorbie, ministers; William Hanna of Kirkdale, ruling elder. Burgh of Wigton, Dr Alexander Martine of Little Airies, physician. Burgh of Whithorn, Hugh Hathorn, merchant, and late Dean of Guild of Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Stranraer, Mr John Dickson at Newluce, Mr Thomas Mutter at Leswalt, ministers; Dr James Dalrymple of Dunraggat, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Stranraer, Mr Andrew M'Dowall of Kingseat, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Ayr, Mr William Coats at Dalmellington, Mr Hugh Hamilton at Girvan, Mr William Auld at Mauchline, Mr William Walker at Monkton, Mr Andrew Mitchel at Muirkirk, ministers; Mr Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, Advocate, and Mr David Dalrymple, Procurator for the Church, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Irvine, Mr John Montgomery at Stewarton, Mr Robert Hall at Kilmarnock, Mr Charles Bannatyne at Irvine, ministers; Bailie William Gilchrist at Kilmarnock, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Paisley, Mr Robert Paton at Renfrew, Mr Peter Scott at Paisley, Mr James Hamilton there, ministers; Provost William Somerville, ruling elder. Burgh of Renfrew, Mr Archibald Campbell, younger of Succoth. From the Presbytery of Hamilton, Mr John Muirhead at Glasgow, Mr John Currie at East Monkland, Mr Robert Bell at Strathaven, ministers; Mr William Gilmore, probationer, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lanark, Mr Thomas Linning at Lesmahago, Mr James Porteous at Wiston, Mr John Bradepute at Dunsyre, ministers; Mr James White of Overstockbridge, ruling elder. From

the Presbytery of Glasgow, Mr William Maxwell at Rutherglen, Mr John Oughterson at Cumbernauld, Mr William Bell at Campsie, ministers; Richard Allan, merchant in Glasgow, ruling elder. City of Glasgow, John Murdoch, one of the present Bailies thereof; University of Glasgow, Mr Neill Campbell, Principal thereof. From the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Mr Andrew Gray at New Kilpatrick, Mr Andrew Duncanson at Roseneath, Mr John Colquhoun at Baldernock, ministers; John Robison of Boghall, ruling elder. Burgh of Dumbarton, Mr James Smollet of Bonhill, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Dunoon, Mr James Stewart at Kingarth, Mr Alexander Lamont at Kilfinan, ministers; Duncan Campbell of Southhall, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kintyre, Mr David Campbell at Southend, Mr Gershom Stewart at Kilbride in Arran; Mr Alexander M'Millan of Dunmore, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverary, Mr Patrick Pollock at Southknappdale, Mr Donald Campbell at Northknappdale, ministers; Colin Campbell of Kirkbride, Esq., one of the Commissioners of his Majesty's Customs, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lorn, Mr James Stewart at Kilbrandon, Mr William Campbell at Kilchrennan, ministers; Patrick Campbell of Monzie, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Mull, Mr Lauchlan Campbell at Ardnarmurchan, Mr Archibald M'Tavish at Torasay, ministers; Hector M'Lean of Torloisk, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunkeld, Mr Alexander M'Lagan at Little Dunkeld, Mr Alexander Stewart at Blair-Athol, Mr Alexander Campbell at Weem, Mr John Macduff at Lethendy, ministers; His Grace James Duke of Athol, Robert M'Intosh, Agent for the Church, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Perth, Mr James Oswald at Methven, Mr Charles Foot at Kinfauns, Mr Patrick Bannerman at Kinnoul, Mr James Gillespie at Dumbarnie, ministers; Mr Robert Craigie of Glendoig, Advocate, and John Belshes of Invermay, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Stirling, Mr James Mackie at St Ninians, Mr James Turnbull at Denny, ministers; George Abercrombie, younger of Tillibody, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr Andrew Ramsay at Madderty, Mr Donald Munro at Monzie, Mr James Reid at Glendovan, ministers; Mr James Graham of Damside, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunblane, Mr Andrew Turnbull at Kippen, Mr James Stewart at Callender, ministers; Sir James Campbell of Aberuchil, Bart., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr John Liston at Aberdour, Mr James Thomson at Dunfermline, Mr James Bathgate at Dalgettie, ministers; Sir George Preston of Valleyfield, ruling elder. Burgh of Dunfermline, David Turnbull, merchant in Dunfermline. From the Presbytery of Kirkaldy, Mr Robert Spears at Burntisland, Mr David Marshall at Kirkaldy, Mr George Gib at Abbotshall, ministers; John Simson of Brunton, Esq., ruling elder. Burgh of Kirkaldy, Dr Robert White of Bennochie. Burgh of Dysart, Mr John Sinclair of Balgregie. Burgh of Kinghorn, Mr Gilbert Elliot of Lochgelly, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Cupar, Mr William Smibert at Kilmenie, Mr John Mathie at Collessie, Mr George Simson at Falkland, Mr Lawrence Gillespie at Auchtermuchty, ministers; the Right Honourable the Earl of Leven, and Mr Marshall of Kilkernie, ruling elders. Burgh of Cupar, Mr James Leslie of Milldeans, Advocate. From the Presbytery of St Andrews, Mr James Murison, Principal of the New College at St Andrews, Mr James Walker at Leuchars, Mr David Beath at Pittenweem, Mr Joseph Pitcairn at Carnbie, ministers; Mr James Anderson, Advocate, and Bailie Robert Waddel, shipbuilder in Kilrenny, ruling elders. University of St Andrews, Mr David Young, Professor of Philosophy therein. From the Presbytery of Meigle, Mr James Lyon at Blairgowrie, Mr Alexander Scot at Kingoldrum, Mr David Thomson at Airlie, ministers; John Murray of Lintrose, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forfar, Mr James Donaldson at Glammis, Mr George Nicol at Kinnettles, ministers; James Carnegie of Finhaven, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dundee, Mr David Maxwell at Strathmartin, Mr George Lyon at Longforgan, Mr William Dall at Monifeith, ministers; William Morison of Naughton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberbrothwick, Mr Robert Preston at Arbirlot, Mr James Purdie at Guthrie, ministers; the Honourable Mr John Maul of Inverkeillor, one of the Barons of Exchequer, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Brechin, Mr James Beattie at Maryton, Mr George Wilson at

Kinnaird, Mr David Ferguson at Farnwell, ministers; James Bisset, merchant in Montrose, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordoun, Mr Robert Young at Benholm, Mr James Walker at Dunnottar, Mr Alexander Forbes at Fetteresso, ministers; Arthur Straiton of Kirkside, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberdeen, Mr John Lumsden, Professor of Divinity in the King's College of Aberdeen, Mr Arthur Mitchell at Kinnellar, Mr George Abercrombie at Footdee, Mr Robert Pollock, Professor of Divinity in the Marischal College of Aberdeen, ministers; the Right Honourable William Grant of Prestongrange, Esq., his Majesty's Advocate, Alexander Robertson of Glasgowego, late Provost of Aberdeen, ruling elders. King's College, Mr George Gordon, Professor of Oriental Languages therein. From the Presbytery of Kincardine-O'Neil, Mr John M'Innes at Crathie, Mr Francis Downie at Lumphannan, Mr William M'Kenzie at Glenmuck, ministers; Sir Arthur Forbes of Craigievar, Bart., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Alford, Mr John Lumsden at Strathdon, Mr Theodore Gordon at Kinnethmont, Mr Francis Adam at Cushney, ministers; Alexander Redford, merchant in Clatt, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Ellon, Mr Andrew Moir at Ellon, Mr John Rose at Logie, ministers; George Clark in Slains, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Garioch, Mr Alexander Simson at Monymusk, Mr Alexander Turing at Oyne, Mr Alexander Gordon at Kintore, ministers; the Right Honourable Hew Dalrymple of Drummore, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, ruling elder. Burgh of Kintore, Mr Thomas Dundas, younger of Fingask. From the Presbytery of Deer, Mr Robert Garden at St Fergus, Mr James Walker at Peterhead, Mr William Taylor at New Deer, ministers; the Right Honourable the Lord Strichen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Turriff, Mr Andrew Ker at Turriff, Mr William Moir at Fyvie, ministers; George Ironside, in parish of Alva, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordyce, Mr Walter Morison at Deskford, Mr James Ogilvie at Ordiquhill, ministers; Mr Robert Pringle, Advocate, ruling elder. Burgh of Cullen, Alexander Grant of Tochyneil. Burgh of Inverury, Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk. From the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr Patrick Gordon at Belly, Mr Alexander Chalmers at Glass, ministers; Thomas Grant of Achoykanie, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberlour, Mr Hugh Grant at Knockando, Mr James Gray at Rothes, ministers; the Right Honourable Patrick Grant of Elchies, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abernethy, Mr Patrick Grant at Duthill, Mr Patrick Grant at Cromdale, ministers; Mr John Grant, younger of Elchies, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Elgin, Mr Alexander Murray of Birnie, Mr Alexander Murray at Duffus, ministers; Bailie Robert Grant, merchant in Elgin, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forres, Mr Robert Dunbar at Dyke, Mr William Barron at Ardclach, ministers; John Dunbar at Bennagicht, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverness, Mr Alexander M'Bean at Inverness, Mr Robert Thomson at Kirkhill, ministers; John Baillie, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chanonry, Mr Alexander Fraser at Avoch, Mr Hector M'Phail at Culicudden, ministers; Robert Gordon of Haughs, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tain, Mr John Porteous at Kilmuir-Easter, Mr Gilbert Robertson at Kincardine, ministers; the Honourable William Master of Rose, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dingwall, Mr James Fraser at Alness, Mr John M'Lennan at Contin, ministers; Albert Monro of Coull, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abertarff, Mr Thomas Fraser at Boleskine, Mr Malcolm M'Caskill at Kilmallie, ministers; Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Skye, Mr John M'Pherson at Slait, Mr Donald M'Queen at Kilmuir, ministers; Alexander M'Leod of Ulinish, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lewis, Mr John Clark at Stornoway, Mr Norman Morison at Uig, ministers. From the Presbytery of Uist, Mr Lauchlan M'Lean at Barra, Mr John M'Aulay at South Uist, ministers. From the Presbytery of Gairloch, Mr John M'Lean at Kintail, Mr Martin M'Pherson at Glenelg, ministers; Murdoch M'Kenzie of Letterew, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dornoch, Mr William Rose at Loth, Mr Francis Robertson at Clyne, ministers. From the Presbytery of Tongue, Mr Walter Ross at Tongue, Mr John Skeldoch at Farr, ministers; Captain George Mackay of Skibo, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Caithness, Mr James Brodie at Latheron, Mr Alexander Pope at Reay, ministers;

Mr William Halawel, preacher of the Gospel, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr John Yule at Kirkwall, Mr Hugh Mowat at Evie, ministers; Robert Sutherland, physician in Kirkwall, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Cairston, Mr James Tyrie at Stromness, Mr John Reid at Orphir, ministers; Mr Andrew Ross, factor for the Earl of Morton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of North Isles, Mr Andrew Cowan at Westray, Mr Matthew Cleghorn at Rousay, ministers; Jerome Dennison of Noutland, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Zetland, Mr John Barclay at Delting, Mr Thomas Miller at Lerwick, ministers; John Craigie, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Mr George Fordyce at Corstorphine, Mr Robert Hamilton at Edinburgh, Mr Gilbert Hamilton at Cramond, Mr William Bennet at Duddingston, Mr George Kay at West Kirk, Mr John Hyndman there, ministers; the Right Honourable Robert Dundas of Arniston, Esq., Lord President of the Court of Session, Mr James Davidson of Halltree, John Brown, merchant, and one of the present Bailies of Edinburgh, ruling elders. City of Edinburgh, George Drummond, Esq., present Lord Provost thereof, and James Ker, Deacon-Convener of the Trades thereof. University of Edinburgh, Mr John Gowdie, Professor of Divinity therein. Church of Campvere, Mr James Yair, minister, Archibald Macaulay, Esq., Lord Conservator of the Scots Privileges therein. From the Presbytery of Linlithgow, Mr John Lookup at Mid-Calder, Mr John Wilkie at Uphall, Mr William Hastie at Slamannan, Mr Thomas Wardrop at Bathgate, ministers; the Right Honourable the Lord Napier, the Honourable Charles Hope Vere of Craigiehall, ruling elders. Burgh of Linlithgow, Mr James Dundas of Philpstoun, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Biggar, Mr Patrick Hepburn at Walston, Mr William Tait at Kilbucho, ministers; John Gladstones, heritor in Biggar, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Peebles, Mr Christopher Cairns at Tweedsmuir, Mr Alexander Davidson at Traquair, ministers; Charles Hamilton of Spittlehaugh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dalkeith, Mr Patrick Simson at Fala, Mr Alexander Carlyle at Inveresk, Mr George Logan at Ormistoun, ministers; Mr Robert Dundas, younger of Arniston, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Haddington, Mr Patrick Wilkie at Haddington, Mr James Witherspoon at Yester, Mr Hugh Bannatyne at Dirleton, ministers; Mr William Law of Elvingston, Advocate, ruling elder. Burgh of North Berwick, Richard Anderson of Windigoul. From the Presbytery of Dunbar, Mr Alexander Pyot at Dunbar, Mr David Spence at Cockburnspath, ministers; Mr Alexander Hamilton of Pencaitland, ruling elder. Burgh of Dunbar, Mr Alexander Home of Eccles, one of his Majesty's Solicitors. From the Presbytery of Dunse, Mr William Home at Fogo, Mr Matthew Sandilands Dysart at Eccles, ministers; Bailie David Cockburn in Langton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chirnside, Mr William Wilson at Coldstream, Mr James Allan at Eyemouth, Mr John Tod at Ladykirk, ministers; Mr John Swinton, younger of that ilk, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kelso, Mr Thomas Pollock at Ednam, Mr William Walker at Mackerston, ministers; John Dawson of Harpertoun, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Jedburgh, Mr James Winchester at Jedburgh, Mr James Simson at Wilton, Mr Alexander Glen at Kirkton, ministers; the Most Honourable the Marquis of Lothian, ruling elder. Burgh of Jedburgh, Mr Thomas Calderwood of Polton. From the Presbytery of Earlston, Mr Alexander Duncan at Smailholm, Mr David Duncan at Stow, ministers; Mr Robert Kennedy of Greenknow, Advocate, ruling elder. Burgh of Lauder, Mr Charles Binning of Pilmore, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Selkirk, Mr James Mason at St Boswell's, Mr William Brown at Maxton, ministers; Mr Andrew Pringle, Advocate, ruling elder; with his Grace Archibald Duke of Argyle, the Most Honourable John Marquis of Tweeddale, the Right Honourable James Earl of Morton, the Right Honourable John Earl of Breadalbane, the Right Honourable Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto, Mr John Sinclair of Murkle, two of the Senators of the College of Justice, Sir John Clerk of Pennicuik, Baronet, one of the Barons of Exchequer, ruling elders; to be commissioners, &c.

VII.

*Sess. ult., May 25, 1752.—Act concerning Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions upon Overtures transmitted to them.**

The General Assembly, considering that a great many Presbyteries neglect to send up their opinions concerning overtures transmitted to them, whereby the consideration and enacting of several overtures hath been postponed, do hereby enact, that when any overture hath been twice transmitted, the General Assembly will, without further transmission, take such overtures into consideration, and pass into acts or reject the same as they shall see cause, although Presbyteries have not sent up their opinions.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1752.—Act regulating the Meetings of Synods in respect of the late Act of Parliament changing the Calendar.

The General Assembly, in respect of a late Act of Parliament changing the calendar, appoints that the Synods which usually met on the first Tuesday of April or October, shall meet on the second Tuesday of these months, according to the new style; that those who have been in use to meet on the second Tuesday of the said months shall meet on the third Tuesday, new style, and so of the rest; advancing a week in the denomination of the days, whatever month or week of that month any of the Synods have been in use to meet in; and such Synods as have already adjourned shall have their next meeting according to the above appointment.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 25, 1752.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 24th day of that month, in the year 1753.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. ult., May 25, 1752.—Overture for regulating the Effect of Dissents from Judgments of Inferior Courts.†

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their Committee for Overtures, an overture for regulating the effect of dissents, which was read as follows, viz.:—The General Assembly, considering that the appearing of dissenters against particular judgments of inferior courts has created much trouble to the superior judicatories—for remedying thereof in all time coming, enact and ordain, that in all causes litigated betwixt parties before any inferior judicatories, when judgment is given in such way as one or more members think themselves obliged to dissent, this shall give them no title to appear before the superior courts in opposition to such judgment, unless they be called upon to defend themselves against censure, according to the Act of Assembly, 1644, anent dissenting voices. The General Assembly, having heard the above overture, do transmit the same to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may report their opinion thereon to the next Assembly.

* Remonstrances having been made against the way of passing this Act, it was, in 1753, transmitted as an overture. In 1758 it was re-enacted, (see 5th Act of that year.)—*Ed.* 1843.

† This overture does not appear to have been passed into an act.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 24, 1753.

I.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1753.—The King's Commission to Alexander Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1753.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1753.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1753.—Act Discharging Presbyteries to elect Missionary Ministers or Preachers as their Commissioners to the General Assemblies.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration the case of commissions given sometimes by Presbyteries to missionary ministers, employed by the managers of the Royal Bounty, to represent them in the Assembly, do hereby discharge all Presbyteries to elect such missionary ministers to be their commissioners to the General Assembly in time coming.

V.

Sess. 7, June 1, 1753.—Act against Simoniackal Practices.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration a representation made to them by the Synod of Angus and Mearns, relating to bargains betwixt patrons or heritors in parishes, and candidates for the ministry, or the friends of such candidates, and the great danger which may thence arise to this Church, do hereby enjoin the several Presbyteries in this Church, in order to prevent such practices for the future, to take all proper measures to discover if any such have happened in their bounds, and if, upon inquiry, it shall be found that any minister or probationer hath obliged himself, or that his friends, before his settlement, and in order to promote the same, have obliged themselves, upon the account of the candidate, that he shall not, during his incumbency, commence any process against the heritors for augmentation of stipend, reparation of manse, office-houses, or enlarging his glebe; or shall have become bound in any sum or sums of money, or any prestation to the patron or persons connected with the patron, in order to procure the presentation, or to the heritors or others concerned, in order to obtain a concurrence with the said presentation, or otherwise to procure a call to a vacant parish; or has entered into any simoniackal paction or practice

for that effect; that such Presbytery lay a representation of the said matter before the General Assembly, that the Procurator for the Church may have orders to raise and carry on a process of reduction of such bargains or obligations before the Court of Session; and also, the Assembly do hereby declare it a just cause of deposition in ministers, or of taking away the licence of a probationer; and ordain Presbyteries to proceed to such sentences against all such ministers and probationers as shall be hereafter found to have either entered into such bargains themselves, previous to their settlements, or who shall, after their settlements, homologate the deed of their friends, and do not immediately, when they come to the knowledge of it, intimate the same to the Presbytery of the bounds. And, further, the Assembly appoint this Act to be read by all Presbyteries to every person before he be licensed to preach the Gospel, and to every candidate for a settlement in their bounds, before they take any steps towards his settlement. And, further, the General Assembly being informed that in the case of a certain settlement in the Presbytery of Dundee, the present incumbent's friends, before his settlement, had, without his knowledge, entered into a bargain with the heritors, which has been very inconvenient for him ever since; they do therefore appoint their Procurator to raise and carry on a process of reduction of that bargain before the Lords of Council and Session at the public charge; and ordain the Presbytery of Dundee to give the Procurator a distinct account of the particulars of that matter, so far as they have access to know them, for the above mentioned purpose.

VI.

Sess. 8, June 2, 1753.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1753.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1753.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 23d day of that month, in the year 1754.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. ult., June 4, 1753.

The General Assembly, finding, by the report of their Committee for Overtures, that a great number of Presbyteries have not yet sent up their returns to the overtures transmitted to them by the last and former Assemblies, do require such Presbyteries, as are still deficient, to send up their opinions on these overtures to the next General Assembly, viz. :—

Overture about the Psalmody, transmitted in the year 1750.

Overture about Licensing Probationers, transmitted in the year 1749, and, with an addition, in the year 1750.

Overture anent Processes against Probationers, transmitted in the year 1748.

Overture for Regulating the Effect of Dissents from Judgments of Inferior Courts, transmitted by the Assembly 1752.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1753.—Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Overtures transmitted to them by the Assembly.

(See Act 5th, 1758.)

Upon a motion that the Assembly should consider the 7th Act of last Assembly with respect to overtures transmitted to Presbyteries, concerning which there were a good many instructions sent up with commissioners to this Assembly, remonstrating against the way of passing the said Act, the same not having been previously transmitted as an overture to Presbyteries, the General Assembly do hereby now transmit the said Act as an overture to the several Presbyteries of this Church; and appoint that they send up their opinions thereon to the next General Assembly; of which Act the tenor follows, viz.:—"The General Assembly, considering that a great many Presbyteries neglect to send up their opinions concerning overtures transmitted to them, whereby the consideration and enacting of several overtures hath been postponed, do hereby enact, that when any overture hath been twice transmitted, the General Assembly will, without further transmission, take such overtures into consideration, and pass into Acts or reject the same as they shall see cause, although Presbyteries have not sent up their opinions."

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1754.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1754.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Hopetoun produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1754.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1754.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1754.—Act anent Licensing Probationers and settling Ministers in consequence of a Presentation.

The General Assembly enjoin all Presbyteries that they take care, in licensing probationers, strictly to observe the rules of the Word of God, and Acts of Assembly relative thereto—also strictly to observe the rules of this Church, with respect to Probationers for the ministry licensed in England, or in foreign parts; that before taking any steps towards a settlement in consequence of a presentation, they take care that the patron and presentee be duly qualified, and that the presentation be in the terms of law; and that when one is presented to a parish, against whom there appears to be no just objection, they use their best endeavours to render the presentee acceptable to the parish.

V.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1754.—Act appointing Ministers ordained or admitted to Parishes to be Members of the Presbytery and Synod in whose Bounds the Parish lies.

The General Assembly do hereby declare, that when one is ordained or admitted as minister of a parish, he shall, by virtue of such ordination or admission, be, *ipso facto*, a member of the Presbytery and Synod in whose bounds the parish lies; and ordains the clerks of these judicatories forthwith to enrol him. And all clerks of Synods and Presbyteries are hereby enjoined to enrol as members such as have, at any time preceding this, been ordained or admitted as ministers of parishes within their respective bounds.

VI.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1754.—Act extending the Twelfth Act of the Assembly, 1736, to Sentences passed by the General Assembly, and not obeyed by Presbyteries.

The General Assembly, finding that, by the 12th Act of Assembly, 1736, Presbyteries refusing to obey the sentences of the Commission of the General Assembly are declared to be, *ipso facto*, sisted before the next General Assembly, to whom they shall be accountable for their conduct; do hereby declare this Act to be extended to sentences passed by the General Assembly, and not obeyed by Presbyteries.

VII.

Sess. 8, June 1, 1754.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1754.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1754.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 22d day of that month, in the year 1755.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*May 30, 1754.—Overture anent Ministers ordained in England, or in Foreign Parts.**

The General Assembly transmit the following overture to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may report their opinion thereupon to the next General Assembly, viz. :—"That before any minister ordained in England, or in foreign parts, be considered as a minister of this Church, so as to be capable of a charge in the Establishment, he shall preach before the Presbytery in whose bounds the charge is, and be examined by them, in order to their judging if he be duly qualified. And in case any such minister shall be presented by a patron, or receive a call to any parish previously to his undergoing the trial now mentioned, it shall be competent for the Presbytery to take trial of him as above, in order to his settlement."

June 1, 1754.—Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them to the Superior Courts.

(See 1741.)†

The General Assembly agreed to transmit the following overture, transmitted to them by the Commission of last Assembly, to the consideration of the several Presbyteries, that they may report their opinion thereon to the next General Assembly; which overture is as follows, viz. :—"The Commission considering that the present practice of this Church, whereby the members of inferior judicatories are excluded from judging or voting in the superior judicatories, in case of an appeal, is contrary to the practice of all other courts, both of law and equity, and in some measure subversive of that exact parity which is a leading part of our constitution, as it sometimes subjects the sentence of the far greater number to that of the lesser; and further, considering that, by this means, those who a little before acted in the character of judges, are obliged to stand at the bar on a level with the pannel, must enter into the spirit and warmth of a party, and, perhaps, are condemned for no other reason than giving sentence according to their best judgment, and which they would willingly have altered upon a review; and as it often, if not always, happens that when the members of inferior courts, before whom the cause was first tried and thoroughly canvassed, are removed, the affair is not sufficiently understood, particularly because those who voted among the minority are not allowed to assign any reasons for their conduct, except they have entered a complaint, which one would not choose to do, unless in a very strong case; and every one knows that, in the course of reasoning, things frequently cast up which perplex or mislead the judges, that could easily have been obviated or cleared up if the members of the inferior courts had not been deprived of the liberty of speaking. On all these accounts, and for many other obvious reasons, the Commission propose that the Assembly should transmit an overture to the consideration of the several Presbyteries, for allowing the members of inferior judicatories to sit, judge, and vote, in the Superior Courts, in cases of appeals, as they do at present in the case of a reference.

* This overture was again transmitted in the following year; but Presbyteries do not appear to have reported their opinion.—*Ed.* 1843.

† This overture appears to have been again and again transmitted, (see especially 1771. &c.) but never enacted.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1755.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1755.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1755.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1755.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 28, 1755.—Act against Infidelity and Immorality.

The General Assembly, being filled with the deepest concern on account of the prevalence of infidelity and immorality, the principles whereof have been, to the disgrace of our age and nation, so openly avowed in several books published of late in this country, and which are but too well known among us; do, therefore, judge it proper and necessary for them at this time to express the utmost abhorrence of these impious and infidel principles, which are subversive of all religion, natural and revealed, and have such pernicious influence on life and morals. And they do earnestly recommend it to all the ministers of this Church to exercise the vigilance, and to exert the zeal, which becomes their character, to preserve those under their charge from the contagion of these abominable tenets, and to stir up in them a solicitous concern to guard against them, and against the influence of those who are infected with them.

V.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1755.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1755.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1755.—Act appointing the next Diet of the General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the third Thursday of May next, being the 20th day of that month, in the year 1756.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

May 29, 1755.

Upon report of the Committee for Overtures, the General Assembly transmits to the several Presbyteries the overtures formerly transmitted to them by the last and preceding General Assemblies, and appoint that such Presbyteries as have given no opinion on these overtures do send up their opinions to the next General Assembly; and that such Presbyteries as have given their opinions upon them formerly do send up a new extract of the same.

The Overtures above referred to are:—

- I. Overture anent Processes against Probationers, transmitted by the Assembly, 1748.
- II. Overture anent Licensing Probationers, transmitted by the Assembly, 1749, with an Amendment, proposed and transmitted by the Assembly, 1750.
- III. Overture anent the Psalmody, transmitted by the Assembly, 1750.
- IV. Overture anent the Effect of Dissents, transmitted by the Assembly, 1752.
- V. Overture anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on the Overtures transmitted to them by the Assembly, transmitted by the Assembly, 1753.
- VI. Overture anent Ministers ordained in England, or in Foreign Parts, transmitted by the Assembly, 1754.
- VII. Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them to the Superior Courts, transmitted by the Assembly, 1754.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1756.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1756.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1756.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The frequent proofs you have given of your zeal and steadiness in promoting true piety, and the repeated experience we have had of your loyalty, attachment, and affection to our person and government, cannot but induce us most heartily to concur in your present meeting, and to countenance the same with our royal approbation and authority. And as we are persuaded that you will at all times, and more especially in the present juncture, be governed by, and are now come together with, the same good principles and dispositions, you may be assured of our firm resolution to protect the Church of Scotland, as by law established, and to maintain it in the full enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges.

We have had such proofs of the fidelity, prudence, and conduct of our right trusty and well-beloved Charles Lord Cathcart, that we have again thought fit to make choice of him to represent our person in this Assembly, not doubting, from the knowledge you have of his firm attachment to our person, family, and government, and of his zeal for the Church of Scotland, but that he will be most agreeable to you.

We have a thorough dependence, that your best endeavours will not be wanting, in whatever may contribute to the good and desirable end of advancing true piety and virtue, which is the chief intent of your present Assembly. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 21st day of April 1756, in the twenty-ninth year of our reign.

By His Majesty's Command,

HOLDERNESSE.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1756.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We received your Majesty's most gracious letter with that respect and gratitude which we owe to the best of Sovereigns, under whose auspicious government we enjoy so many inestimable blessings.

Your Majesty's countenancing our present meeting with your royal approbation and authority, is one of the many evidences you have given of your regard for the prosperity of this National Church.

Nothing can do more honour to us than that your Majesty is graciously pleased to take notice of our zeal and steadiness in promoting true piety, and of our loyalty, attachment, and affection to your sacred person and government.

When we reflect upon the justice and mildness of your government, and the unwearied attention your Majesty has given to the prosperity of all who are so happy as to live under it, we have the greatest confidence and joy in the assurances of your Majesty's firm resolution to protect the Church of Scotland, as by law established, and to maintain it in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges: At the same time, it fills our hearts with gratitude to Almighty God, by whom kings reign, with an ardent zeal to support your Majesty's government; and with the warmest resolution to promote the same pious and loyal principles, wherever our influence can reach; and, particularly, in the breasts of all those with whom we are more immediately concerned.

Your Majesty, in the present critical juncture, hath given such signal proofs of your fortitude and steadiness in the support of the rights and privileges of the crown of Britain, and of all, even its remotest subjects, against the attempts and usurpations of lawless power, that we consider ourselves as called upon, in a particular manner, to exert our utmost endeavours in defence of your Majesty's sacred person, and in support of that constitution and government which must be dear to us as men, Britons, and Protestants.

Your Majesty's renewal of your royal bounty for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and places where Popery and ignorance abound, we acknowledge with all thankfulness, and shall not fail to employ so pious a gift for promoting the important purposes for which it is most graciously bestowed.

The choice your Majesty has again been pleased to make of Lord Cathcart to represent your person in this Assembly, gives the highest pleasure to us, and to every member of the Church of Scotland.

The proofs your Majesty has had of his fidelity, prudence, and conduct; and the knowledge we have of his steady and firm attachment to your Majesty's person, family, and government, and of his regard and zeal for the rights and interests of the Church of Scotland, must render the choice of him most acceptable to us, and endear him to all who wish well to our present happy Establishment in Church and State.

We can, with great truth, assure your Majesty, that, as we are at this time met together in the National Assembly of this Church, our best endeavours shall be employed to promote the good and desirable end of advancing true piety and virtue, the great intent of our present meeting; studying to approve ourselves to Almighty God, and to justify the trust and confidence your Majesty is most graciously pleased to repose in us.

That he who is the King of kings may pour down his choicest blessings upon your Majesty's person and family; that the crown may long flourish upon your sacred head, and your precious life be preserved for a blessing to these realms; that that wisdom which is from above may inspire all your councils, and that strength which is Almighty may go forth with your arms; that God may abundantly bless his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, the Princess Dowager of Wales, the Duke, the Princesses, and all the branches of your royal family; and that after a long and happy reign upon earth, you may at last be received into that kingdom which cannot be moved, are, and shall be, the sincere and hearty prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by
PATRICK CUMING, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 24, 1756.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty, on Occasion of his Declaration of War against the French King.

Most gracious Sovereign,

Your Majesty's just resentment of the encroachments of the French in America has compelled that nation to throw off the mask of peace, under which they have carried on designs so pernicious to Great Britain. Hostilities are begun in Europe; war is now declared; France has invaded Minorca, and threatens with invasion the British Isles.

In this critical situation of public affairs, we, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the National Assembly, think it our duty to express our deep concern for the general welfare, and our affectionate regard for a prince who is the guardian of liberty, and the father of

his people; and we heartily embrace this opportunity of giving your Majesty assurances which cannot fail of being acceptable to your benign disposition—authentic assurances of the loyalty of the people of Scotland.

The members of this Established Church, who make so great a majority of the inhabitants of North Britain, are universally fervent in their zeal for your Majesty's person and family. Devoted of old to the best of causes, religion and liberty, the Presbyterians early fixed their hearts and hopes on the House of Hanover, by whose succession alone religion and liberty could have been preserved. The happy experience of almost half an age, during the reign of your Majesty, and your royal father, have demonstrated the wisdom of our ancestors, and confirmed the present generation in their loyalty and love to your illustrious House.

Nor is it less from your certain knowledge of the present spirit, than of the ancient principles of the Church of Scotland, that we can venture to assure your sacred Majesty, that, in no part of your dominions the zeal of the subjects may be more safely relied on; for never was the affection of this nation to their prince so manifest as at this juncture. Roused by the approach of danger, the hearts of your people, most gracious Sovereign, are more than ever yours; and should that danger come, which may the Providence of God avert, it will be found, Great Sir, that your government will be supported in this part of the united kingdom, by the zeal and courage of your most faithful people, who hold nothing so dear as religion and liberty, and esteem nothing so glorious as loyalty to a prince by whom religion and liberty are held sacred.

We beg leave to assure your Majesty, that in our sphere we shall make it our great care to cultivate these good and happy dispositions in your people; and shall endeavour to make it manifest that we have nothing so much at heart as the glory of God, the honour of your Majesty, and the support of your government.

That mutual love and confidence may still subsist between your Majesty and your subjects; that the God of battles may bless your fleets and armies with success; and that a race of kings of your royal line, lovers of religion, liberty, and their country, may always sway the sceptre of these lands, is the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by
PATRICK CUMING, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1756.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1756.—Act appointing a solemn National Fast.

Whereas our Sovereign, in defence of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging, has declared war against France, the formidable enemy of the religion and liberties of our country: And whereas the Almighty, in former times, has done great things for these nations; has bestowed upon them inestimable privileges; and, in the day of danger, when our fathers cried unto God, he heard from heaven, raised up deliverers, and saved, according to his manifold mercies; and still continues to distinguish us beyond all nations, blessing us with the best religion, and best of governments.

Yet, notwithstanding all this goodness showed to these nations, just cause there is to lament that we have not learned wisdom from our dangers, nor gratitude from our deliverances; that we have not duly prized nor improved our advantages; but as God has multiplied his favours upon us, we have multiplied our transgressions against the God of heaven; and too visible it is, that infidelity, luxury, vice, and profaneness, have widely diffused their contagion, and infected this nation.

From this aggravated guilt we have reason to dread that God may be provoked to depart from us; to deliver us a prey into the hands of our enemies; and, by an inclement season, to blast the fruits of the earth, and break the staff of bread in our land; thus visiting us, for our iniquities, with the desolating calamities of war and famine.

The National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in this important crisis, when we have much to fear from our enemies, and more from our own follies and heinous transgressions, do, therefore, most seriously call and exhort all to the duties of solemn fasting, humiliation, and prayer, upon such a day as his Majesty shall please to appoint; the Assembly having made humble application to him to name the day, and interpose his royal authority for the due observation thereof; and they do earnestly obtest persons of all ranks, as they tender the favour of Almighty God, and the welfare of these nations, to humble themselves, with penitent and contrite souls, in the sight of that God who, dwelling in his high and holy place, dwelleth also with them who are of contrite and humble hearts, to confess and forsake their sins, imploring, through Jesus Christ, grace and mercy from the Father of mercies; beseeching the Divine Majesty to revive among us a spirit of primitive integrity, piety, and virtue; that we may be inspired with reverence of the Almighty, loyalty to our Sovereign, love and zeal for our constitution, civil and religious; that there may be one mind and one heart in us all; that every heart may be warm with the love of our country, and every hand cheerfully employed in her service: And if, in the Providence of God, we shall be called to appear in the defence of the Protestant religion, and our national privileges, that in so noble a cause we may act a part becoming our characters, as Protestants and free Britons; may be of good courage, and may play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God.

The Assembly further enjoins, that in the day of public prayer, supplications be offered to the God of heaven, that he may bless our Sovereign King George, long preserve his valuable life, direct his councils, establish his throne in righteousness, and that he may continue to reign in the hearts of a free and happy people; that God may bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales, the Princess Dowager of Wales, the Duke of Cumberland, the Princesses, and all the royal family: That God may give wisdom to our counsellors, conduct to our commanders, and strength to those who turn the battle from our gates; that our trust and confidence being placed not in an arm of flesh, but in the Lord Jehovah, in whom there is everlasting strength, he, the Righteous Governor of the universe, may favour our righteous cause; the Lord of Hosts may go forth with our fleets and armies, protect those in the day of battle who expose their lives for our safety, and crown their arms with victory and success; that God, who setteth bounds to the sea, stilleth the raging of its waves, and the tumults of the people, would make this expensive and dangerous war speedily to terminate in a safe and honourable peace; that the God of nature, whom all the elements obey, would send such weather as will cherish the fruits of the earth, that our pastures may be clothed with flocks, and our valleys covered over with corn; that our land may yield her increase, and the year at length be crowned with the Divine goodness; that we, enjoying the blessings of peace and plenty in all our borders, and, being delivered by the Almighty from the hands of our enemies, may serve our God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives; that the beauty of the Lord our God may be upon us, and glory, the glory of civil and religious liberty, may ever dwell in our land. And the Assembly enjoins all ministers to intimate this Act from their pulpits upon the Lord's Day immediately preceding the day that shall be appointed by his Majesty for the observation of the fast, and to excite the people to their duty by suitable exhortations.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1756.—Act and Recommendation of the General Assembly respecting Irish Bursaries.

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration repeated representations that have been made of the great scarcity of preachers and students in divinity, having the Irish language, by which means many parishes in the Highlands and Islands, where the English is not generally understood, are likely to become destitute of the means of religious knowledge, and several parishes already vacant, particularly where Popery abounds, cannot be supplied for want of persons capable of preaching to them in that language which they are acquainted with, did, therefore, agree, that the former laudable practice, of giving bursaries to students having the Irish language, be revived; and the General Assembly do hereby, in so far, repeal the 7th Act of the Assembly, 1737, superseding that practice; and do earnestly recommend to every minister of this Church to pay in, from year to year, to the clerk of his Presbytery, three shillings sterling; and appoint the money, so collected, to be transmitted to William Ross, clerk to the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, before the second day of February each year; and that the foresaid money be applied for educating students for the ministry, having the Irish language, in such manner as the General Assembly of this Church shall judge most proper. And the Assembly ordains that every student that shall be trained for the ministry in the Highlands and Islands, upon the fund to be raised for this purpose, shall, when he comes to be settled as a minister, preach every Lord's Day in English, as well as in the Irish language: And it is recommended to all the ministers now settled in those parts to do the same. And they are hereby appointed to do everything in their power, with the assistance of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and other friends of our country, religion, and government, to have as many good schools as may be in that part of the kingdom, so as the English tongue may spread the faster, till it be universally understood and spoken.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1756.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1756.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the third Thursday of May next, being the 19th day of that month, in the year 1757.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 5, May 25, 1756.—Overture anent Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors concerning the extent of their Stipends.

(See Act 6th, 1759.)

Sess. 5, May 25, 1756.—Overture anent the more speedily Supplying of Vacancies.
(See Act 7th, 1759.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1757.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1757.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1757.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1757.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 25, 1757.—Act anent the Method of keeping the Separate Registers.

The General Assembly, having heard the report of the Trustees for Managing the Fund for a Provision to Ministers' Widows, &c. concerning the manner of keeping the separate registers, do appoint, that, for the future, the separate registers shall be divided into as many parts as the respective Presbyteries consist of parishes; and that the facts respecting the ministers and vacancies of every parish shall be stated under its own proper head or division, marked with the name of the parish: And further, as an abstract is to be prepared of the two Acts relative to the fund, and of what other papers are necessary for the direction of Presbyteries and Universities respecting the said fund, the General Assembly appoint, that, as soon as this abstract shall be transmitted, every Presbytery and University shall cause it to be bound up with a quire of clean paper, in order that whatever after regulations shall be found necessary with respect to the fund, these may be copied over into the said book, by which means the whole of the rules concerning the fund will be always at hand.

V.

Sess. 8, May 27, 1757.—Recommendation to Presbyteries to take care that none of the Ministers of this Church attend the Theatre.

The General Assembly, considering how much the success of the Gospel depends on the regular and inoffensive behaviour of the ministers of this Church, do earnestly recommend to the several Presbyteries to take such wise and effectual measures as may promote the spirit of our holy religion, and preserve the purity and decorum of the ministerial character; and that they take care that none of the ministers of this Church do, upon any occasion, attend the theatre.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1757.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1757.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr William Leechman, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing Popery and profaneness, and for managing the royal bounty given for these ends, according to and in terms of his Majesty's grant to this Assembly. In prosecution of which purposes, the committee are to appoint preachers and catechists to go to such places as they shall find, upon due information, to be most proper, according to his Majesty's design, expressed in his warrant. And they shall take care that the persons they employ be certified, and found, upon due trial, to be properly qualified for these respective offices, of good abilities for the same, of a pious life and conversation, prudent, of undoubted loyalty to his Majesty, and of competent skill in the principles of divinity, and particularly in Popish controversies; such preachers and catechists being hereby appointed to be subject to and under the inspection of the Presbyteries of the bounds to which they are sent, who are to take care that the orders of the committee be duly observed by them. And the preachers are also appointed to catechise, and both they and the catechists to instruct the people from house to house, and to visit the sick; and in all their labours among the people to be careful to teach them the principles and duties of the true Christian Protestant religion, and the obligations they are under to duty and loyalty to our Sovereign King George, and obedience to the laws; and the committee are empowered to give them such instructions, as to their work and behaviour, as they shall judge meet; which instructions the preachers and catechists are hereby ordered to obey. The General Assembly do further appoint the said committee to have a particular regard, in their proceedings, to the regulations agreed upon by the committee of the Assembly for managing the royal bounty, on the 30th day of September 1730, approved by subsequent Assemblies; and to take care that Presbyteries, and others concerned, observe the same, which they are hereby ordered to do; particularly, the Assembly ordains the several Presbyteries to insert in their registers the committee's appointments of the designations, salaries, and stations, of the several missionaries, and to

have an exact regard thereto in all the letters they shall write about the said missionaries, and in giving of certificates to them, and to direct all their letters concerning missionaries in their bounds only to the moderator of the committee; which letters shall be signed, at the appointment of the Presbytery, by the moderator or clerk thereof. And the Assembly does discharge any payments to be made of the salaries of missionaries, except upon receipts from the missionaries themselves, and upon certificates from the Presbyteries, bearing that they have served for the time mentioned in the receipts. The General Assembly do also empower the said committee to apply, for the purposes above mentioned, what may remain of the last year's royal bounty not disposed of, by reason of any of the missionaries not fulfilling the appointments laid upon them; and they are to keep a register of their proceedings, and likewise distinct books of accounts how the foresaid money is bestowed, which shall be patent to any concerned who please to inspect the same. Of the persons above named as members of this committee, five are declared to be a quorum, whereof three are to be ministers. But it is hereby appointed, that at the quarterly meeting of the committee, in which the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the ensuing year is to be approved and determined, not less than fourteen shall be the quorum, whereof nine shall be ministers; and the said committee are appointed to have their meetings at Edinburgh, in the Hall of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the last Thursday of every month, at four o'clock afternoon, and also the first lawful day after the adjournment of the four stated diets of the Commission of the General Assembly, at ten o'clock forenoon, except that day should fall to be Saturday, and then the meeting shall be upon Monday next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find most needful and convenient; and they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and take their advice and assistance; and also to correspond with Synods and Presbyteries concerned. They are likewise instructed and empowered, as they shall see cause, to apply to the government, or any magistrate, for assistance and support in carrying on the design of the commission now given to them. And the General Assembly do, by these presents, nominate and appoint Mr David Dalrymple, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, to be receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, and to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the said committee, and according to their rules. And the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the distribution of the royal bounty, and lay the same before the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or the Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable. And it is agreed that no person, once employed and inserted in the scheme, shall be struck out thereof for that year, but by the quorum of at least fourteen, whereof nine to be ministers; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of them on the scheme, it shall not be determined at the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but shall lie on the table till another meeting; and, in the meantime, the person complained of, and the Presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted of such complaint, and those concerned be required to send to the said committee a just account of the matter against their next meeting. And it is further appointed, that after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the royal bounty is settled in manner above directed, and notice thereof given, by letters, to the Presbyteries concerned, such Presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answers to these letters, at farthest, with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not done sooner; and that the committee, at their first meeting after the General Assembly, in case they do not complete the next year's scheme themselves, shall name a sub-committee of their number for completing the same, who are to lay their draught thereof before a subsequent meeting.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1757.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 25th day of that month, in the year 1758.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

May 24, 1757.—Overtures of last year re-transmitted.

May 28, 1757.—Act and Overture against Simoniacal Practices.

(See 8th Act, 1759.)

An explanation or amendment being proposed of a part of the 1st Act, June 1753, against simoniacal practices, the General Assembly agreed to transmit the foresaid Act, and explication thereof, as an overture, to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may send up their opinions thereupon to the next General Assembly, and appoint that, in the meantime, the same have the force of an Act, and that Presbyteries take it into their consideration as soon as the Acts of Assembly shall come into their hands; of which explication the tenor follows, viz. :—“Whereas, in the Act of Assembly of the 1st June 1753, against simoniacal practices, there is the following branch or clause,—‘and do not immediately, when they come to the knowledge of it, intimate the same to the Presbytery of the bounds;’ and whereas it is found necessary to explain and amend the said clause, it is, therefore, hereby enacted, that if any such simoniacal practices as are mentioned and described in the said Act, shall be carried on by any person or persons whatsoever, in order to the promoting or procuring any benefice or office in this Church, to any minister or probationer, though without his consent or approbation; and if such minister or probationer shall at any time be told or informed that such practices have been or are carried on, or proposed to be carried on, for the purpose aforesaid, and shall not make discovery or intimation thereof to the Presbytery of the bounds, at their first meeting after he shall receive such information, then, and in that case, he shall, if a minister, be deposed, and if a probationer, be deprived of his licence.”

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 25, 1758.

I.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1758.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1758.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 27, 1758.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1758.—Act declaring Mr Thomas Boston, late Minister at Oxnam, incapable of receiving or accepting a Presentation or Call to any Parish in this Church, without the special allowance of the General Assembly.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their Committee for Bills, a reference from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, concerning the Rev. Mr Thomas Boston, who had deserted his charge of the parish of Oxnam, and set up a separate meeting in the parish of Jedburgh, containing an overture given in to them by a committee of their number, and the Synod's approbation thereof, bearing, that Mr Boston's conduct deserved severe censure; but that, in order to give weight to any censure which may be inflicted, they proposed the authority of the General Assembly of this Church should be interposed; and, therefore, had appointed the Presbytery of Jedburgh to transmit to this Assembly extracts from their records, of the demission given in to them by Mr Boston, and of their deliverance thereupon; and that the Presbytery should cause summon Mr Boston to compare before this Assembly, in order to their giving a final judgment or direction in the affair as they shall see cause. Upon the reading of the above reference, the Presbytery of Jedburgh being inquired at, with respect to the appointment laid upon them by the Synod, represented, that, in obedience thereto, they had ordered Mr Boston to be summoned to this Assembly; and an execution being produced and read of his being accordingly summoned, he was called, but did not compare. Then the Assembly caused to be read the minutes of the Presbytery of Jedburgh, dated the 7th of December last, containing a demission given in to them by Mr Boston of his charge at Oxnam; and a question being moved, how far it was proper for the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale to have taken up this affair, and to have brought it immediately before the Assembly? that part of the 4th Act of Assembly, 1739, concerning ministers who secede from this Church, which directs the several judicatories in their method of procedure in such cases, was read. After some reasoning, the General Assembly did agree, in respect of the particular circumstances attending this cause, to take Mr Boston's demission under their consideration, together with the proceedings of the Presbytery of Jedburgh, relating to him; whereby the Assembly finds that the said Mr Thomas Boston has declared himself to be no minister of this Church, and that he will not hold communion with her judicatories; and, therefore, they did, without a vote, and hereby do, declare, that he is incapable of receiving or accepting of a presentation or call to any parish in this Church, without the special allowance of some future General Assembly. And the General Assembly do hereby prohibit all the ministers of this Church from employing him to preach or perform any ministerial offices for them, or from being employed by him, unless some future Assembly shall see cause to take off this prohibition. And Mr Boston being called, and not comparing, the above sentence was publicly read.

V.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1758.—Act anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their Opinions on Overtures transmitted to them.

The General Assembly, considering that a great many Presbyteries neglect to send up their opinions concerning overtures transmitted to them, whereby the consideration and enacting of several overtures has been postponed, do hereby enact, that when any overture hath been twice transmitted, the General Assembly will, without further transmission, take them into consideration, and pass them into Acts, or reject them, as they shall see cause, although Presbyteries have not sent up their opinions.

VI.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1758.—Act anent Parochial Schools.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from the Committee for Overtures, a representation by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, setting forth—"That by divers laws and Acts of Parliament, particularly the 17th Act of the Parliament, 1646, and 26th Act of the Parliament, 1696, it is statuted and ordained, that there be a school settled, and a schoolmaster appointed, in every parish; and, for that effect, that a commodious house be provided for a school, and a salary modified for the schoolmaster, not under 100 merks, nor above 200 merks, to be paid by the heritors and liferenters, according to their valuations, and to be laid on and uplifted in manner mentioned in the foresaid Acts; and, particularly, by the said Acts it is provided, that if the heritors of the parish shall not convene and agree amongst themselves anent the premises, that the Commissioners of Supply, or any five of them, upon application from the Presbytery, shall have power to settle a school, and modify a salary to the schoolmaster, as aforesaid. That, notwithstanding of the above quoted, and other acts of Parliament, as well as several acts of the Privy Council of Scotland to the same purpose, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge are sorry to find, that in no less than 175 parishes, within the bounds of 39 Presbyteries, where the Society's schools are erected, parochial schools are not yet erected, and of these parishes the Society have given in a list, founded on the information of the Presbyteries in which the parishes lie. The Society are extremely sensible that it would be improper for them to point out to the Assembly the fatal consequences of this neglect; these must occur to every person who considers of how much consequence it is to train up the youth of this, or of any country, in learning and Christian knowledge. The Society are also unwilling to suggest to the Assembly to what causes, at least in some places, this neglect may be owing. They are sorry to say, that those for whose benefit this salutary regulation was principally designed are not always so ready and willing as they ought to be to carry it into execution, although the burden it lays upon them is so extremely small, as to bear no proportion to the benefit derived from it. The Society have done every thing in their power to have this neglect remedied; so far as their influence has reached, they have excited all concerned to comply with so reasonable a demand. They have done more; they have threatened to withdraw their charity schools from those parishes which neglect or refuse to provide parochial ones; they have passed an act to that purpose, and have notified the same to every Presbytery where their schools lie. It was never surely the intention of the donors, nor of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, to substitute their charity schools in place of parochial schools, which are by law appointed to be established through the whole country. It will easily occur to the Assembly that there is work enough for both. As it is but too certain that in many places the heritors are backward in raising and establishing parochial schools, and as, by the acts already quoted, in every case when that happens, the remedy is by an application from the Presbytery to the Commissioners of Supply, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge thought it their duty to apply to the Assembly, that, by their authority, it may be recommended to every Presbytery through

Scotland to inquire whether or not a parochial school is established in every parish within their bounds, and in every instance where that shall not be found to be the case, that an immediate application be made by the Presbytery to the Commissioners of Supply, to have a parochial school forthwith established in that parish. And as they conceive this affair to be of the last consequence to the interests of learning, religion, and virtue, and to the peace and prosperity of the country, the Society beg leave further to suggest, that the result of the above inquiry and requisition be forthwith notified to the Procurator and Agent for the Church, that under their direction a process may, in name of the particular Presbytery, and of the Procurator, be, in case of necessity, immediately commenced, for having a school erected in that parish; and that the expense of these processes, which cannot be considerable, as the law is clear, and as one summons will do for all the parishes within the same Presbytery, may be defrayed out of the Church's funds." The General Assembly, having heard the said representation read, with the opinion of the Committee for Overtures thereupon, do hereby appoint the several Presbyteries of this Church to inquire whether or not a parochial school is established in every parish in their bounds, and where such schools are wanting, the Presbyteries concerned are hereby appointed to make application to the Commissioners of Supply for having parochial schools, with legal salaries, erected in every parish, as the law directs. And the General Assembly appoint the Procurator and Agent for the Church, at the public charge, to commence and carry on all processes necessary for having the laws respecting parochial schools put in execution.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 5, 1758.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 5, 1758.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint, the Rev. Mr Thomas Turnbull, minister at Borthwick, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly, for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as that of last year.)

IX.

Sess. ult., June 5, 1758.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 24th day of that month, in the year 1759.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Overtures of last Assembly re-transmitted.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 24, 1759.

I.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1759.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1759.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1759.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 28, 1759.—Act appointing the Synod of Ross to meet once in the Year, and that on the second Tuesday of May yearly.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their Committee for Bills, a representation and petition by the Provincial Synod of Ross, setting forth, That the said Synod consists only of three Presbyteries, which are made up of twenty-five parishes. That the bounds, however, are very spacious, and interjected by branches of the sea, where the crossing of ferries, especially about the time of the Synod's meetings, which happen to be about the seasons of the Equinoctial storms, makes the attendance of members both dangerous and precarious. That there have been instances more than once, and one at the very last meeting of Synod, when all the members of a Presbytery have been stopped at ferries, and their design of attending disappointed, whereby it frequently happened that in some cases the sentence and decree of the Synod was only the deed of one Presbytery, the other being removed as parties, and the third almost, or altogether, absent: That of late years business has not been throng, so that two Synodical meetings yearly have been held more for form's sake, and in obedience to the Assembly's Act, than for real necessity. For which causes, and several others, too tedious to be enumerated, the said Synod have for a long time had under deliberation, and at length, at the last meeting, which was held in April, determined and appointed that an application should be made to this Assembly for an Act repealing the former Act, which appointed the Synod to meet twice annually, viz., once in September, and again in April; and, instead thereof, that the annual meeting of the Synod of Ross should be appointed to hold yearly, upon the second Tuesday of the month of May, which the Synod are encouraged to insist for, and hope, not only for the onerous causes above mentioned, but because also the same is the case with the two adjacent Synods of Caithness and Glenelg, the correspondents of which Synods might, with great propriety and conveniency,

attend the Synod of Ross, in their way to the General Assembly ; their annual meeting holding only in the month of July. And, therefore, praying the Assembly would take the premises under their consideration, and appoint the said Synod to hold but one meeting annually, and that upon the second Tuesday of May :—Which petition being read, with the opinion of the Committee for Bills thereupon, the General Assembly did, in terms thereof, and hereby do, repeal the Act of Assembly, appointing the Synod of Ross to meet twice in the year, viz., in the months of April and September ; and the General Assembly do appoint, that in time coming the said Synod meet once in the year, and that on the second Tuesday of May yearly.

V.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1759.—Act appointing the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale to meet on the first Tuesday of May yearly.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from the Committee for Bills, a petition by the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, bearing, That it was found very inconvenient to have their meetings in May, sometimes on the second Tuesday, and at other times on the third Tuesday of that month ; therefore, praying that their meetings after this might be fixed on the first Tuesday of May :—Which petition being read, with the opinion of the Committee for Bills thereon, the General Assembly unanimously agreed to grant the desire thereof ; and accordingly do appoint that in the month of May the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale shall meet, in time coming, on the first Tuesday of that month.

VI.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1759.—Act against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors, with respect to obtaining a Decreet of Modification and Locality for their Stipends.

The General Assembly, having had represented to them the great loss which many of the present ministers of this Church sustain from agreements which have been made betwixt their predecessors in office and the heritors of their respective parishes, concerning the extent of their stipends, whereupon decreets of modification and locality have been obtained, with consent of parties, do, therefore, enact and ordain, that in all time coming no minister shall make any composition with his heritors with respect to obtaining a decreet of modification and locality for his stipend, but at the sight, and with the advice and consent of the Presbytery of the bounds.

VII.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1759.—Act anent the Supplying of Vacancies.

The General Assembly, in order to prevent long and unnecessary protracting of the vacancy of parishes, do appoint, that it shall be among the questions asked by Synods at the several Presbyteries at the privy censures, What vacancies there are in their bounds ; of how long continuance these have been ; and the reasons why they are not supplied ? and if the Synod shall find any Presbytery dilatory, after the right of planting any parish has by law fallen into their hands, the Synod shall enjoin them to proceed toward the settlement of that parish without further delay.

VIII.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1759.—Act against Simoniacal Practices, containing an Explication of the Fifth Act of Assembly, 1753.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration a representation of the Synod of Angus and Mearns, relating to bargains betwixt patrons or heritors in parishes, and candidates for the ministry, or the friends of such candidates, and the great danger which may thence arise to this Church; do hereby enjoin the several Presbyteries in this Church, in order to prevent such practices for the future, to take all proper measures to discover if any such have happened in their bounds; and if, upon inquiry, it shall be found that any minister or probationer hath obliged himself, or that his friends, before his settlement, and in order to promote the same, have obliged themselves upon the account of the candidate, that he shall not during his incumbency commence any process against the heritors for augmentation of stipend, reparation of manse, office-houses, or enlarging his glebe, or shall have become bound in any sum or sums of money, or any prestation to the patron or person connected with the patron, in order to procure the presentation, or to the heritors or others concerned, in order to obtain a concurrence with the said presentation, or otherwise to procure a call to a vacant parish, or has entered into any simoniacal paction or practice for that effect, that such Presbytery lay a representation of the said matter before the General Assembly, that the Procurator for the Church may have orders to raise and carry on a process of reduction of such bargains or obligations before the Court of Session; and also the Assembly do hereby declare it a just cause of deposition in ministers, or of taking away the licence of a probationer; and ordain Presbyteries to proceed to such sentences against all such ministers and probationers as shall be hereafter found to have either entered into such bargains themselves, previous to their settlements, or who shall, after their settlements, homologate the deed of their friends. And it is hereby enacted, that if any such simoniacal practices as are mentioned and described in this Act shall be carried on by any person or persons whatsoever, in order to the promoting or procuring any benefice or office in this Church, to any minister or probationer, though without his consent or approbation; and if such minister or probationer shall at any time be told or informed that such practices have been or are carried on, or proposed to be carried on, for the purpose aforesaid, and shall not make discovery or intimation thereof to the Presbytery of the bounds, at their first meeting after he shall receive such information, then, and in that case, he shall, if a minister, be deposed, and if a probationer, be deprived of his licence. And, further, the Assembly appoint this Act to be read by all Presbyteries to every person before he be licensed to preach the Gospel, and to every candidate for a settlement in their bounds before they take any steps towards his settlement.

IX.

Sess. 8, June 2, 1759.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

X.

Sess. 8, June 2, 1759.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate, commission, and appoint the Rev. Dr George Kay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c.; to be a com-

mittee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, &c. (The Act proceeds in the same terms as the corresponding Act of the two preceding years, with the additional injunction to the committee to have particular regard to such parishes as South Uist, Small Isles, Glencoe, Harris, the countries of Moidart, Glengarry, and Lochaber, and the other parishes of the Synods of Glenelg and Argyle.)

XL

Sess. ult., June 4, 1759.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the third Thursday of May next, being the 15th day of that month, in the year 1760.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 7, June 1, 1759.—Overture for an Addition to be made to the Sixth Act of this Assembly, against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors.

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their Committee for Overtures, an overture of an addition to be made to the Act of this Assembly, the 30th day of May, which addition being made to the Act, the whole is as follows, viz. :—“That in all time coming no minister shall make any composition or agreement with his heritors, or any others, with respect to obtaining a decret of modification and locality for his stipend, or with respect to his glebe, grass, or any other emoluments, to which a minister has, or may have any right, but at the sight, and with the advice and consent of the Presbytery of the bounds, under the pain of such censure as the Presbytery of the bounds shall think proper to inflict; and that no minister shall enter into any agreement, or accept of any payment of his stipend, inconsistent with the decret of modification or locality, or use and wont of payment, without an acknowledgment in writing, obtained from the heritor or heritors, produced to the Presbytery, and such acknowledgment inserted in the Presbytery records.” Which overture being read, the General Assembly agreed to transmit this addition to the Act foresaid to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may send up their opinion thereon to the next General Assembly. (See also Overture of 1760.)

*Sess. 7, June 1, 1759.—Overture of an Act and Rules concerning the Election and Qualifications of Members of Assembly.**

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 15, 1760.

I.

Sess. 1, May 15, 1760.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

* An Act on this subject was passed in 1766, entitled, “Act anent the Form of Commissions.” And although the Act is not in precisely the same terms as the above, it is judged unnecessary here to print the overture at full length. See also 1767 and 1768.—*Ed.* 1843.

II.

Sess. 1, May 15, 1760.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 17, 1760.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 21, 1760.—The General Assembly's Address to the King, on Account of the signal Successes of his Arms since the last General Assembly.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in a National Assembly, take this first opportunity of approaching your sacred person, with our most humble and sincere congratulations upon the signal and uninterrupted success with which, since our last meeting, it hath pleased Almighty God to bless your arms. All the efforts of your Majesty's enemies have been disconcerted or defeated, while every battle fought by your fleets and armies hath led to victory, every armament hath accomplished its intention; and as the operations of war have been more extensive, they have likewise been more prosperous than those any former age can boast of. These great events we have observed with the utmost gratitude to your Majesty, under whose prudent and vigorous administration we enjoy such distinguished blessings; nor have we ceased continually to offer up our devout acknowledgments to the Lord of Hosts, from whom alone strength and wisdom are derived, and who hath enabled us both to fight and to overcome.

But amidst our rejoicings for victories obtained in every part of the world, it was with the utmost concern that we beheld the approach of domestic calamity, and were witnesses of the alarm and terror which the invasion, threatened and attempted by the French King, spread among the inhabitants of this part of the island, sensible, at that juncture, both of the danger to which they were exposed, and of their inability to exert themselves in repelling your Majesty's enemies with such vigour as their principles of religion and loyalty would naturally have inspired.

We have always reckoned it an important part of our duty to animate the people committed to our care with zeal for the Protestant religion, with veneration for our happy constitution, and with attachment to your Majesty's person and family, nor have our unwearied endeavours been unaccompanied with success; and it is with great pleasure we can assure your Majesty, that the wisdom, justice, and lenity, of your Majesty's administration, your paternal attention to the welfare of this part of Great Britain, and your magnanimity in reposing confidence even in those who, from their former conduct, could not hope for such marks of your royal favour, have operated with a most powerful and happy influence, and have gone far towards overcoming ancient and unreasonable prejudices. Our constant intercourse with the people under our charge gives us the best access to be acquainted with their principles and inclinations; and we think ourselves called upon by our duty to your Majesty, as well as in justice to them, to assure your Majesty, that the members of this National Church (of whom the great body of the people is composed) have discovered such sentiments as become British subjects, upon every appearance of danger with which your Majesty's kingdoms and government were threatened, that they would embrace with joy every opportunity of exerting themselves in defence of both, and would act

with such spirit and loyalty, as would render Great Britain still more formidable to its enemies, and add to its internal strength and security.

That Almighty God may long preserve your Majesty's important life ; that he may bless your royal family ; that he may continue to go forth with your fleets and armies ; and that, after blessing your Majesty with success in war, he may enable you to put a period to the desolation and calamities of Europe by a lasting peace, are the daily and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT HAMILTON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1760.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr Robert Hamilton, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator, &c. ; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, &c. (The terms of the Act are the same as last year.)

VI.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1760.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1760.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the third Thursday of May next, being the 21st day of that month, in the year 1761.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 5, May 20, 1760.—Overture of an Act and Rules concerning the Election and Qualifications of Members of Assembly.

(Re-transmitted.)

*Sess. 5, May 20, 1760.—Overture for an Addition to be made to the Sixth Act of the Assembly, 1759, against Ministers making Agreements with their Heritors.**

The General Assembly do again transmit to the consideration of the several Pres-

* This overture does not appear to have been passed into an Act.—*Ed.* 1843.

byteries, the overture transmitted by last Assembly, for an addition to be made to the 6th Act of the Assembly, 1759, against ministers making agreements with their heritors, with this addition, "That manses shall be particularly mentioned as one of the things about which agreements shall not be made, but at the sight, and with the advice and consent of the Presbytery of the bounds;" and appoint that they send up their opinion thereon to the next Assembly.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1761.

I.

Sess. 5, May 26, 1761.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

II.

Sess. 5, May 26, 1761.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R.,

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having the most perfect confidence as well in your loyalty and affection to our person and government, as in your zeal for the encouragement of virtue and piety, we take this first opportunity of assuring you of our fixed purpose and resolution to support the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in the full enjoyment of its rights and privileges, as by law established.

At the same time, as we have no doubt of your coming together in the best intentions to promote the happiness of our reign, and the true interest of the Church whereof you are members, we have a particular satisfaction in countenancing your present meeting with our royal authority.

The many and repeated proofs which your former Assemblies have given of their wisdom, prudence, and temper, are an earnest to us of the moderation which we may expect from you, in avoiding all unnecessary debates and contentions amongst yourselves, and giving your whole attention to the means of advancing true religion, and the service of Almighty God.

The preventing, as much as possible, the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and immorality to the utmost of your power, are objects of so great consequence that you may be fully assured of our ready concurrence with you, in whatever may tend to the attainment of so desirable ends.

And as you cannot but be affected with the most sensible pleasure, in reflecting upon the present undisturbed tranquillity and freedom which you enjoy in common with the rest of our good subjects of Scotland, we are persuaded you will think it of the highest moment to infuse into the minds of the people under your charge such

* The Assembly met on the 21st of May, according to the appointment of the General Assembly of 1760. Owing to the death of the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, (the Duke of Argyle,) to whom the Royal Commission to Lord Cathcart was sent down, the Deputy-Keeper did not consider himself at liberty to append the Seal, in which case the Commissioner did not appear at the first diet of the Assembly. An express, however, having been sent to London, a King's messenger arrived in Edinburgh on the 25th, with His Majesty's warrant to the Deputy-Keeper to append the Seal, which having been done, Lord Cathcart appeared in the Assembly on the following day as his Majesty's Commissioner. This explains the circumstance of the Royal Commission and King's Letter not having been presented till the 5th Session of the Assembly.—*Ed. 1843.*

principles, and such a spirit, as may be best adapted to the security of our happy constitution, and their own most valuable interests.

We have appointed our right trusty and well-beloved Charles Lord Cathcart to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied with his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service. You have before had experience of his abilities for the discharge of this important trust which we now confer upon him, and of his particular affection to the Church of Scotland, and concern for its prosperity; so that we have the greatest reason to believe that our choice of him upon this occasion will be most agreeable to you.

There is nothing more remaining, but to acquaint you with our hopes, that the charity, brotherly love, and unanimity of your proceedings in the business before you, will bring this your meeting to as happy a conclusion as that of any former Assembly. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 6th day of May 1761, in the first year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

BUTH.

III.

Sess. 6, May 27, 1761.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter to this first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland which hath had the happiness to meet since the beginning of your Majesty's most auspicious reign, we received with the greatest joy, and do acknowledge with the utmost gratitude.

Your Majesty's being pleased, in so gracious a manner, to take this first opportunity of assuring us of your fixed purpose and resolution to support the Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established, is a most endearing testimony of your royal favour to us, which we humbly accept of with the greatest thankfulness, and rely upon with the firmest confidence, as esteeming your Majesty's royal protection to be, under God, our greatest security. Your Majesty does us the greatest honour, when you are pleased to express the most perfect confidence in our loyalty and affection to your person and government, and in our zeal for the encouragement of virtue and piety; and it shall be our constant care, through Divine assistance, so to acquit ourselves upon every occasion, as that your Majesty may never have reason to entertain a less favourable opinion of this Church. These sentiments are deeply rooted in our hearts, and we shall most cheerfully embrace every opportunity of expressing them.

Your Majesty's countenancing our present meeting with your royal authority we take as a great blessing from God, and a most engaging evidence of your Majesty's royal goodness. To promote the happiness of your Majesty's reign, and the true interests of this Church, are great and desirable ends, which we are bound always to have in view; and we should be most unworthy of your Majesty's favour, and of the character we bear, if we had not the best disposition to contribute to them all in our power.

The mention your Majesty is pleased to make of the many and repeated proofs which our former General Assemblies have given of their wisdom, prudence, and temper, shows us your Majesty's kind inclination to approve what hath been done by others before us according to their duty, and is a great incitement to us to follow the good example of those with whom your Majesty hath the goodness to express yourself so well satisfied. We are sensible how much disputes and contentions among ourselves would give advantage to those who are enemies to the peace and prosperity of your Majesty's government, upon which our own welfare, under God, does depend. And we humbly acknowledge your Majesty's fatherly tenderness for us, in being pleased to caution us against them, and in recommending to us the giving our whole attention to the means of advancing true religion, and the service of Almighty

God. We pray and hope that the good Spirit of God, who is the Spirit of love and peace, will assist us to dispatch all our business with that unanimity, brotherly love, and charity, which becomes the servants of the Prince of Peace, and which is so necessary to the bringing of our meeting at this time to a happy conclusion.

We cannot but thankfully acknowledge your Majesty's royal wisdom and watchful care, in calling upon us to prevent, as much as possible, the growth of Popery, and the suppressing of vice and immorality, to the utmost of our power; and the assurance your Majesty gives us of your ready concurrence in whatever may tend to the attainment of so desirable ends, is at once the greatest encouragement and obligation for us to exert ourselves in the most vigorous manner for accomplishing them.

The present undisturbed tranquillity and freedom we enjoy, in common with the rest of your Majesty's good subjects, excite in us the most sensible pleasure; and it shall always be our principal care to make the people under our charge deeply sensible of the many great and invaluable blessings they now enjoy under your Majesty's wise government and administration; and to infuse into them those principles of piety and loyalty on which the security of their own most invaluable interests entirely depend.

To this we are greatly animated by your royal proclamation, in the beginning of your reign, and, in a special manner, by your princely donation to this General Assembly, for promoting the knowledge and practice of religion in the Highlands and Islands, and places where Popery and ignorance prevails. For this we beg leave to return your Majesty our most humble and grateful acknowledgments; and earnestly pray that God may abundantly reward you for so great a charity; and we shall take the most effectual care faithfully to apply it to the pious purposes for which it is granted by your Majesty.

Lord Cathcart hath given such eminent proofs of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for your Majesty's service, and of his abilities, on many former occasions, for the discharge of this important trust which your Majesty has reposed in him, and of his most affectionate concern for the prosperity and happiness of this Church, as render your Majesty's choice of him, to represent your royal person in this Assembly, most acceptable and obliging to us; and we humbly acknowledge it as a particular evidence of your Majesty's goodness.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may long preserve your Majesty, to be a blessing to these lands, the guardian of our liberties, civil and sacred, and the support of the Protestant interest; that he may bless your Majesty's arms in the just and necessary war in which you are now engaged, for vindicating the honour of your Crown, and redressing the injuries done to your subjects; and that he may prosper all your Majesty's endeavours for restoring the peace, and preserving the liberties of Europe; that he may bless the Princess Dowager of Wales, and all the branches of your royal family; that there may never be wanting one of your most illustrious house to fill the throne of these kingdoms to latest ages; and that, after a long and happy reign, over a free and dutiful people, you may exchange an earthly for a heavenly crown, are, and shall be, the sincere and hearty prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN HYNDMAN, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 6, May 27, 1761.—The General Assembly's Address to the King on his Accession to the Throne of these Realms.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the

Church of Scotland, as we heartily approve the conduct of the Commission of the late Assembly, in congratulating your Majesty's auspicious accession to the throne of your ancestors, so we embrace with pleasure this first opportunity, which our meeting together in a National Assembly affords us, of expressing our own joy on account of an event so happy for Great Britain.

The many blessings which we had enjoyed, during so long a tract of time, under the mild and paternal government of your royal grandfather, gave us the highest reason to join in that deep and universal sorrow which filled the nation on his death. The memory of so just and gracious a Sovereign, whose councils and arms were so remarkably blessed by the Almighty, as it must long remain engraved on our hearts, cannot fail to endear to us the more every descendant of his illustrious family.

With most lively gratitude to Heaven, we now behold your Majesty raised, in the prime of life, to the throne of these realms; and, under your happy administration, we have the greatest reason to promise ourselves the continuance and increase of all public felicity. Trained up from your earliest youth to every princely virtue; conspicuous for a steadiness and greatness of mind superior to the snares of royalty; endowed with a heart and affections truly British; and formed to know and to love that constitution of which you are the guardian; distinguished, in particular, for that sincere regard to religion which adds so much lustre to your exalted character, your Majesty became, from the moment of your accession to the Crown, the object of the highest hopes to all your subjects. Every step of your administration, since that time, has confirmed and enlarged these hopes.

Nor can we omit to join in the general admiration and applause due to that virtue, which disposed your Majesty to relinquish power and revenues, which, though most safely lodged in hands so pure as yours, might have been employed, in some future period, to the prejudice of that liberty which you love and cherish. With hearts full of affection, we repose an entire confidence in your Majesty, as the great defender of our faith and liberties; and, in particular, as the protector of the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, which you have given us the most gracious assurances of your intention to maintain.

Permit us to assure your Majesty, that amongst all your subjects none are more distinguished for their fidelity and loyalty to your person and government than the members of the Church of Scotland. A Church which dates the era of its secure establishment from that happy period of the Revolution, which introduced your royal house to the throne of Great Britain, must have the strongest motive to a most sincere and faithful attachment to your Majesty. Animated, as we are, with the deepest sense of the inestimable happiness we derive from our sacred and civil constitution, it ever has been, it ever shall be, our zealous endeavour to inspire with like sentiments all who are within our influence, or under our care. The blessings of a wise and merciful government, now so universally felt in every part of your dominions, give us the best reason to hope that your Majesty will reign in the hearts, and may command the united strength of all your people.

That the great God of heaven, by whom kings reign, may crown all your undertakings with success; that he may inspire you with the Spirit both of counsel and of might; that he may scatter all your foes; and that, after having long made you the instrument of blessing a free and happy people, he may raise you to an high place in his glory above, are the sincere and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient,
and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN HYNDMAN, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 8, May 29, 1761.

The Acts of the General Assemblies, 1712 and 1719, respecting the public money, ordered to be reprinted with the Acts of this Assembly, and the instructions to the Commission to contain a particular appointment on them to observe these Acts, which are as follows, viz. (Here follow in the original edition at full length, 1st, Act 8th, Assembly, 1712, entitled, "Act directing the right Application of the Money granted by her Majesty, for defraying the Public Charges of this Church;" and, 2d, Act 8th, 1719, entitled, "Act for the right Management of the Church's Public Money.")

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1761.—Act anent taking a Blind Man upon Trials.

Upon reading the minute of yesterday, concerning the settlement of Kirkcudbright, it was proposed by a member, that before any Presbytery or Synod shall agree to take upon trials any blind man, they shall first consult the General Assembly. The General Assembly, having heard the said proposal, agreed thereto, and appoint accordingly.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1761.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr John Hyndman, one of the ministers of the West Kirk, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly, for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, &c. (The terms of the Act are the same as the corresponding Act of the immediately preceding years, with the following addition :) And that the said committee, in making up the scheme of missionaries, &c. do not exceed the sum in the grant.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1761.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1761.—Act appointing the Meetings of the Synod of Ross.

Upon the motion of a member from the Synod of Ross, the General Assembly appoints that Synod to have their meetings henceforth upon the third Tuesday of April.

X.

June 1, 1761.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the third Thursday of May next, being the 20th day of that month, in the year 1762.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

5 B

May 25, 1761.—Overture for preventing Dilapidation of Stipends, &c.
(See Act 8th, 1762.)

*May 27, 1761.—Overture anent sending up Opinions on Overtures transmitted by the Assembly.**

The following overture was transmitted from the Committee for Overtures, viz. That considering how dilatory Presbyteries are in sending up their opinions on overtures transmitted by the Assembly, which shows, that all preceding regulations to enforce a due return have been ineffectual; in order, therefore, to remedy this in time coming, that it should be enacted, that in all time coming, no commissions from any Presbytery to their representatives in Assembly shall be sustained, unless it bears the following clause, viz. "The Presbytery of _____ having considered the overtures transmitted by last Assembly, their answer to which is hereto subjoined, proceeded to the election," &c.; or, in case there be no overtures transmitted, then the form to be, "There being no overtures transmitted by last Assembly, the Presbytery of _____ proceeded," &c. The General Assembly having heard the said overture read, agreed to transmit the same to the several Presbyteries of this Church, that they may send up their opinion thereon to the next Assembly; with certification, that if they fail therein, that Assembly may take up the overture, and pass it into a law as they see cause.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1762.

L

Sess. 1, May 20, 1762.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1762.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Experience has strengthened and confirmed in us those favourable dispositions towards the Church of Scotland, of which we gave assurances to the last General Assembly. We are happy, therefore, in this opportunity of repeating our fixed resolution to support it, as by law established, in all its rights and privileges.

We confide in you who are the present representatives of that Church, that, by the prudence of your conduct, you will afford us reason to increase our affection towards it: and that, avoiding all unnecessary debates and contentions, you will apply yourselves with temper and moderation to promote the good ends for which you are assembled, the advancement of religion, and the service of Almighty God; and you may be assured that your laudable endeavours in these respects shall not want our steady concurrence and support.

We doubt not but you will agree with us that we ought, in the present moment, to pay a more than ordinary attention to our respective religious duties. The blessings with which Providence has of late, in so wonderful a manner, distinguished these our kingdoms, require of us and our subjects, that, by a conduct suitable to the occasion, we should show a due sense of gratitude for them. We trust, therefore, that you will infuse into the minds of our people committed to your charge, such a zeal for the interests of religion, and such a spirit of piety and devotion, as can alone

* This overture was regularly transmitted for several successive years, but does not appear to have been passed into a law.—*Ed.* 1843.

make us worthy of those favours which the Almighty has been pleased to bestow upon us, and may contribute to the continuance of them.

We have appointed our right trusty and well-beloved Charles Lord Cathcart to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied with his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service; and we have reason to believe that our choice of him will be most agreeable to you, as you have already had so frequent experience of his abilities for the discharge of the important trust we now confer on him, and such repeated proofs of his particular affection for the Church of Scotland, and his concern for its prosperity.

There is nothing more remaining but to express our hopes, that, by proceeding in the business before you with that charity, brotherly love, and unanimity, which we have recommended to you, you may bring this meeting to as happy a conclusion as that of any former Assembly. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 19th day of April 1762, in the 2d year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

BUTE.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1762.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We received your Majesty's most gracious letter with the respect and gratitude that was due for so condescending a mark of your royal favour.

We esteem it as our greatest honour, that your Majesty's experience has confirmed your favourable dispositions towards us, and led you to repeat your fixed resolution to support the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in all its rights and privileges.

The confidence your Majesty is pleased to express in the prudence of our conduct, and the hopes of obtaining an increase of your paternal affection, are additional and most engaging motives to make us avoid all unnecessary debates and contentions, and apply ourselves with temper and moderation, to promote the advancement of religion, and the service of Almighty God; and we thankfully acknowledge it as one of our greatest blessings, and as the happiest presage of success, that our endeavours in these respects are sure of your Majesty's ready concurrence and support.

We listen, with the most profound reverence, to the call your Majesty is pleased to give us, to pay a particular attention to our religious duties in the present moment; and we count it our honour and happiness to be ready to follow our King in sentiments so becoming the father of his people.

The hand of God, so piously traced by your Majesty in the wonderful success of these your kingdoms in war, will, in due time, we trust, distinguish your reign by a blessing more agreeable to the wishes of your royal heart, the enabling your Majesty to give a lasting peace to all your faithful subjects.

Warmed by your Majesty's most religious sentiments, we feel in our minds the deepest gratitude to Almighty God, for giving us a prince whose virtue must interest the care of Providence in behalf of his kingdoms; and, encouraged by your great example, we will not fail to infuse into the minds of your people committed to our charge such a zeal for the interests of religion, and such a spirit of piety and devotion, as may promote the great ends your Majesty has in view, the rendering your people worthy of those favours the Almighty has already bestowed, and may contribute to the continuance of them.

We beg leave to express our humble thanks to your Majesty for your attention to the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and the principles of the reformed reli-

gion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, parts of your Majesty's dominions in which the interests of religion and of government coincide in a particular manner. It is our duty and inclination at all times to apply your Majesty's royal donations with the most prudent care; but we think ourselves called upon at present to double our attention to an object that has so much engaged your Majesty's zeal, and for which you have expressed so particular a concern.

Lord Cathcart's loyalty, integrity, and zeal for your Majesty's service, is so well known to us, and we have had such frequent experience of his abilities to discharge the important trust which your Majesty has reposed in him, and are so fully convinced of his particular affection to the Church of Scotland, that we look on your Majesty's choice of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly as a most obliging mark of your favour; for which we beg leave to make our most thankful acknowledgments to your Majesty.

Permit us to assure your Majesty that, next to the favour of that God whom we serve, your royal approbation, from affection no less than duty, is our constant aim; and that we will proceed in the business before us with that charity, brotherly love, and unanimity, which your Majesty so strongly recommends, and which you have had the rare felicity, by your most just and merciful government, to establish in a high degree among all your subjects.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may long preserve your Majesty, to reign in the hearts of an affectionate people, and to be the watchful guardian of religion and liberty; that he may continue to bless your arms with success; and that your magnanimity and moderation, in the midst of so much glory, may be crowned with the power of giving lasting peace to Europe; that he may bless and long preserve your Royal Consort the Queen, and make her the happy mother of a race of kings to sway the sceptre of these realms; that he may bless the Princess Dowager of Wales, and all the royal family; and that, after having reigned over a free and happy people, he may bestow upon you the crown of glory that fadeth not away, are, and shall be, the constant prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

R. TRAILL, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 26, 1762.—Act appointing the Act of Parliament against Murdering of Children to be read from the Pulpits.

The General Assembly appoints that the Act of Parliament against Murdering of Children be read from the pulpits of each parish in this Church, at least twice every year, and that the Presbyteries, at their privy censures, make inquiry if the same be done; and the Assembly appoints the several ministers of this Church to cause engross the said Act into their session records, to the end the same may always be at hand and not lost.

V.

Sess. 6, May 26, 1762.—The General Assembly's congratulatory Address to the King, on the happy event of his Marriage.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, embrace with joy this first oppor-

tunity of congratulating your Majesty on your happy nuptials with a Princess of illustrious descent, and most eminent virtues.

As our duty and affection to the best of Kings do not permit us to behold unmoved the completion of your Majesty's domestic felicity, so our sense of your mild and equitable reign, and of the great blessings we enjoy under your auspicious government, make us, on this happy event, look forward to posterity, and rejoice in the goodness of Providence, who gives us the prospect of a race of kings descended from your Majesty, to inherit the virtues of your royal line, and perpetuate the happiness of these your kingdoms.

We beg leave, at the same time, to congratulate your Majesty on the amazing success with which it has pleased Almighty God to bless your reign. When we consider the rapid and uninterrupted conquests of your Majesty's arms, your undisputed empire of the sea, your constitutional establishments for internal defence, your mild administration of government, your felicity in abolishing ancient factions and animosities, and in gaining the hearts of your people; when we behold your Majesty's magnanimity and moderation, amidst such a tide of prosperity; when, in such a situation, we perceive religious veneration for Divine Providence, and tender concern for the welfare of your people, to be the reigning passions of your heart, we bless the God of our fathers, not less for giving us a King who adorns the most exalted state of human greatness, than for the present distinguished glory of our country; and we fervently pray that he may render us a people worthy of such conspicuous marks of his favour.

We should be wanting in our duty on this occasion, if we did not assure your Majesty, that our fellow-subjects are not insensible of the blessings of which they partake, under your benign and prosperous government. The members of this Established Church, always remarkable for their zeal for religion and liberty, are not less distinguished for their loyalty to your Majesty and their love of the constitution; and if, in the course of this war, prolonged by a new combination of your enemies, your Majesty should think it proper to call them out in defence of your sacred person, their religion and liberties, we are persuaded they would be found inferior to none of their fellow-subjects, in the exertion of that spirit which becomes a free people, and members of the British community.

That Almighty God may establish your throne in righteousness, and in the hearts of your subjects; that, after having brought your kingdoms to the summit of glory in war, he may honour your Majesty to confer on them the blessings of a lasting peace, that you may daily behold the increasing felicity of your people; that the King and Queen may be long preserved to each other, and to an affectionate and grateful nation; and that, when they shall be exalted to an heavenly kingdom, their posterity may reign over ours to the latest ages, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

R. TRAILL, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 6, May 26, 1762.—The General Assembly's congratulatory Address to the Queen, on the happy event of her Marriage.

May it please your Majesty,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to take this first opportunity of congratulating your Majesty on your arrival in these kingdoms, and your auspicious

marriage with a monarch who, by his eminent virtues and happy government, has acquired the full affection and confidence of all his subjects.

Our gracious Sovereign's choice alone would have endeared your Majesty to us, even though we had not been informed of your amiable and distinguished qualities; but experience having confirmed early report, and given us the strongest proofs of your wisdom and virtue, and of your firm attachment to the Protestant religion, we, with grateful hearts, bless Almighty God, who has brought so accomplished a Princess to share the throne of our beloved Sovereign. We humbly offer to your Majesty our most respectful duty and cordial affection, and earnestly beg that our most gracious Queen would honour the Church of Scotland with her countenance and favour.

That God Almighty may ever have your Majesty under his gracious tuition; that he may long preserve you to the King and to the people, to soothe the cares of government, and bless us with a hopeful progeny; and that, very late, you may exchange this earthly crown for the crown of righteousness that endureth for ever, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

R. TRAILL, *Moderator.*

VII.

Sess. 6, May 26, 1762.—The General Assembly's congratulatory Address to the Princess of Wales, on the happy event of the King's Marriage.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, take this first opportunity of addressing your Royal Highness on an event that must have given you the highest pleasure, the happy marriage of our beloved Sovereign, your son, with a Princess of illustrious birth, and most amiable endowments.

Not insensible of what we owe to the mother of our King, nor of what she must feel on such an occasion, we beg leave to assure your Royal Highness of our unfeigned joy for an union that cannot fail to give you entire satisfaction, and continually implore the Almighty to pour down such blessings on the royal pair, as may fulfil all the wishes of your maternal heart.

That the King and Queen may live long for their mutual happiness, and to bless their people; that your Royal Highness may see yourself repaid for your tender care of your illustrious son, by their no less tender care of their royal offspring; and that, sprung of you, and inheriting your virtues, a race of kings, who shall fear God and love the people, may never be wanting to these kingdoms, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, your most faithful and devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

R. TRAILL, *Moderator.*

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1762.—Act against the Dilapidation of Stipends, and for ascertaining the extent of Glebes.

Upon report of the Committee for Overtures, the General Assembly enjoin the

several Presbyteries of this Church to take an exact account on the place of the extent of the stipend, glebe, grass, and other emoluments, belonging to every minister within their bounds, and record the same with accuracy in the Presbytery books, so that every succeeding incumbent may see at once what he is entitled to, and Presbyteries may be better able to give check to any dilapidations which may be attempted; and the Assembly appoint that the respective incumbents shall, in case any persons liable in payment of stipends refuse or withhold any part thereof, report the same to the next Presbytery after such refusal, who are to give such directions for recovery of the same as the nature of the case may require; and that where a minister is possessed of more glebes than one, and has been in use of setting the glebe or glebes most remote from his manse, that such glebe or glebes shall, in all time coming, after the boundary and limits thereof are ascertained, as above directed, be let only by tack, in which the extent and marches thereof shall be particularly set forth, and the same lodged with the Presbytery clerk.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1762.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

X.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1762.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly do hereby nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr Robert Traill, Professor of Divinity in the College of Glasgow, their Moderator, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, &c. (The powers and instructions of the Commission are the same as in the immediately preceding years; and no change takes place for a considerable time.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1762.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, upon the fourth Thursday of May next, being the 26th day of that month, in the year 1763.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*May 31, 1762.—Overture for Repealing that part of the Form of Process anent Exculpations.**

The Committee for Overtures transmitted an overture for repealing that part of the Form of Process anent exculpation; which overture being read, the General Assembly agreed to transmit the same to the several Presbyteries of this Church, and appoint that they send up their opinions thereon to the next General Assembly, of which

* This overture was transmitted for several years, but does not appear to have been passed.—*Ed. 1843.*]

overture the tenor follows, viz :—"The General Assembly, considering that by Form of Process, chap. ii. sect. 13, the judicatories of this Church are enjoined to consider and sustain the relevancy of the exculpation offered by the defender, before they give warrant to cite witnesses for the proof thereof; and considering, likewise, that a practice more equitable obtained in the Supreme Civil and Criminal Courts of this part of the United Kingdom, viz., that the defender is always allowed to prove all facts and circumstances which he may apprehend to have any tendency, either to his entire exculpation, or to the alleviation of the crime charged in the libel against him, and that before the Court proceed to consider the relevancy of the grounds of exculpation offered by the defender; therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, repeal the article in the Form of Process above referred to, and enact and appoint all judicatories in this Church to grant warrant to cite such witnesses as the defender, or his procurator, shall name, for proving all facts and circumstances which the said defender or his procurator may judge to be of use for exculpating the defender from the crime or crimes libelled, or for alleviating the same, without giving any previous judgment on the relevancy of the grounds or articles of exculpation; and, further, they appoint the said judicatories, before pronouncing final sentence, to weigh deliberately, not only the relevancy and proof of the libel, but likewise the relevancy of the said exculpation, and the proof thereof."

May 31, 1762.—Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts Judging in Causes appealed from them.

(The Overture of 1754 again transmitted.)

May 31, 1762.—Overture anent sending up Opinions on Overtures transmitted by the Assembly.

(Re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 26, 1763.

I.

Sess. 1, May 26, 1763.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

May 26, 1763.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The repeated proofs which we have received, as well of the loyalty and good affections of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, as of their attention to promote the cause of religion and virtue, which we have above all things at heart, give us great pleasure in assuring you of our most favourable and gracious dispositions towards you, and of our resolution to

support that Church in all its rights and privileges, as by law established. We have no doubt of your exerting yourselves with a truly Christian zeal, and conformably to the intent of your meeting, in the discouragement of vice and infidelity; and you may rely upon our ready concurrence with you in every thing that may tend to the advancement of purposes so essential to the welfare of our people.

The preventing of the growth of Popery, and the instilling into the minds of those committed to your charge a devout reverence towards Almighty God, and an humble gratitude to his Divine Providence for the inestimable blessings of peace, which he has so lately vouchsafed to us, and all his other innumerable mercies, are likewise such great and important objects, that we are persuaded you will think them worthy of your most serious attention, and heartiest endeavours.

We shall receive the highest satisfaction in being informed of your having applied yourselves, with your accustomed piety and prudence, to matters so well deserving our recommendation, and all your care.

We have appointed our right trusty and well-beloved Charles Lord Cathcart to represent our royal person in this Assembly; and as our appointment of him arises from the experience we have had, upon many like occasions, of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service, so we have full cause to be satisfied that the same reasons, together with your knowledge of his fitness to discharge this important trust, and of his affection to the Church of Scotland, will render our choice of him to discharge the said office very agreeable to you.

We conclude with recommending to you such temper and moderation in all your proceedings, and such charity, brotherly love, and unanimity, as may secure a happy conclusion to this your meeting. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 9th day of May 1763, in the third year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

DUNK HALIFAX.

III.

Sess. 3, May 28, 1763.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We received your Majesty's most gracious letter, with the respect and gratitude which are due to such a distinguishing proof of your royal favour.

Your Majesty's approbation of our past conduct we consider as the most agreeable recompence we could have received for having done our duty. Your royal declaration of your resolution to support our Church in all her rights and privileges, affords us the greatest satisfaction, and we rely upon it as the most perfect security.

It shall be our care, in obedience to your Majesty's command, to exert ourselves so zealously in discouraging vice and infidelity, as will show how desirous we are to merit the confidence your Majesty reposes in us, and we deem it our particular felicity, that we are subject to a Sovereign, who, by exciting us to our proper work, shows us that the faithful and conscientious discharge of our duty is the most certain recommendation to his favour.

We thankfully ascribe the return of the inestimable benefits of peace to the blessing of Divine Providence, upon the wisdom and steadiness with which your Majesty hath carried on the negotiations for that salutary purpose; and as by the definitive treaty with your enemies, your Majesty hath gained acquisitions of vast extent, and of great importance to your crown, which far exceed the most sanguine expectations of your subjects at the commencement of the war, and are fully adequate to the great success of the British arms, it hath been, and shall be our care at this juncture, to instil into the minds of our people proper sentiments of gratitude towards your Ma-

jesty, and of thankfulness to Almighty God, whose hand they discern and bless in the conduct of this great event.

We beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Majesty for your attention to the propagation of Christian knowledge, and of the reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It shall be our endeavour to apply the sum appropriated by your royal bounty for that purpose, in such a manner as may best answer the generous and pious intention with which it is bestowed, and to exert the greatest zeal on our part to communicate the blessings of knowledge, and the arts of peace, to those of our countrymen who have displayed their valour during the war, with no less benefit to Great Britain than glory to themselves.

We have had experience on so many former occasions of the loyalty, integrity, and prudence of the noble Lord whom your Majesty has appointed to represent your royal person in this General Assembly; we are so sensible of his abilities to discharge this important trust, of his zeal for religion, and of his attention to the true interest of this Church, that we consider your Majesty's repeated choice of him as an additional mark of your favour and regard to us.

Permit us to assure your Majesty, that we shall conduct our deliberations and proceedings with such temper and moderation, with such brotherly love and unanimity, as, we trust, shall secure to us the continuance of your royal protection and favour, which, next to the approbation of that God whom we serve, we esteem our greatest honour and happiness.

That Almighty God may protect your person, prolong your days, and bless your administration; that he may render the peace which you have concluded as permanent as it is honourable; that you may behold the increasing felicity of your people; that you may be honoured as the instrument of Divine Providence for their good; and that, after reigning long in righteousness, and ruling in judgment, you may receive the recompence of an heavenly crown, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 28, 1763.—The General Assembly's congratulatory Address to the King, on the happy event of the Birth of the Prince of Wales, and the re-establishment of Peace.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, embrace with pleasure the first opportunity of presenting our humble congratulations upon the birth of the Prince of Wales. As we are attached to your Majesty from love, no less than from duty, an event which contributes so much to your domestic felicity affords us the most sincere joy. As we are deeply sensible of our own happiness, under your righteous and mild administration, we could frame no better wish for after ages, than that the same blessings which we enjoy might be transmitted to them. We adore the goodness of God, who hath heard our prayers, and who now giveth us the prospect that our posterity shall be governed by a prince formed by your Majesty's precept, and taught by your example, to be the guardian of a free constitution, and the father of his people.

To our expressions of joy on account of this important event, we beg your Majesty's permission to add our warmest congratulations on the re-establishment of peace. After a long war, the most extensive, and the most successful, but, at the same time, the most burthensome ever carried on by Great Britain, peace became a desirable

object to a nation whose wealth and power are derived from its commerce. Your Majesty, undazzled by the splendour of continual victories, and always attentive to the true interest of your people, took early measures for procuring them this necessary blessing; and your magnanimity and steadiness have accomplished the salutary work which your wisdom and humanity prompted you to undertake.

By a definitive treaty with your enemies, the great objects for which war was undertaken are attained; the possessions of chief consequence to Britain are secured; new sources of commerce are opened; and territories are added to your crown, more extensive and of greater value than have been acquired by any nation since the division of Europe into great kingdoms, and the establishment of a balance of power, have put a stop to the rapidity of conquest; and as your Majesty can now turn your whole attention towards the cultivation and encouragement of the arts of peace, which, even under the pressure, and amidst the avocations of war, you did not neglect, these, under your royal patronage, must revive and flourish, and Britain, as it is the greatest, will become the most polished and illustrious nation in Europe.

Nor are our hopes of beneficial consequences from the return of peace confined to ourselves alone. As the chief obstacles which have hitherto prevented the instruction of the American nations are now removed, we trust to your Majesty's known zeal for promoting true religion, and to the blessing of the Almighty upon your endeavours, that the people now under your dominion which know not God, shall at length receive the knowledge of that holy faith which civilizes and refines the manners of men, at the same time that it improves and sanctifies their hearts.

Permit us to assure your Majesty, that sentiments of loyalty and attachment towards their gracious Sovereign, the blessings of whose mild and paternal government they have experienced, prevail universally among the people under our care; and as, during the continuance of war, their courage, in defence of the rights and possessions of their country, has not been inferior to that of their fellow-subjects, so they will be no less zealous, on the return of peace, to express their love and fidelity to your Majesty's person, and to contribute towards the internal vigour and constitutional security of the kingdom.

That Almighty God may bless your administration, and prolong your days; that he may preserve the Prince of Wales, to be your comfort and our hope; that he may render the peace which in his great mercy he hath restored, as permanent as it is honourable and advantageous, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 3, May 28, 1763.—The General Assembly's congratulatory Address to the Queen, on the happy event of the Birth of the Prince of Wales.

May it please your Majesty,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders, met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to take this first opportunity of presenting our humble congratulations to your Majesty, upon the birth of the Prince of Wales. Our attachment to his Majesty's illustrious house, and our love of our happy constitution, fill us with most sincere pleasure, on account of an event which contributes to the preservation of the former, and the perpetuity of the latter; our admiration of your royal virtues, and our solicitude for the happiness of a Queen, so much and so deservedly beloved by our gracious Sovereign, lead us to participate deeply in your Majesty's joy, on a circumstance which increases your domestic felicity.

city, and must endear you to the King, and completes the hopes and wishes of the nation.

That Almighty God may prolong your days, as a blessing to the King, and the joy of his people; that he may preserve the Prince of Wales for your comfort and our hope; that he may perpetuate and increase your domestic happiness, and add to it all spiritual and divine blessings, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, June 4, 1763.—Act anent Applications for a Share of the Public Money.

The General Assembly ordered that all applications for a share of the public money, in time coming, shall be transmitted to the Agent for the Church, with the grounds of the claims, on or before the 1st of May yearly, that the same may be laid before the Procurator, who is hereby appointed to give a short state of the case, and report the same, with his opinion thereon, to the General Assembly at their third sederunt; with certification, that all petitions or applications for money, not lodged in terms of this overture, shall not be received by that Assembly, but left in the Agent's hands, to be considered and reported to the Assembly in the year thereafter.

And the General Assembly do hereby recommend to all Presbyteries to pay the greatest attention to the 8th Act of Assembly, 1719, which is hereby ordered to be reprinted, and inserted with the public Acts of this Assembly, and is as follows:—

(Here follows in the original edition, Act 8th, 1719, entitled, "Act for the right Management of the Church's Public Money.")

VII.

Sess. 9, June 4, 1763.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 6, 1763.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 6, 1763.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday the 24th of May, in the year 1764.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures.

Upon report from the Committee for Overtures, transmitted by the last and preceding Assemblies, the General Assembly agreed, that all these be again transmitted; and do hereby appoint, that such presbyteries as have not yet sent up their opinions concerning them, do send up the same to the next General Assembly. The overtures are these:—*1mo*, Anent sending up opinions on overtures transmitted by the Assembly; *2do*, For repealing that part of the Form of Process anent exculpations; *3tio*, Anent members of inferior courts judging in causes appealed from them; and that the report concerning them be brought in to an earlier diet of the Assembly.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 24, 1764.

I.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1764.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1764.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1764.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 10, June 4, 1764.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 10, June 4, 1764.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1764.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday the 23d of May, in the year 1765.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures.

(The three overtures of last Assembly re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1765.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1765.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1765.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. It is with the highest satisfaction that we embrace every opportunity of renewing to you those testimonies of our paternal affection, which your duty and loyalty to us and our government, and your steady attention to the great concerns of religion and virtue, deserve at our hands. It is from the experience we have had of your prudence, candour, and moderation, those constant attendants of a truly Christian spirit, that we gladly support the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, and this present meeting in particular, with our royal countenance and authority.

We need not recommend the avoiding of all contention and unedifying debates, to those who have no other object in their view than the suppressing licentiousness, immorality, and vice; and who are actuated by no other zeal than that which tends to the advancement of true religion, and, consequently, to the general peace and happiness of society.

No religion can be sincere which does not require a conscientious discharge of the duties it prescribes. No government can be steady which is not founded on maxims of public liberty, under the influence and restriction of wholesome laws. The purity of the Christian faith is distinguished by the first;—the happiness of the British constitution is derived from the second. It is by infusing into the minds of the people committed to your care those civil and religious principles, so essential to

their happiness, both here and hereafter, that you will be effectually entitled to our favour.

We have again appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, John Earl of Glasgow, to represent our royal person in this Assembly. You, who have already experienced his affection for you, will be sensible of our attention to you in this choice. We need not assure you that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, as by law established, will always meet with our support in the full enjoyment of their rights and privileges; and with such conviction on your part, we have no doubt but that this meeting will be concluded with the same unanimity, harmony, and brotherly affection, which have distinguished any former Assembly. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 20th day of April 1765, in the fifth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

SANDWICH.

III.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1765.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious Letter to this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the highest respect and gratitude. We are deeply sensible of the honour done us by your Majesty's approbation of the past conduct of the Church of Scotland. Our hearts are sensibly affected with the tender concern your Majesty expresses for the interests of religion and virtue, and the encouragement you give us to pursue the ends of our office; and it is our steady purpose to improve the advantages of our happy situation.

Your Majesty has been pleased to point out to us the great objects of our attention and zeal, which ought to be ever in our view, and we should be unworthy of your royal favour, and of the countenance of Almighty God, if we should allow ourselves to be turned aside from these, and should fail in exerting our endeavours for the advancement of true religion, for the restraint of every species of vice and immorality, and of that licentiousness of spirit which is so much to be guarded against in a tide of national prosperity, and under so mild and gentle a government.

As we are entrusted with the office of explaining and enforcing a religion, the sole tendency of which is to prepare mankind for inconceivable happiness in another life, by teaching them to pursue their duty and true interest in this present state; and as we act under the protection of a Prince devoted to the worship and obedience of God, and under a constitution of government formed for maintaining the rights and liberties of mankind, we shall be utterly inexcusable if we do not, to our utmost ability, pursue those great and noble ends with steadfastness and ardour. Placing, therefore, our humble confidence in Him from whom every good and perfect gift doth come, we are determined to cultivate in our own hearts, and in the hearts of those committed to our care, such principles of religion and public liberty as tend to produce the peace of society, and the happiness of mankind, in this life and in the life to come; in the prosecution of which purposes, we rest assured, under your Majesty's protection, of the full enjoyment of the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland.

With the warmest gratitude of heart, we offer up our prayers to God for your Majesty's happy recovery from your late indisposition; and, at the same time, permit us, Great Sir, to make our most thankful acknowledgments to your sacred Majesty, for the late instance you have been pleased to give, with such magnanimity of spirit, of

your paternal affection, in proposing a method for securing the future peace and happiness of these nations, in the view of an event, which we fervently pray to God we may never see.

We most gratefully acknowledge your Majesty's royal donation for promoting Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as a renewed proof of your Majesty's zeal for the best interests of your subjects; and we shall be careful to apply it in such a manner as may most effectually contribute to the accomplishment of your Majesty's pious and charitable design.

The approved zeal and fidelity of the Earl of Glasgow in your Majesty's service, our experience of his abilities for the discharge of so high a trust, his exemplary regard for religion, his warm affection to this Church, and his many amiable qualities and Christian virtues, make your Majesty's choice of him, to represent your royal person in this Assembly, most acceptable to this whole Church.

That the King of heaven and earth may long preserve your Majesty the guardian of liberty, and the patron of piety and virtue, to your people;—that he may render your administration prosperous;—that he may pour down his best blessings on your Royal Consort, our most gracious Queen; that God may bless his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all your Royal Family; that one of your royal progeny may, to latest ages, reign over a free and loyal people;—that, after a long and happy life on earth, you may enjoy the glorious crown of immortality, are, and ever shall be, the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES OSWALD, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1765.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1765.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1765.—The General Assembly's Address to the King, anent the new Erections in the Highlands.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, humbly beg leave to approach your throne, in behalf of our fellow-subjects residing in the more remote corners of this part of the United Kingdoms. With the deepest concern we behold many of them labouring under gross ignorance, or deluded by dangerous errors, which render them insensible to those blessings, religious and civil, which the inhabitants of the other parts of your Majesty's extensive dominions enjoy under your auspicious reign.

To communicate to the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands a more perfect knowledge of true religion, and to inspire them with just sentiments concerning our

happy constitution, we have always considered as objects worthy of our most serious attention; and we are confident that every measure, calculated for attaining such important ends, will not only merit your Majesty's approbation, but receive such countenance from your royal authority as may be necessary towards carrying it into execution. Animated by these hopes, the General Assembly of this Church, held in the year 1761, thought it their duty to lay before your Majesty the report of commissioners, who had been appointed by the preceding General Assembly to visit the Highlands and Islands, and to inquire into the state of religion in those parts; and, at the same time, they humbly suggested to your Majesty, that if you should be pleased to continue the royal donation, which you have annually made to this Church for reformation of the Highlands and Islands, such alteration might be made in the terms of the grant as to permit a part of it to be applied towards the erection of new parishes, with fixed pastors, in different parts of those countries, as the most effectual method for instructing and reforming the people.

The gracious reception which your Majesty was pleased to give to that application hath encouraged us to lay before you the report of a reverend minister, who, in obedience to the appointment of last General Assembly, visited several parts of the Highlands and Islands, the state of which the former commissioners had no access to inspect. Although we are fully satisfied that the labours of the missionaries and catechists, which your Majesty's royal bounty enables us to employ in the Highlands and Islands, are attended with good effects, we are persuaded that the erecting of new parishes, in different parts of those countries, would be productive of more certain and permanent advantages. But as the sum granted annually to the Church does not enable us to carry on both these plans in that vigorous manner with which we would wish to prosecute your Majesty's pious intentions, and promote the happiness of our fellow-subjects, we, with all humility, suggest to your royal wisdom, that some part of the rents and produce of those estates, which, by a statute made in the 25th year of his late Majesty, were annexed inalienably to the Crown, may be applied towards erecting parishes in those places of the Highlands and Islands where to your Majesty they shall appear to be most wanted. By that statute the rents and produce of these estates are declared to be applicable to the purposes mentioned in it, or "in such manner as his Majesty, his heirs, or successors, should, from time to time, by warrants under his or their sign manual, be pleased to direct; to the purposes of civilizing the inhabitants of said estates, and other parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the promoting amongst them the Protestant religion, good government, industry, manufactures, and the principles of duty and loyalty to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, and to no other use or purpose whatsoever."

From our certain knowledge of the state of the Highlands and Islands, we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that the application of some part of the rents and produce of these estates, in the manner we have humbly proposed, will greatly conduce to promote the salutary purposes which the legislature had in view; and we have such confidence in your Majesty's paternal tenderness towards all your people, that we are persuaded it will appear to you an object highly worthy of your royal consideration.

That it may please Almighty God long to continue the blessing of your Majesty's reign, and that the principles of true religion and virtue, with a firm attachment to our invaluable constitution, may, under your gracious government, be diffused into every part of your extensive dominions, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES OSWALD, *Moderator.*

VII.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1765.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday the 22d of May, in the year 1766.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures.

(Same three Overtures as were transmitted in 1764.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1766.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1766.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1766.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1766.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1766.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1766.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 5 and 7, May 25 and 27, 1766.—Act declaring Mr James Bain, late Minister at Paisley, incapable of receiving or accepting a Presentation or Call to any Parish in this Church, without the special allowance of the General Assembly.

At Edinburgh, the 27th day of May 1766 years.

The which day, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had transmitted to them, from their Committee for Bills, a petition for Messrs Warner, Davidson, and Kennedy, ministers in the Presbytery of Paisley, tabling an appeal taken by them, in name of said Presbytery, from a sentence of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr; by which sentence, the said Synod had accepted of a demission from Mr James Bain, one of the ministers of Paisley, and declared his kirk vacant; and appointed the Presbytery of Paisley to meet on the 23d day of April, in order to receive any application that might be made to them for the supply of the said vacancy: Which petition sets forth, "That the Presbytery of Paisley had laid before them a letter from Mr James Bain, one of the ministers of Paisley, bearing a demission of his office and charge as minister of Paisley, upon the 26th day of March last. The Presbytery, by their deliverance of that date, delayed the further consideration of that affair until the 23d day of April, in order that Mr Bain might be heard upon that subject before final sentence was passed; and ordered a letter to be written to the said Mr Bain, requiring him to attend upon the said 23d day of April; against which sentence the Magistrates of Paisley protested, and appealed to the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. That the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr sustained the said appeal, accepting of said demission, declared his kirk vacant, and appointed the Presbytery of Paisley to meet on the 23d day of April, in order to receive any application that might be made to them for the supply of the said vacancy. That the petitioners, by virtue of powers from the Presbytery of Paisley, who considered Mr Bain's conduct to be very irregular, protested against the said sentence of Synod, and appealed to the venerable Assembly for redress; and praying that it might please the venerable Assembly to take in the said appeal, reverse the judgment of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, and take such further steps in it as to their wisdom shall seem meet, and as the very great importance of the cause deserved." As also, another petition from the Magistrates and Town-Council of Paisley, complaining of the Presbytery not having met upon the said 23d of April, in terms of the Synod's sentence, and praying for redress, in such manner as the venerable Assembly should judge proper. The moderator being a member of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, Dr Oswald, at the Assembly's desire, took the chair. Parties being called, there compeared for the appellants, the said Messrs Warner, Davidson, and Kennedy; for the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, Messrs Dun, Freebairn, and Mr Colin Campbell; and for the town of Paisley, Mr Joseph Williamson, Advocate. The letter of demission by the said Mr James Bain to the moderator of the Presbytery of Paisley was called for and read; the sentence of the Synod appealed from; the petition of appeal and reasons, and answers by the Synod to the said petition of appeal and reasons, together with the petition of the Magistrates of Paisley, were all read over; and parties being fully heard at the bar, were removed. The General Assembly, after some reasoning on this affair, ordained that the said Mr James Bain be summoned to appear before them upon Thursday next, in the New Church Aisle, at ten o'clock, in order to answer for his conduct in giving up his ministerial charge at Paisley, and appointed their clerk to issue out an order upon one of their officers for this purpose, who should deliver the summons to the said Mr James Bain, personally, or at his dwelling-house, and should return a written execution thereupon; and in the meantime, the Assembly delayed proceeding any further in the affair till that diet, and parties were then ordered to attend. Parties were called in, and the above sentence was intimated to them.

At Edinburgh, the 29th day of May 1766 years.

The General Assembly proceeded to the determination of the cause of Paisley, in consequence of their resolution of Tuesday last; and the cause being called, parties compeared as formerly. The General Assembly called for the execution of citation against

Mr James Bain, which was produced and read, bearing him to have been summoned personally ; and Mr Bain having appeared personally at the bar, was heard. The letter of demission by him to the Presbytery of Paisley was read, the tenor whereof follows :—
 “ Reverend dear Sir, It would have given me great pleasure to have met with my brethren of the Presbytery of Paisley, as it would have given me an opportunity of acquainting them with what I now inform you of, as their moderator, to be laid before them, viz., that I entirely give up my charge of the High Church in this town, and the care of the flock belonging to it, into the Presbytery’s hand. They know not how far I am advanced in life, who see not that an house for worship, so very large as the High Church, and commonly so crowded too, must be very unequal to my strength ; and this burden was made more heavy, by denying me a session to assist me in the common concerns of the parish, which I certainly had a title to ; nor am I singular in thinking so, as I have the opinion of the first judge of the kingdom, that it was peevish to refuse it. But the load became quite intolerable, when, by a late unhappy process, the just and natural right of the common session was wrested from us, which drove away from sitting in it twelve men of excellent character, so that I had not one elder for five hundred of examinable persons in my proportion ; nor does it alleviate the burden, that this right of the session was so tamely given up (some, perhaps, will say betrayed) by those who ought to have defended it. For in any society where candour is thought to be gone, confidence must die. I would earnestly beg of my very reverend brethren to think, that this change of my condition, and the charge I have now accepted, makes no change in my former creed and Christian belief, none in my principles of Christian and ministerial communion, nay, none in my cordial regard to the constitution and interest of the Church of Scotland, which I solemnly engaged to support some more than thirty years ago, and hope to do so while I live. At the same time, I abhor persecution in every form, and that abuse of Church power of late, which to me appears inconsistent with humanity, with the civil interests of the nation, and destructive of the ends of our office, as ministers of Christ. I would only add, and assure my brethren, that I go away with a grateful sense of their civilities to me while among them. As a small recompence, it is my heart’s desire to God, that they and their flocks may prosper, and they may be directed to promote a speedy and comfortable settlement of a pastor over that very numerous and affectionate people, who are now my charge no more. With esteem, I am, Reverend dear Sir,” &c.

Then the parties were removed. The moderator being a member of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, Dr Oswald, at the Assembly’s desire, took the chair. The General Assembly determined the cause anent the vacancy of the parish ; and then the moderator having resumed the chair, proceeded to take under their consideration Mr Bain’s conduct, and what is contained in his letter. And he being called upon, was further heard, and again removed ; and, after a very long debate, a motion was made by a member to the following purpose :—*1mo*, That the Assembly should declare him to be no minister of this Church ; and that he is incapable of receiving or accepting of a presentation or call to any parish in this Church, without the special allowance of some future General Assembly. And, *2do*, That the General Assembly should prohibit all the ministers of this Church from employing him to preach, or perform any ministerial offices for them, or from being employed by him, unless some future Assembly shall see cause to take off this prohibition. The General Assembly, after deliberating upon the above motion, agreed to the first part thereof without a vote ; but, members being divided in their opinions with regard to the second part of the motion, the General Assembly came to the following state of a vote, Agree to the last part of the motion, or Not ; and the rolls being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a great majority, Agree. And, therefore, the General Assembly find and declare, that the said Mr James Bain is no minister of this Church, and that he is incapable of receiving or accepting of a presentation or call to any parish in this Church, without the special allowance of some future General Assembly. And the General Assembly do hereby prohibit all the members of this Church from employing him to preach or perform any ministerial offices for them, or from being employed by him, unless some future Assembly shall see cause to take off this prohibition. Mr Bain being called in, the above sentence was intimated to him.

VII.

Sess. 6, May 28, 1766.—Act anent the Form of Commissions.

The General Assembly, having had laid before them the report of a committee appointed to revise the forms of commissions to members of the General Assembly, and considering that it is of the greatest importance for the honour and interest of religion, that the office-bearers of the Church should behave and conduct themselves in all respects becoming their character, do, in terms of the Act of Assembly, 22d May 1722, earnestly beseech, exhort, and require all ministers to take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine, and to be exemplary to their people in sobriety, righteousness, and holiness, abstaining from all appearance of evil; and, in like manner, the General Assembly do earnestly beseech, exhort, and require the elders and deacons to be faithful in the discharge of their respective offices, tender and circumspect in their walk, punctual in their attending upon ordinances, strict in their observation of the Lord's Day, and regular in keeping up the worship of God in their families. The Assembly do further enjoin and require, for the more regular election of members to the Assembly in time coming, Presbyteries, Burghs, and Universities, strictly to observe the acts of former Assemblies, appointing that the election shall be made at least forty days before the meeting of Assembly, and within a month preceding the first of the said forty days, except those lying in the Northern and Western Isles, and shall appoint the day of election at a meeting to be entered in their minutes, at least ten free days before such election; and that on the day of election, they shall make their elections betwixt the hours of one and eight o'clock in the evening.

The General Assembly, considering also that some acts regulating the manner and time of electing members to the Assembly are posterior to the Act 17th May 1725, establishing the present form of their commissions; and that these forms refer in general to Acts of Assembly that contain some particulars, of which Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghs, cannot have any certain evidence, and are thereby reduced to the necessity either of attesting what does not come properly under their own knowledge, or of omitting clauses in the established form, whereby their commissions have been rendered void and null, the Assembly did, on all these accounts, and hereby do, appoint and ordain the forms of commissions and attestations, hereunto subjoined, to be observed by Presbyteries, Sessions, Universities, and Burghs; and enact and ordain, that all such commissions and attestations as are not conceived and attested in these very words of the form now prescribed shall be rejected.

The General Assembly do further declare and enact, that when a Kirk-Session or Presbytery refuse their concurrence or attestation to a commission by a burgh or university, without assigning the reasons of their refusal, that commission shall be sustained as if duly attested, in case the matter shall be brought before the Assembly by protest or appeal. And they appoint the Agent for the Church to cause print this act, together with the following forms of commissions, and transmit the same to the several Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghs.

(Then follow, in the original edition, "Forms of Commissions;" but it is unnecessary here to give them, as they appear at length in Act 4th, 1768.—*Ed.* 1843.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1766.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday the 21st of May, in the year 1767.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Overture anent Transmission of all the former Overtures.

(Same three Overtures as were transmitted in the immediately preceding years.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1767.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1767.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1767.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1767.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Recommendation anent the Orphan Children of Soldiers.

Proposals for more effectually executing a Scheme for Maintaining and Educating the Infants and Orphans of Soldiers.

That every infant born in any of his Majesty's regiments of foot or dragoons in Great Britain, be provided with proper clothing, and its mother with necessary sustenance, to the amount of one shilling per week.

That a request be made to the Right Honourable the Secretary at War, to issue his orders to the respective commanding officers, to take upon them the care of the above article.

That when a regiment shall be quartered together, the surgeon and quartermaster, under the direction of the commanding officer, be appointed to buy and provide necessaries within the said sum of one shilling per week.

That when the regiment shall be divided, the commanding officer in each quarter be ordered to undertake this charge.

That in case of a march before the lying-in women are in a condition to accompany their husbands, without danger of their own or infants' lives, application be made to some magistrate or justice of the peace, or to the minister of the parish, to undertake this charitable office, and a sum not exceeding one shilling per week be allowed for lodging, exclusive of the allowance for support.

That a furlough be allowed to the husband of the lying-in woman thus left behind, for a month or six weeks, according to the discretion of the commanding officer.

That when a child becomes an orphan, it be boarded in some village, near the place where the parents died, till it arrives to the age of five years; at which time to be put, if possible, to the parish school for two years, and then boarded at some reputable farmer's for three years more, or put to some trade or manufacture.

That though it is hoped and believed, that the clergy in general will cheerfully engage in this charitable work, yet, as a further inducement, that my Lords the Bishops be humbly requested to recommend it by their influence, and enforce it by their example. The minister of the parish where the parents died will then think it his duty to appoint a proper person to take care of the orphan, and to make a monthly report to the register, whether it be living or dead.

As a great many objects of this charity will reside in Scotland, that application be made to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to recommend the inspection of the orphan children to the care of the respective ministers within whose parishes they shall be boarded.

To ascertain the persons who are entitled to the benefit of this charity, and to prevent, as much as possible, all abuse of it, the commanding officer at quarters shall send up a certificate, with the first monthly return, specifying that A. B. is wife of C. D., corporal, drummer, or private man, in such a regiment and company, and has been so at least nine months before her delivery.

That if a sergeant die during his wife's pregnancy, the widow and orphan be entitled to this charity.

That a monthly return be made to the register, by the commanding officer of each corps, specifying the state of the children, and the time when any of them die; the subsistence then to cease, except the woman be in her first month; but, in that case, to continue the four first weeks after delivery.

That the children continue under the care of their parents, who will be enabled by this charity to maintain them, and, encouraged by the continuance of it, to suffer them, at the age of five years, to be put to school, and afterwards boarded with some reputable farmer, or put to some trade or manufacture, as proposed for the orphans; and thus a vigorous and hardy race may be formed for agriculture and the service of their country. If they refuse to comply with this kind and charitable proposal, then all subsistence immediately to cease for ever.

That the proceedings of this charity be annually printed, for the information of the subscribers, and the public in general.

Every subscriber paying five guineas annually shall be entitled to be a governor of this charity.

This proposal has been approved by their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of York, Gloucester, and Cumberland, by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, by several of the first general officers of the army, by the Paymaster of the Forces, Secretary at War, Adjutant-General, &c.

His Majesty has been most graciously pleased to declare himself Patron of this charity.

The Secretary at War has been pleased to order the commanding officers of the several corps to report the state of the infants and orphans to his office, where an exact register will be kept of the proceedings of this charity.

Subscriptions to be received at Messrs Backwell and Co., Pall-Mall; Drummond and Co., Charing Cross; Colebrooke and Co., Threadneedle Street; Martin and Co., Lombard Street; and Messrs Forrest and Maxwell, merchants at Edinburgh.

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1767.—Act supplying certain Defects in the Forms of Commissions, and Attestations thereof.

The General Assembly, considering that some defects have been observed in the

forms of commissions to members of Assembly, and attestations thereof, prescribed by the last General Assembly, do hereby appoint the following additions to be made to these forms; and do enact and ordain, that all such commissions and attestations as are not conceived and attested in the very words of the forms prescribed by last Assembly, and of the supplement now made to them, shall be rejected. (See Act 4th, 1768, for the full amended "Forms of Commissions.")

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1767.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1767.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1767.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday the 19th of May, in the year 1768.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

Former Overtures again Transmitted.

*Sess. 9, May 30, 1767.—Overture of an Act concerning Students in Divinity, and the Licensing of Probationers.**

There was transmitted to the General Assembly, from their Committee for Overtures, an overture concerning students in divinity, and the licensing of probationers, prepared by a committee appointed for that purpose by the last General Assembly; together with another overture respecting students, proposed by the Committee for Overtures to be added to this; which overture, prepared by the committee of last Assembly, including the said additional overture, which comes in as Article 4th, the General Assembly do hereby transmit to the several Presbyteries of this Church, to be considered by them, that they may send up their opinions thereupon to the next General Assembly. The same is as follows:—

The General Assembly, considering the dangerous consequences to religion, of licensing any to preach the Gospel who are not duly qualified; and whereas former acts relative hereto are scattered, and at great distances from each other, by which

* This overture was not passed into an act.—*Ed.* 1843.

means they cannot easily come so distinctly under view, as if they were digested into one general act comprehending the substance of them, together with such alterations and additions, as in the present state of things in this Church, relative to students in divinity, their admission to probationary trials, and licensing them to preach, are become either necessary or highly expedient.

For these and other weighty reasons, the General Assembly renews the former acts relative thereto, in form and manner following.

Article I. None shall be admitted to pass trials in order to their being licensed to preach the Gospel, excepting such as are of good report for piety, gravity, sobriety, good affection to the constitution in Church and State, and concerning whom there shall be ground to hope that they will prove able, faithful, and edifying, in discharging the duties of their station.

Article II. It is hereby more particularly enacted and ordained, that none be admitted to trials, or licensed, unless in the cases and under the conditions immediately hereto subjoined.

Sect. 1. Students found qualified, as is above required, may be proposed to be taken on trials when five complete years shall have passed, from and after their finishing their course in philosophy; provided always, that it be documented by a certificate of the form and tenor by this act appointed, that they prosecuted their theological studies at the University during some part of every one of the five several sessions, between the time of completing their studies in philosophy, as above required, and their being proposed in Presbyteries to be admitted to trials. Provided also, that it shall appear that they did publicly deliver in the Hall, with approbation, five several exercises at least during said sessions; and that they attended two sessions on the lectures of the Professor of Church History, and during at least one session on the Professor of Hebrew.

Sect. 2. In order to encourage a more close and regular prosecution of public study, it is hereby enacted, that students qualified, as required per Section 1st, may, after four years complete from the time of finishing their course in philosophy, be admitted to probationary trials, provided it be certified in form and manner hereafter by this act required, that they did prosecute at a university their theological studies, during the greatest part of the four intermediate sessions, between their finishing their course in philosophy, and their being proposed to be put upon said trials; and that during the course of said sessions, they did deliver not fewer than five several exercises with approbation, and that they gave like attendance, as by the preceding article is required, on the colleges of Church History and Hebrew.

Sect. 3. The General Assembly, in favour of those who shall distinguish themselves by prosecuting their studies with the greatest assiduity and regularity, do hereby enact and ordain, that students qualified, as is above required, may be proposed to be taken on trials on the expiration of three years, from and after completing their course in philosophy, provided always, that they be certified in manner and form after mentioned and appointed, to have given close and punctual attendance on the divinity lessons and exercises, during the three intermediate sessions between the end of their philosophical course and their being proposed to trials, and to have delivered in the Hall at least six several discourses or exercises with approbation, and to have attended the lectures on Church History and the Hebrew class, in like manner as in the cases of students above described, is required.

Sect. 4. It is hereby expressly ordained and enacted, that no student shall, on any consideration whatever, be licensed to preach the Gospel till he shall appear to the Presbytery, by unquestionable evidence, to have attained to the age of majority or twenty-one years complete; and the Presbytery is hereby enjoined to mark in their register the production of such evidence, and to specify the nature of it, and if it is contained in a written certificate, to appoint their clerk to keep the same *in retentis*.

Article III. The General Assembly earnestly recommends to the members of this Church, and more especially to the Professors of Divinity, Church History, Hebrew, and others, under whom students of divinity may carry on any branch of their studies, and to all ministers of the Gospel, to have a watchful eye over such students;

and it is further recommended, particularly to the Professors of Divinity, when making up the roll of their students yearly, to require, as a necessary condition of being enrolled, from all new intrants, and to keep *in retentis*, letters recommendatory, or certificates from the ministers in whose parishes such intrants reside, or from other persons of known and established character for candour and discernment, bearing and attesting that they have completed their course in philosophy, and are of blameless behaviour.

Article IV. The General Assembly further appoints, that every person when he is about to enter upon the study of divinity, and to apply to a Professor of Divinity to be enrolled by him for that purpose, shall signify his intention to the Presbytery in whose bounds he resides, that he may, at the same time, be enrolled by them in their records as a student in divinity.

Article V. It is further hereby enacted and ordained, that no Presbytery shall admit to trials before them any student not actually at the time residing, or who has not, since his becoming a student, resided for the space of six weeks continuedly in their bounds, unless he be recommended by a Presbytery in whose bounds he resideth or hath resided, as said is, during said space as, in their judgment, qualified to be admitted: And it is further hereby provided, that students coming from foreign parts shall not be entered on trials until six months at least shall have elapsed from the time of their arrival in Scotland; nor even then, until they produce certificates of their diligence and proficiency in their studies, and of their good behaviour, from the universities where, or professors under whom they studied; and till it shall further appear that their studies were so conducted and prosecuted as to bring them on a footing with the students of one or other of the three several classes described in the 2d article of this Act, and in Sections 1st, 2d, and 3d of the same.

Article VI. When any student is proposed to a Presbytery in order to be taken on trials, the proposal shall lie on the table till the next ordinary meeting, before they give judgment therein, that diligent inquiry may be made and information had concerning the said student's qualifications and behaviour; and the Presbytery shall be alone both when the proposal is made and judged on. And the General Assembly enjoins all students to take all opportunities of cultivating an acquaintance with the ministers of the Presbytery where they reside, and where they are to pass trials.

Article VII. When a Presbytery resolves to take a student on trials, they shall by themselves, or by a committee appointed for that purpose, take a private trial of his progress in the learned languages, in philosophy, especially in moral philosophy, and in divinity; and particularly they shall take trial of his acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and what impression of religion he hath on his own soul; and being satisfied in these respects, the committee of examiners shall require him to read aloud in their presence, or (when the Presbytery themselves take the said private trial) their clerk shall read in open court, and in hearing of the candidate, the engagements to be entered into by Act 10th, Assembly, 1711; and the Formula appointed (by Assembly, 1714, Act 6th of the same) to be signed by such as are licensed to preach immediately before licensing them; and Presbyteries are strictly charged to conduct those trials impartially, as in the sight of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, the alone King and Head of his Church, and either reject or delay to further trial such as shall not be found sufficiently qualified.

Article VIII. The same steps are hereby ordained to be taken in all respects, before any Presbytery shall recommend a student to be taken on trials by another.

Article IX. It is likewise enacted that Presbyteries, after sustaining the above private trial, and resolving to admit the candidate to public trials, shall two months (at least) before the then ensuing meeting of Synod, direct circular letters to be written, and sent away to each Presbytery within the bounds, informing them of their intention, that the members of the Synod may be ripely advised thereanent; and it is likewise ordained, that intimation of the same shall be publicly made at the second diet of Synod, to lie on the table till another diet, or in case of no third diet, till the end of said second one, and then particular inquiry shall be made, whether there is any objection against entering the said student on trials? And in case any relevant one

shall be moved, the Presbytery proposing the candidate shall stop procedure till the same be discussed or brought to an issue.

Article X. The General Assembly appoints the public probationary trials of students, who are to be licensed probationers, to be these following, viz. ; *1mo*, The catechetic trials to be renewed in presence of the Presbytery, and that previously to all the other parts of public trials; *2do*, A homily in English on a Scripture text; *3tio*, An exegesis in Latin, on a controverted head of divinity, and sustaining a thesis or dispute thereon; *4to*, An exercise and addition; *5to*, A lecture on a large portion of Scripture; *6to*, A popular sermon on a particular text of Scripture. *Lastly*, To interpret the Greek of the New Testament, *ad aperturam libri*, and not only to translate and analyse any portion of the Hebrew Bible prescribed by the Presbytery, but also to read the Hebrew text, *ad aperturam libri*. And it is hereby further enacted, that the foresaid public trials shall not be taken and concluded in fewer than three several meetings of Presbytery, nor shall the interval between the first and last of these meetings be, in any case, shorter than six weeks.

Article XI. When any Presbytery who, with the Synod's allowance, has entered, or who is about to enter a student on trials, shall receive a letter from any Presbytery, showing their dissatisfaction with the student entered, or to be entered on trials, and giving relevant grounds for the same, which they offer to the Presbytery at their next meeting, the said student shall not be licensed until the matter be tried. And the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries, who shall receive such letters anent students from any other Presbytery, to write a return with the first post after their meeting, acquainting them of their next diet.

Article XII. The General Assembly considering, that some persons who, upon application to the judicatories of this Church, have not been admitted on trials, or have not been found fit and worthy to be licensed to preach, do yet retire out of the bounds of this Church, where they are not so well known, in order to enter upon trials, and after they have been licensed, do not recommend themselves by a holy life and ministerial conversation, to the reproach of the Church of Scotland where they were educated; therefore, the General Assembly do hereby inhibit and discharge all young men, educated in this Church, or students of divinity, to go to foreign places and offer themselves to trials for licence to preach the Gospel, without testimonials and recommendations from their Presbytery, as above directed. And further, order and appoint, that no student whatsoever, coming from abroad, shall be allowed to preach within this Church, as one of our probationers, until it appear documented that they have followed the study of divinity for six years, after their finishing their course of philosophy, and until they undergo anew their catechetic trials, and come under the engagements, and sign the Formula appointed by Act 10th, Assembly, 1711, and it appear by their licence that the said probationers have been licensed by a regularly constituted Presbytery, or classical meeting.

Article XIII. For the better securing the attainment of the purposes of this Act, and to prevent the eluding thereof, the General Assembly does hereby enact and ordain, that no young man educated in this Church shall go without the bounds thereof, and offer himself to trials, unless he carry with him such certificates as are by this Act appointed to be produced to Presbyteries within the Church, previously to their admitting any to trials, at the desire and on the recommendation of another Presbytery. And it is hereby further enacted, that no person licensed without the bounds of this Church shall be held or considered as one of her probationers, nor shall be entitled to, or capable of, enjoying any of the privileges belonging to that character, till he shall undergo a-new his catechetic trials, and until it shall be documented, that he did follow the study of divinity, so as to fall under one or other of the three classes of students above described in paragraph or section 2, Article 1, 2, and 3, and until he come under the engagements, and sign the Formula appointed by Act of the General Assembly, 1714; and till it shall likewise appear that he was licensed to preach by a regularly constituted Presbytery or classical meeting. Provided always, that the space of time intervening between the admission of such students to trial before Presbyteries or classical meetings, not within the Church

of Scotland, and their being actually licensed, shall not have been less than six weeks.

Proposals annexed to the above Overture.

1mo, That a form of a licence adapted to the frame and chief clauses of this Act be drawn up, and be strictly enacted to be observed as the only valid form in the power of Presbyteries to grant, and that no one presume to officiate in the character of a preacher, till he shall either have extracted his licence drawn up in manner and form hereby required, and shall have the same ready to produce and exhibit to all concerned; or until he shall obtain and be in possession of an attestation by the Presbytery, that the materials out of which such a licence can be framed are actually engrossed and contained in their minutes.

2do, That certificates be drawn up in such manner and form as shall suit the requisites of this Act, be printed, leaving blank spaces to be filled up with the dates and other particulars, that can only be inserted by the granter of the certificates.

3tio, That an edition of this Act be printed, and copies thereof given to students of divinity already enrolled, and prosecuting their studies, and to intrants on said study in time coming.

4to, That when Presbyteries suspend preachers, or deprive them of their licences, notice should be given of such sentences, either in the public newspapers, or by circular letters to the Presbyteries, at least of the Synod of the bounds, if not to the whole Church; and in like manner notice be given when such as have been suspended or deprived of their licences are restored to their character of preachers.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1768.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1768.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1768.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1768.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Act of the Assembly anent the Form of Commissions.

The General Assembly, 1766, having prescribed certain forms of commissions to members of Assembly, and attestations thereof, and the Assembly, 1766, having, in respect of some defects observed in these forms, made a supplement thereto; the General Assembly, now considering the disadvantage of having what belongs to the necessary forms of commissions and attestations lying in separate Acts, by which the electors or their clerks may be more liable to mistakes or omissions, than if the whole was laid before them in one view, did appoint both to be brought together into one Act as follows; and the Agent for the Church to cause print the same, and transmit copies thereof to the several Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghs.

The General Assembly, considering that it is of the greatest importance for the honour and interest of religion, that the office-bearers of the Church should behave and conduct themselves in all respects becoming their character, do, in terms of the Act of Assembly, 22d May 1722, earnestly beseech, exhort, and require all ministers to take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine, and to be exemplary to their people, in sobriety, righteousness, and holiness, abstaining from all appearance of evil; and, in like manner, the General Assembly do earnestly beseech, exhort, and require the elders and deacons to be faithful in the discharge of their respective offices, tender and circumspect in their walk, punctual in their attending upon ordinances, strict in their observation of the Lord's Day, and regular in keeping up the worship of God in their families. The Assembly do further enjoin and require, for the more regular election of members to the Assembly in time coming, Presbyteries, Burghs, and Universities, strictly to observe the Acts of former Assemblies, appointing that the election shall be made at least forty days before the meeting of Assembly, and within a month preceding the first of the said forty days, except those lying in the Northern and Western Isles, and shall appoint the day of election at a meeting to be entered in their minutes, at least ten free days before such election; and that on the day of election, they shall make their elections betwixt the hours of one and eight o'clock in the evening.

The General Assembly, considering also that some Acts regulating the manner and time of electing members to the Assembly are posterior to the Act 17th May 1725, establishing forms of their commissions; and that these forms refer in general to Acts of Assembly that contain some particulars, of which Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghs, cannot have any certain evidence, and are thereby reduced to the necessity either of attesting what does not come properly under their own knowledge, or of omitting clauses in the established form, whereby their commissions have been rendered void and null; the Assembly did, on all these accounts, and hereby do, appoint and ordain the forms of commissions and attestations hereunto subjoined, to be observed by Presbyteries, Sessions, Universities, and Burghs; and enact and ordain, that all such commissions and attestations as are not conceived and attested in these very words of the form now prescribed shall be rejected.

The General Assembly do further declare and enact, that when a Kirk-session or Presbytery refuse their concurrence or attestation to a commission by a Burgh or University, without assigning the reasons of their refusal, that commission shall be sustained as if duly attested, in case the matter shall be brought before the Assembly by protest or appeal.

Form of Commissions by Presbyteries.

At the day of years.
The which day, the Presbytery of being convened, betwixt the hours of one and eight o'clock in the evening, in order to elect their representatives to the ensuing Assembly, pursuant to a resolution entered into their minutes on the

testified and declared, that the said _____ is a minister, or (an elder) of this Church, lawfully ordained, and (if a minister) hath signed the Formula enjoined by the 10th Act of the Assembly, *anno* 1711; or (if an elder) hath signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the Assembly, 1694. And, further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of the Assembly; and (if an elder, it must be said) and, in particular, he is of an unblemished character, circumspect in his walk, regular in giving attendance on the ordinances of Divine institution, and behaves in other respects agreeable to his office. All which the University have hereby attested on proper information.

Form for Universities in the Case of an After-Election of a Commissioner in the place of one formerly chosen.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Principal, Professors, Masters, and other members of the University of _____ being convened, betwixt the hours of one and eight in the evening, and (here the occasion of the new election to be narrated) did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint in his place _____ their commissioner to the next General Assembly; and it is hereby testified and declared, that he is in all respects qualified in the same manner as their former commissioner, in whose room he is chosen, which the University attests on proper information.

N.B.—This form for Universities is prescribed on the supposition that the former commissioner, and the person chosen in his place, are either both of them ministers, or both of them elders; but if an elder is chosen in the place of a minister, or a minister in the place of an elder, then the attestation must contain the words at length of the form prescribed for the first election.

Attestation.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Presbytery of _____ having had before them a commission given by the University of _____ to _____ to represent the said University in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do, in terms of the 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, the 7th Act of Assembly, 1723, and 4th Act of Assembly, 1724, testify and declare, that the said _____ is a minister or (an elder) lawfully ordained; that he has signed the Formula enjoined by the 10th Act of Assembly, 1711; or (if an elder) hath signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694; and that he is a master of the said University, or

And, further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly. This signed by
 A. B. Moderator.

Form of Commissions from Burghs.

At _____ the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ being convened in Council, betwixt the hours of one and eight o'clock in the evening, in order to elect their representative to the ensuing Assembly, pursuant to a resolution entered into their minutes on the _____ day of _____ did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint _____ ruling elder, their commissioner to the next General Assembly of this Church, indicted to meet at _____ the _____ day of _____ next to come, or when and where it shall happen to sit, willing him to repair thereto, and to attend all the diets of the same, and there to consult, vote, and determine in all matters that come before them, to the glory of God, and the good of his Church,

according to the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, and agreeable to the constitution of this Church, as he will be answerable; and that he report his diligence therein at his return therefrom. And it is hereby testified and declared, that the said _____ is an elder of this Church, lawfully ordained, and hath signed the Formula enjoined by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694, and is every other way qualified to be a member of Assembly, and likewise that he is (a resider in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies,) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh,) or (Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh doth lie,) according to the Acts of Assembly; and, in particular, that he is of an unblemished character, circumspect in his walk, regular in giving attendance on the ordinances of Divine institution, and behaves in other respects agreeable to his office. All which the Magistrates and Town-Council have attested on proper information.

Form for Burghs in the Case of an After-Election of a Commissioner in the place of one formerly chosen.

At the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ being convened, betwixt the hours of one and eight in the evening, and (here the occasion of the new election to be narrated) did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint in his place _____ ruling elder, their commissioner to the next General Assembly; and it is hereby testified and declared, that the said _____ is (a resider in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies,) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh,) or (Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh doth lie,) and that he is in all other respects qualified in the same manner as their former commissioner, in whose room he is chosen; which the Magistrates and Town-Council do attest on proper information.

Attestation by the Kirk-Session.

At the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Kirk-Session of _____ having had laid before them a commission by the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ to _____ ruling elder, to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, do, in the terms of the 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, testify and declare, that the said _____ is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of the General Assembly, 1694; and likewise, that he is (a resider in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the bounds of the said Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies,) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh,) or (Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh doth lie.)

Attestation by the Presbytery.

At the _____ day of _____ years.
 The which day, the Presbytery of _____ having had produced before them a commission given by the Magistrates and Town-Council of _____ to _____ to represent the said burgh in the ensuing General Assembly of this National Church, with an attestation of the kirk-session of the said burgh, conform to the direction of the 9th Act of Assembly, 1718, 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, and 4th Act of Assembly, 1724, do, in terms of the foresaid Acts, likewise testify and declare, that the said _____ is an elder lawfully ordained, and that he has

signed the Formula prescribed by the 11th Act of Assembly, 1694; and likewise, that he is (a resider in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the said burgh,) or (an heritor in the bounds of the Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh lies,) or (has formerly resided and officiated as an elder in the said burgh,) or (Presbytery of _____, within which the said burgh doth lie;) and further, that the said commissioner is every other way qualified to be a member of the Assembly, according to the Acts of Assembly. This signed by _____ A. B., Moderator.

V.

Sess. 8, May 27, 1768.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1768.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1768.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 18th day of May, in the year 1769.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Former Overtures again transmitted.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1769.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1769.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1769.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1769.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 23, 1769.—An Address by the General Assembly to his Majesty.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, consider it as our duty, at this juncture, to approach your throne with the warmest professions of our sincere attachment to your royal person and family. As the Church of Scotland is indebted for its preservation, in times of danger and persecution, to the Divine protection, it owes its civil establishment to the principles of liberty. Under the same Illustrious Monarch who secured the succession of the British Throne to the House of Hanover, the protection of law was obtained for the Church of Scotland; and the members of this Church have uniformly distinguished themselves, no less by the love of liberty, which the genius of our ecclesiastical constitution tends to cherish, than by their attachment to your Majesty's royal ancestors, the faithful guardians of the rights of their people.

Animated with the warmest sentiments of loyalty and affection to our Sovereign, we embrace the first opportunity that hath offered to us of expressing our hearty concern at that spirit of licentiousness, and those unhappy dissensions which have disturbed your Majesty in the seat of your government, and begin now to alarm the minds of good citizens in the most remote parts of your dominions. Fully sensible of your Majesty's paternal goodness, and constant endeavours to promote the public happiness, we cannot sufficiently lament that this gracious purpose should be obstructed by any part of your subjects.

It is, however, with much satisfaction that we assure your Majesty, that the great body of the people under our care, sensible of the blessings which they enjoy under your auspicious reign, are actuated with zeal for our happy constitution, and with respect and love for their Sovereign. No pains shall be wanting on our part to cherish and improve those happy dispositions. At the same time that we inculcate upon them a supreme reverence for the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, we will omit no opportunity of impressing them with loyalty to our King, veneration for the constitution, and obedience to the laws of our country.

We offer, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, our prayers to Almighty God, that he may long preserve your Majesty to be the guardian of our civil and religious rights: That he may comfort your heart under the cares and burdens of government, and guide your councils by his unerring wisdom: That there may ever surround the throne men of approved ability and integrity, possessing the confidence of their Sovereign, and the esteem of their fellow-subjects; and that these lands, ruled by your Majesty and your royal descendants, may continue to the latest ages to be the happy seat of religion, liberty, and the valuable arts of life, are, and shall be, the constant prayers of,

Most Gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment, by

JAMES M'KNIGHT, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1769.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1769.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1769.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 24th day of May, in the year 1770.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Former Overtures again transmitted.

*Sess. ult., May 29, 1769.—The Act of Assembly, 1732, anent the Method of Planting Vacant Churches, transmitted as an Overture to Presbyteries.**

(See Act 8th, 1732.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 24, 1770.

I.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1770.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1770.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

* In regard to this overture, the following notice appears in the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings for 1769: "The General Assembly agreed to transmit the Act of Assembly, 1732, anent the method of planting vacant churches, as an Overture to Presbyteries, that they may return their opinion to the next Assembly concerning the reviving of the said act." It was again transmitted in 1770; but in 1771 no notice is taken of the subject.—*Ed. 1843.*

III.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1770.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, June 1, 1770.—An Address by the General Assembly to his Majesty on the Birth of a Princess.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, embrace with pleasure an opportunity which is offered us by Providence, during our meeting in the General Assembly, of congratulating your Majesty on the safe delivery of the Queen, and the birth of a Princess.

This happy event, while it fills our hearts, as it must do those of all your faithful subjects, with joy, gives us fresh reason to acknowledge the goodness of God, in thus farther securing to us, by the increase of your royal family, a long continuance of those estimable blessings which we have hitherto enjoyed under the protection of your Majesty's illustrious house.

While attempts have been made to disturb the order of government, and diminish the affection of your people towards a Sovereign who is so worthy of their confidence and trust, we esteem ourselves happy, in being able to assure your Majesty of the firm and unperturbed loyalty of the people under our care, and of their taking equal concern with us in every event that is auspicious to your Majesty's family, persuaded that liberty is only secure when due reverence to the laws is preserved. We rejoice in having a Prince who has shown that, while he maintains the most sacred regard to the British constitution, he knows how to support, with propriety, the dignity of the throne.

That Almighty God may pour down his blessings on your Majesty, on the Queen, and on all the royal family; that he may prolong your reign in the midst of national prosperity, and may establish your throne in the hearts of a dutiful people, are the constant and fervent prayers of,

Most Gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ALEXANDER CARLYLE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, June 2, 1770.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1770.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1770.—Act anent the Introduction of Commissions to certain Universities.

* It being represented that the present form of commissions from universities in the introduction does not suit certain of the universities, viz., in these words:—"The Principal, Professors, Masters, and other Members of the University of having right to elect, being convened," &c.: Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do appoint, that in the form for those universities to whom the words above mentioned do not agree, in place of these, the words shall be as contained in the 8th Act of Assembly, 1726, viz.:—"A meeting of the university of being convened, betwixt the hours," &c. And in like manner in the form of an after-election.

VIII.

Sess. 5, May 29, 1770.—Act anent the bringing in of Overtures.

The General Assembly proceeded to consider the overture respecting the bringing in of overtures to the Assembly. The General Assembly, after reasoning thereupon, agreed thereto, and enacted as follows: The General Assembly did, and hereby do ordain, That no business or overture shall be brought into the Assembly the same day on which it was moved in the Committee for Overtures; and that after any overture being transmitted or moved in the Assembly, it shall lie on the table for one diet.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1770.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 23d day of May, in the year 1771.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Former Overtures again transmitted.

The Act of Assembly, 1732, anent the Method of planting Vacant Churches, transmitted as an Overture to Presbyteries.

(See Act 8th, 1732, and note, p. 779.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1771.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1771.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1771.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1771.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, May 31, 1771.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 8, May 31, 1771.—Act concerning Persons guilty of Uncleaness, where they should make Satisfaction.

It being represented to the Assembly, by an overture, transmitted to them by their Committee for Overtures, that disputes had arisen in the case of delinquents, where satisfaction should be made, when the delinquents have their residence in different parishes, the General Assembly find, that, according to the law and practice of this Church, persons guilty of uncleanness should satisfy in that parish whereof the woman was a parishioner at the time the guilt was committed; and that by a parishioner is understood a person who has his or her fixed residence, or place of abode, within a certain parish for the time, whether such residence is of long or short duration.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1771.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1771.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 21st day of May next, in the year 1772.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

*Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod.**

Sess. 6, May 29, 1771.—Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them.†

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1772.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1772.—The King's Commission to John Earl of Glasgow produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1772.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1772.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

* This overture was eventually passed into an act. See Act 12th, 1776.—*Ed.* 1843.

† This overture was again transmitted for three years, and then dropped.—*Ed.* 1843.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1772.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1772.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1772.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 20th day of May, in the year 1773.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 9, May 30, 1772.—The General Assembly transmits to Presbyteries the following Report, laid before them by their Committee for Overtures.

The Committee for Overtures having met and considered the overtures transmitted to Synods and Presbyteries to this General Assembly, with respect to the electing and ordaining of elders; and having heard reports of irregularities in these matters, particularly of elders being ordained in parishes where they have no residence, and reasons thereon, do report their humble opinion, that the case is not ripe for an overture to be transmitted to Presbyteries; but that the General Assembly should recommend to Presbyteries to inquire into these matters, and to transmit such overtures thereon as to them should seem proper. Which report from the committee being considered, the General Assembly do hereby recommend to Presbyteries accordingly.

*Sess. 6, May 27, 1772.—Overture anent Probationers being Licensed without the Bounds of the Church.**

Sess. 6, May 27, 1772.—Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. 6, May 27, 1772.—Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them.

(Re-transmitted.)

* An Act on this subject was passed in 1779. (See Act 11th of that year.)—Ed. 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1773.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1773.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1773.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1773.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 24, 1773.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the King on the happy event of the Birth of a Prince.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1773.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1773.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1773.—Act anent the neglect of Kirk-Sessions to purchase the Acts of Assembly.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, revive the enactments of Assembly, 1645, p. 30, Assembly, 1700, Act 16, and Assembly, 1705, Act 18, recommending

to all Kirk-Sessions to buy the printed Acts of Assembly, and enjoining Presbyteries and Synods to make inquiry at privy censures how far this recommendation is observed by the Sessions within their bounds.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1773.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 19th day of May, in the year 1774.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 9, May 29, 1773.—Overture anent Probationers being Licensed without the Bounds of the Church.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. 9, May 29, 1773.—Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. 9, May 29, 1773.—Overture anent Members of Inferior Courts judging in Causes appealed from them.

(Re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1774.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1774.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1774.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1774.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 23, 1774.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the King on the Birth of a Prince.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, embrace with pleasure this first opportunity which our meeting in a General Assembly affords us, of approaching your throne with humble congratulations on the birth of another Prince.

Attached to your Majesty by that affection which your Majesty's amiable qualities inspire, we cannot but rejoice in an event which adds to your domestic felicity. The loyalty which we bear to our Sovereign, and a deep sense of the intimate connection betwixt the prosperity of your royal family and the public welfare, increase our satisfaction. Engaged as we are by every motive of duty and of interest to wish the continuance of the British sceptre in your illustrious house, we regard every addition to your royal family as a new pledge of the security of our religion and liberties. We adore the goodness of God, who, by the flourishing state of your royal house, and the persevering wisdom and clemency of your government, affords us so much reason to be grateful for the happiness which we now enjoy, and for the future prospects which are before us.

That his gracious protection may ever continue to watch over your royal person, your illustrious consort the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and every branch of your Majesty's august race; that his Spirit may prompt all your undertakings, his wisdom may direct all your councils, and his Providence crown them with success; and that, after having long made that extensive and flourishing empire over which you reign happy, by your mild and just administration, you may at length attain the full reward of those righteous princes who shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, are the sincere prayers of,

Most gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's most faithful, obedient, and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT HENRY, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1774.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The commission this year contains the following additional clause inserted in the close of the act, immediately after the words "as possible"—"and empowered the committee, at their first meeting, to reject any petition for a new station, in case they shall find sufficient objections against it."

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1774.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1774.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 25th day of May, in the year 1775.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Clk. Eccl. Scot.*

*Sess. 7, May 26, 1774.—Overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, anent Probationers being Licensed without the Bounds of the Church.**

Sess. 7, May 26, 1774.—Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod.

(Re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 25, 1775.

I.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1775.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1775.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 27, 1775.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 30, 1775.—The General Assembly's Address of Condolence to his Majesty on the Death of the late Queen of Denmark.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave humbly to approach your Majesty with sentiments of respectful and sincere condolence, on occasion of the untimely death of your Majesty's royal sister, the late Queen of Denmark.

* An act on this subject was passed in 1779. See Act 9th of that year.—*Ed. 1843.*

Attached to your sacred person, by affection no less than by duty, we are deeply interested in whatever affects our gracious Sovereign, and are most sincerely touched with an event, which, to the cares inseparable from royalty, adds the feeling of domestic affliction.

Possessed, as we are, with reverence and with gratitude towards the illustrious House of Hanover, to which, under God, the nation is indebted for that full enjoyment of the Protestant religion, and of public liberty, which our ancestors were solicitous to secure, when they called it to the British throne, every loss sustained by your Majesty in your august family fills us with the most sincere concern.

That the God of grace, and Father of mercies, may on this occasion pour into your royal heart those consolations which flow from sentiments of reverence for the Divine government, and of dutiful submission to the Divine will; that he may sanctify this national affliction, and, by graciously prolonging your valuable life, and that of our gracious Queen, and the lives of your royal offspring, may afford us the comfortable prospect of continuing to enjoy the many blessings by which we are distinguished from the nations around us, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DAVID SHAW, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1775.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c. (The same as last year.)

VI.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1775.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 5, 1775.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 23d day of May, in the year 1776.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 7, June 1, 1775.—Overture from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, anent Probationers being Licensed without the Bounds of the Church.

(Re-transmitted.)

Sess. 7, June 1, 1775.—Overture anent the Age of Ruling Elders, and the electing them to represent Sessions in the Presbytery and Synod.

(Re-transmitted.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1776.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1776.—The King's Commission to Charles Lord Cathcart produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1776.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by David Dalrymple, Esq.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1776.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 28, 1776.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, animated with the same sentiments of loyalty which prevail among the people under our care, embrace this first opportunity of joining with them in declaring, that, at this interesting juncture, our attachment to your Majesty's person and government, and our zeal for the constitution and rights of Great Britain, continue firm and unshaken.

Under a constitution founded on the principles of liberty, and governed by a Sovereign whose reign has been uniformly distinguished by a sacred regard for the rights of his people, we have enjoyed a felicity which our forefathers struggled and prayed for, but did not obtain; and we daily bless that God, by whom kings reign, for your mild and equitable administration. Sensible of our own happiness, and reposing with confidence on your Majesty's attention to the welfare of all your people, it is with no less astonishment than regret that we have beheld those alarming events which disturb the tranquillity of your reign.

But while we deeply bewail the progress of that spirit which hath prompted our fellow-subjects in North America to take arms in opposition to your Majesty's authority, and the supremacy of the British legislature, we contemplate, with peculiar satisfaction, that striking proof which your Majesty now gives of your paternal affection, by vesting in the same respectable persons whom you have entrusted with the command of your formidable fleets and armies, the power of displaying the extent of your Majesty's clemency, and of conciliating the alienated minds of your subjects.

We consider ourselves as called upon, in the present situation of public affairs, to exert our utmost diligence in discharging the important functions of our sacred office, in order to confirm the people committed to our charge in their reverence for the laws of their country, in their attachment to the system of legal government established by the glorious Revolution, and in their loyalty towards your Majesty,

whom they have experienced to be the faithful guardian of those liberties which your illustrious House was called to maintain.

These endeavours shall ever be accompanied with our fervent prayers to Almighty God, that he may go forth with the fleets and armies of our country; that he may bless the humane means employed by your Majesty to recal our fellow-subjects to a sense of their duty, and to put a speedy period, without effusion of blood, to the present dangerous and unnatural rebellion; that he who stilleth the tumults of the people, and ruleth the spirit of man, may, in his good time, turn the hearts of the children unto their fathers; that out of confusion order may arise; that in place of anarchy and civil discord, submission to legal authority may return; and the union between Great Britain and her Colonies may be happily re-established, so that both may long rejoice under the government of your Majesty, as their common parent and benefactor.

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN KER, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, May 29, 1776.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to his Majesty on the Birth of another Princess.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, embrace with pleasure the opportunity which our meeting in a General Assembly affords us of approaching your throne with respectful congratulations on the birth of another Princess.

Animated with the principles of loyalty and inviolable regard to your royal person and family, we cannot fail to rejoice in an event which adds to your domestic felicity.

Possessed as we are with reverence and gratitude towards the illustrious House of Hanover, to which, under God, the nation is indebted for the full enjoyment of the Protestant religion, and of public liberty, we must consider the increase of your royal family as an happy pledge of the security of our civil and religious rights, which our ancestors were solicitous to establish, by calling your august family to the throne of these kingdoms. On that throne may it flourish to the latest posterity!

With our fervent prayers for the blessing of the Most High to rest on your Majesty, on your illustrious Consort the Queen, and on all your royal progeny, we are,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN KER, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1776.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Re-formation of the Highlands and Islands, and for managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1776.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 5, May 28, 1776.—Act disjoining the Parish of Nenthorn from the Presbytery of Lauder, and annexing the same to the Presbytery of Kelso.

The which day, the General Assembly had transmitted to them, by their Committee for Bills, a petition for Mr Abraham Kerr, minister at Nenthorn, setting forth, that the removal of the Presbytery of Lauder from Earlston to Lauder, which is at a considerable distance from Nenthorn, made it extremely inconvenient for him (especially in winter) to attend the meetings of the Presbytery of Lauder; and as Kelso is much nearer, it would be more convenient for him and his parishioners that the parish of Nenthorn be disjoined from the Presbytery of Lauder, and united to the Presbytery of Kelso. That both the Presbyteries and the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale had agreed thereto; and along with the petition he produced a letter, addressed to the Moderator of this Assembly, signed by all the heritors of the parish of Nenthorn, agreeing to the disjunction, and craving that the General Assembly would disjoin the said parish of Nenthorn from the Presbytery of Lauder, and unite and annex the same to the Presbytery of Kelso. Which petition and letter being read and considered by the General Assembly, they unanimously did, and hereby do, disjoin the parish of Nenthorn from the Presbytery of Lauder, and unite and annex the same to the Presbytery of Kelso; and declare Mr Kerr, and his successors in office, constituent members of the Presbytery of Kelso in all time coming.

IX.

Sess. 6, May 29, 1776.—Act Reponing Mr Robert Dalrymple to the Office of the Holy Ministry.

The General Assembly, taking into consideration a petition of Mr Robert Dalrymple, late minister at Dallas, presented to the Synod of Moray, and referred by them to this Assembly, craving that he might be restored to the ministerial character, of which he was deprived by a sentence of this Church more than twelve years ago, in the justice of which he acquiesced; at the same time, that it had been unspeakably distressing to him, had borne so hard upon his mind, and given him so deep concern, that nothing appeared to him of such importance, and so comforting, as to be restored to his former character. And the Assembly having had laid before them, together with the above petition, a representation from the Synod of Moray, bearing, That they had unexceptionable evidence, both from the testimony of their own members, and from the places where Mr Dalrymple had resided, of his decent and useful behaviour since he was deposed, and were, therefore, unanimously of opinion, that it would be in no respect hurtful to the interests of religion, but otherwise, to agree to his petition; but that as the Assembly had affirmed the sentence of the Synod deposing him, they submitted it to the Assembly, whether, upon what is above represented, it would not be proper to take off the said sentence? The General Assembly, considering the above petition and representation, did unanimously, and hereby do, take off the sentence of deposition passed upon the said Mr Robert Dalrymple, and repon him to the office of a minister of the Gospel.

X.

Sess. 6, May 29, 1776.—Act altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Fife.

The which day, the General Assembly had transmitted to them, from their Committee for Overtures, an overture from the Synod of Fife, craving that the Assembly would alter the day of the Synod's meeting, from the first to the second Wednesday of October: Which being read and considered by the General Assembly, they unanimously did, and hereby do, change the day of meeting of the Synod of Fife from the first to the second Wednesday of October yearly; and appoint the said Synod to meet on the second day of October next.

XI.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1776.—Act Changing the Place of Meeting of the Synod of Galloway.

The which day, the General Assembly had transmitted to them, by their Committee for Bills, a petition for the Synod of Galloway, craving, that the Assembly would be pleased to change the place of the Synod's meeting from Wigton to Newton-Stewart; and along with the petition there was produced an extract of the Synod's proceedings relative to this matter: Which petition and extract being considered by the General Assembly, they unanimously did, and hereby do, change the place of the Synod of Galloway's meeting from Wigton to Newton-Stewart; and appointed the ordinary and stated meetings of that Synod to be held at Newton-Stewart in all time coming, allowing the Synod to adjourn occasionally to Kirkcudbright, Wigton, Stranraer, or elsewhere.

XII.

Sess. 5, May 28, 1776.—Act anent the Age of Ruling Elders.

The General Assembly, upon the report of their Committee for Overtures, finding that a considerable majority of the Presbyteries of this Church have now agreed to an overture anent the age of ruling elders, and the electing them to represent sessions in Presbyteries and Synods, did thereupon agree, without a vote, to turn the said overture into a standing act. And, accordingly, the General Assembly did, and hereby do enact,—1mo, That no person shall be ordained an elder of this Church before he is twenty-one years of age complete; 2do, That all Presbytery elders shall be elected, within two months after the sitting of Synod, to attend the Presbytery and ensuing Synod of that bounds, and in case of death or demission, a new election shall be made within one month of the same; 3tio, That every elder so chosen shall produce an extract of his election, under the hand of the session-clerk, before he be received on the roll either of Presbytery or Synod.

XIII.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1776.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held in this place, on Thursday, the 22d day of May, in the year 1777.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 5, May 28, 1776.—Overture anent Persons going to be Licensed and Ordained without the Bounds of this Church.

(Re-transmitted.)

*Sess. 9, June 1, 1776.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.**

* An Act on this subject was afterwards passed. See 8th Act, 1782. The overture transmitted is the same as that of 1749.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1777.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1777.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.]

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1777.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1777.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 26, 1777.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Affairs in North America.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met together in a National Assembly, consider it as our duty, at this interesting juncture, to approach your throne, in order to assure your Majesty that our attachment to your person and government, and the zeal of the people under our care for the constitution and rights of Great Britain, continue firm and unshaken.

Sensible of our own felicity under the reign of a Prince who has been the faithful guardian of those laws and liberties which the illustrious House of Hanover was called to secure and maintain, we observed, with deep concern, the first appearances of a turbulent and ungovernable spirit among the people of North America. We have contemplated its alarming progress with astonishment, and beheld fellow-subjects, who enjoyed in common with us the blessings of your Majesty's mild administration, take arms in opposition to your just authority, and disclaim the supremacy of the British legislature, reject with disdain the means of conciliation, generously held out to them by your Majesty, and labour to erect their unlawful confederacies into independent states.

With reverence and gratitude to Divine Providence, we offer our congratulations to your Majesty on the success which has attended the fleets and armies, which you have been constrained to employ, in order to oppose the violence of rebellious subjects, and reclaim them to a sense of their duty. While we trust that your Majesty's councils will be conducted with wisdom, and your troops continue to act with valour, we regard it as our immediate duty, in the present situation of public affairs, to increase our diligence in discharging the functions of our sacred office, that we may not only confirm the people under our care in sentiments of loyalty to their Sovereign, and attachment to the British constitution, but may impress all ranks of men with a deep sense of their manifold transgressions, and incite them to such reforma-

tion in their hearts and lives, as will avert from our country those judgments which our iniquities justly deserve.

That the Lord of Hosts, in whose hand is power and might, may go forth with the fleets and armies of our country; that he who stilleth the tumults of the people, and ruleth the spirit of man, may, in his good time, turn the hearts of the children unto their fathers, that the destroying sword may return into his scabbard, and be at rest; that the union between Great Britain and her colonies may be speedily re-established, on terms so just and equitable that both may long rejoice under the government of your Majesty, as their common parent and benefactor, are the daily and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES BROWN, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1777.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VL

Sess. 9, May 31, 1777.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 29, 1777.—Overture and Interim Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed or Ordained without the Bounds of this Church.

(See Act 9th, 1779.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1777.—Act anent the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Fife.

There having been a mistake in the 10th Act of the last Assembly, respecting the day of the meeting of the Synod of Fife, the General Assembly do now ordain, that the meeting of the said Synod, in the month of October, shall be on the second Tuesday of that month yearly.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1777.—Renewal of the Appointment of Assembly, 1763, respecting Collections.

The General Assembly did agree to renew an appointment of the Assembly, 1763, respecting collections made by act or recommendation of Assembly, and that the same should be inserted with the printed Acts of this Assembly; and, accordingly,

the General Assembly do now appoint, that, in all future collections made by such act and recommendation, the brethren or Presbyteries, when they remit the money collected, in obedience thereto, to the person or persons named in the Act for receiving the same, shall transmit, at the same time, an exact account of the several sums of money so remitted to the clerks of Assembly, who shall keep a book for enrolling the said remittances, that the Church may have thereby an opportunity of knowing the just amount of the several collections made in obedience to Acts of Assemblies.

X.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1777.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May, in the year 1778.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

XI.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1777.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.

(See Act 8th, 1782.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1778.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1778.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1778.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The proofs which we have so constantly received of the duty, loyalty, and affection, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and of their invariable attention to the very important objects committed to their care, give us the greatest pleasure. We have the strongest reliance on your endeavours to promote, with a truly Christian zeal, the cause of religion and virtue, and to discountenance every practice which may have a tendency to impiety and immorality. You may rely upon our ready concurrence with you in every thing that may advance these laudable purposes, so essential to the welfare of our people, and in our resolution to support the Church of Scotland in all its rights, as by law established.

We need not recommend the avoiding of all contention and unedifying debates to those who have no other object in their view than that of suppressing licentiousness, immorality, and vice; and who are actuated purely by that zeal which tends to the advancement of true religion, and the general peace and happiness of society.

We have again appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, George Earl of Dalhousie, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service, and of his particular affection to the Church of Scotland; and we are persuaded that our choice of him will be agreeable to you.

We have the fullest reliance, from long experience, that charity, brotherly love, and unanimity, will prevail in all your proceedings in the business before you, and that you will bring this meeting to a happy conclusion. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 12th day of May 1778, in the 18th year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

SUFFOLK.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1778.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter was received and read with all the respect and gratitude due to so condescending a mark of royal favour.

Your Majesty's approbation of the duty, loyalty, and affection, of the General Assemblies of this Church, gives us the greatest satisfaction, and cannot but animate us with such zeal to give invariable attention to the important objects committed to our care, as may recommend us to the continuance of your Majesty's favourable regard.

The manner in which your Majesty is pleased to express your reliance on our endeavours to promote the cause of religion and virtue, and to discountenance every practice which may have a tendency to impiety and immorality, whilst it clearly points out to us the great objects of our attention, powerfully excites us to use our most vigorous efforts in advancing those valuable purposes; and the assurances your Majesty is pleased to give of your countenance to our endeavours, affords us the most agreeable prospect of success.

The gracious declaration of your Majesty's resolution to support the Church of Scotland in all her rights, as by law established, we receive with the greatest thankfulness, and rest in it with the most entire satisfaction and security.

It shall be our study to keep invariably in view the important ends of our meeting; and, agreeably to your Majesty's recommendation, to avoid contention and unedifying debates, fully sensible that they are inconsistent with the spirit of true religion, and destructive of the welfare of society.

Your Majesty's royal donation for propagating religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we receive with all thankfulness, and we will be careful to apply it to the pious purpose for which it is bestowed.

The choice which your Majesty has been pleased to make of the Earl of Dalhousie to represent your royal person in this Assembly, we regard as an additional instance of your Majesty's favour. The approved fidelity and ability of that noble Lord, his affection to the Church of Scotland, and the happy experience of a former Assembly, render your Majesty's nomination of him most acceptable to us.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may long preserve your Majesty, direct your councils, and prosper your administration;—that he may bestow his choicest blessings on your Royal Consort the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family;—that there never may be wanting one of your royal house

to sway the British sceptre;—and that, after a long and happy reign over a free people, your Majesty may receive an unfading and eternal crown of righteousness, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

PAT. GRANT, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1778.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty, on the present situation of Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in National Assembly, consider it as our duty, at this season of public danger and alarm, to approach your throne, with the warmest declarations of our continued and inviolable attachment to your Majesty's person and government. While we view, with no less astonishment than concern, an unnatural and unprovoked rebellion still subsisting in North America, we must, at the same time, applaud that lenity which hath prompted your Majesty, as the father of your people, to hold out terms of conciliation to those deluded men, who have withdrawn their allegiance from a government under which they had attained the highest prosperity. We behold with satisfaction the measures which are taken, both for internal security, and for the support of the national honour, against the insult of every hostile power; and have the pleasure to assure your Majesty, that in no part of your dominions have exertions been made for that purpose with greater unanimity and ardour, than among the people under our care. We entertain the firmest hopes, under the blessing of Almighty God, that by a proper mixture of vigour and courage, with wisdom and mercy in the public councils, your Majesty will continue to render the British name everywhere respectable and great. We can assure your Majesty, that to the ministers, the elders, and every member of this Church, nothing will give more joy than to behold all the subjects of your wide extended empire happy under subjection of that free and legal government to which we are indebted for the most valuable blessings.

That, for this end, your Majesty's councils may be ever inspired with wisdom from above, and your arms may be crowned with victory;—that He who turneth wars into peace in all the ends of the earth, may so rule in the hearts of men, that the present unhappy contest in which this kingdom is engaged may speedily terminate in a peace, which shall be equitable, lasting, and consistent with the honour and true interests of Great Britain;—and that your Majesty may long reign the happy Sovereign of a happy people, are the sincere and earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

PAT. GRANT, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1778.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1778,—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 8, May 29, 1778.—Overture and Interim Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed or Ordained without the Bounds of this Church.

(See Act 9th, 1779.)

VIII.

*May 29, 1778.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.**

IX.

Sess. 8, May 29, 1778.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May, in the year 1779.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, } *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*
JOHN DRYSDALE, }

* See 1784, when this overture appeared in an amended form. It was regularly transmitted till 1791, after which there is no further notice of it.—*Ed. 1843.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1779.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1779.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1779.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1779.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1779.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty, on the Birth of another Prince, and on the present situation of Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in National Assembly, beg leave to approach your throne with our respectful congratulations upon the birth of another Prince. While we rejoice in every event which augments the domestic felicity of a Sovereign endeared to his people by his amiable virtues, we regard the increase of your Majesty's family as an additional security to our religion and liberties; and we number, with much satisfaction and thankfulness, the princes born in the royal family, as raised up, by the Divine Providence, to afford your subjects the happy prospect of enjoying, through a course of ages, under the protection of your Majesty's descendants, that full exercise of the Protestant religion, and those civil immunities which the illustrious House of Hanover was called to maintain, and of which your Majesty has been the faithful guardian.

In this season of national exertion and public alarm, we consider it as our duty to express an inviolable attachment to your Majesty's person and government. And we are happy in being able to assure your Majesty, that the same sentiments of duty and affection which we entertain, prevail amongst the people committed to our care. That loyalty which prompted the exertions lately made in this part of your Majesty's dominions, for internal security and the support of the national honour, remains unshaken. The open assistance given by the natural rivals and enemies of Great Britain to the rebellious colonies in North America, has united all ranks of men in zeal for the common cause. They rejoice in the success which attends your Majesty's arms in different quarters of the world. They confide in the wisdom and vigour of your Majesty's councils; and they look forward, trusting in the Almighty, with the solicitude of good citizens, to a happy termination of the present commotions.

It shall be our constant study to cherish these sentiments of loyalty in the breasts of our people, and to approve ourselves the dutiful servants of the Prince of Peace, by inspiring those over whom we have influence with the warmest sense of the security and felicity which they enjoy under your Majesty's mild, legal, and paternal administration.

That the Lord God of Hosts may go forth with your Majesty's fleets and armies, and crown them with victory; that he may defeat the designs of our enemies; that he may open the eyes of our deluded fellow-subjects; that the authority of law, and the blessings of liberty, may be speedily felt and acknowledged throughout all the parts of this extended empire; and that your Majesty may long reign the Sovereign of a free, a happy, and united people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES GILLESPIE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1779.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1779.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—The Commission of this year contains the following additional instructions, viz.:—And the Assembly further did, and hereby do, appoint the Commission to watch over any steps which may hereafter be taken for removing or weakening our legal securities against Popery. And that they may be able more effectually to attend to this object, the Assembly hereby authorise and appoint the Moderator of the Commission to call meetings *pro re nata*, as often as he shall be required so to do by any ten members of the Commission.

VII.

Sess. 5, May 25, 1779.—Act and Resolution of the General Assembly anent Popery.

The General Assembly proceeded, agreeably to the resolution of yesterday, to take under their serious consideration the overtures transmitted, by the Committee for Overtures, to this Assembly, concerning Popery. The several overtures were read over, and, after long reasoning on this affair, the General Assembly, agreeably to a motion made in the course of their reasonings, unanimously came to the following resolution: The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, having taken into their serious consideration the public alarm excited in this part of the United Kingdom, from the apprehension of an intention to repeal the laws enacted to prevent the growth of Popery, think it their duty to make this public declaration of their sentiments, on a subject in which the interests of religion and of their country are so deeply concerned. While they express their gratitude to Providence for the invaluable privileges enjoyed by this National Church, and the security afforded to the Protestant religion by established laws, they declare their firm attachment to the principles of civil and religious liberty, and their earnest desire that universal toleration and liberty of conscience may be extended to Protestants of every denomination. But they think it their duty also to declare their firm persuasion, that a repeal of the penal laws now in force

against Papists would be highly inexpedient, dangerous, and prejudicial to the best interests of religion and civil society in this part of the United Kingdom. Entertaining these sentiments, it is with much satisfaction they have received assurances from the highest authority, that the bill intended for repealing the laws for preventing the growth of Popery in Scotland is laid aside; and they confide in the wisdom of the legislature, that it will not in future be resumed. They likewise think it their duty, on this occasion, to express their strongest disapprobation of those lawless mobs, which have so lately disgraced the good cause which, in the blindness of popular zeal, they were meant to serve; and earnestly recommend it to the people under their care to show the influence of their religion, by a quiet and charitable spirit, approving themselves worthy of their civil and religious liberties, by a peaceable and moderate behaviour. The General Assembly further judge it expedient and necessary to give particular instructions to their Commission on this subject; and they did, and hereby do, appoint the Commission to watch over any steps which may hereafter be taken for removing or weakening our legal securities against Popery. And, that they may be able more effectually to attend to this object, the Assembly hereby authorise and appoint the moderator of the Commission to call meetings, *pro re nata*, as often as he shall be required so to do by any ten members of the Commission. The General Assembly do further resolve to exert their most effectual endeavours, in order to provide for the better instruction of the people in those corners of the Church where Popery chiefly abounds, by increasing the number of stated pastors among them.

VIII.

Sess. 7, May 27, 1779.—Regulations respecting the Chapel of Ease in Dunfermline.

1. The General Assembly allow and authorise the petitioners to employ any licentiate or minister of the Church of Scotland to officiate occasionally in the meeting-house now to be used as a Chapel of Ease, until a stated minister be appointed; it being always understood, that, previous to their employing any minister or probationer, they shall lodge a list of the names of such persons as they intend to employ, before they preach in the chapel; and every probationer shall lodge his licence and other certificates in the hands of the moderator of the Presbytery before preaching in the chapel.

2. The petitioners shall proceed to the election of a stated minister on or before the first of May next.

3. When the petitioners resolve to proceed to an election, they shall intimate their resolution to the Presbytery of Dunfermline, requesting them to appoint one of their number to preside at that election; and the Presbytery is hereby enjoined to comply with that request within a fortnight at farthest after it is made. If the Presbytery make no appointment within the time limited, or if the person nominated by the Presbytery does not attend, the petitioners are authorised to proceed to the election by themselves.

4. If the person elected shall be a probationer, the Presbytery is appointed to proceed to ordain him to the office of a minister according to the rules of the Church. If the person elected shall be an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland, it shall be competent for any of the ministers of the parish to preach along with the person elected, and introduce him to the Chapel of Ease; or if they shall decline that service, when application is made to them, this shall be competent for any other minister of the Presbytery.

5. It shall not be competent for the petitioners to elect any minister or probationer to be minister of the Chapel of Ease, but one entirely of the principles of the Church of Scotland, with regard to worship, doctrine, discipline, and government, and who shall subscribe the Standards and Formula enjoined by the Church; it being also understood and provided, that the petitioners and others, who shall form the congregation that meets in the Chapel of Ease, shall remain subject to the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, and her different judicatories.

6. That collections shall be made regularly at the doors of the chapel, and the sums arising therefrom shall be applied as part of the common fund for the maintenance of the poor of the parish.

7. That before the Presbytery ordain a probationer, or introduce a minister to the said chapel, the petitioners shall lay before the Presbytery a security which appears to the Presbytery sufficient, for a sum not less than fifty pounds sterling, as his yearly stipend, so long as he shall continue to officiate in that congregation; and if the Presbytery entertain any doubt concerning the validity of the security which is offered, the same shall be transmitted to the Procurator of the Church for his opinion; and the Presbytery is appointed to proceed according to that opinion.

IX.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1779.—Act concerning Persons going to be Licensed and Ordained without the Bounds of this Church.

The General Assembly, upon the report of their Committee for Overtures, finding that a considerable majority of the Presbyteries of this Church have now agreed to an overture anent persons going to be licensed and ordained without the bounds of this Church, did thereupon agree, without a vote, to turn the said overture into a standing act; and accordingly the General Assembly did, and hereby do, enact and prohibit all persons, educated or residing within the bounds of this Church, from going out of its bounds to obtain licences to preach; and prohibit all preachers licensed by this Church from going without its bounds to obtain ordination, unless they are called to a particular congregation in another country; and enact that licences obtained in that manner shall not be received, or have any effect in this Church; and such preachers as contravene this act shall forfeit the licence formerly given them, and be no longer entitled to the privileges which belong to a preacher of the Gospel in this Church.

X.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1779.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1779.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

XII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1779.—Order respecting the Acts of Assembly, and transmitting the same to Synods, Presbyteries, and Universities.

The General Assembly, upon considering the petition for James Dickson, printer for the Church, with the report of the committee thereupon, resolved; that, in place of taking one hundred copies of the printed Acts of Assembly from the printer annually, that they should, for the future, take two hundred copies annually; viz., one for the moderator, and one for the clerk of each Presbytery; and that a copy for each Synod and University should also be delivered annually, and a copy delivered to the Keeper of the Advocates' Library, for the use of the Faculty of Advocates: And to prevent expense to the fund in time coming, it is hereby ordered, that the Acts shall, for the future, be left at the Society Hall, and Presbyteries, Synods, and Universities, are desired to send for their copies on or before the first day of December

annually; certifying, if they do not send for their copies on or before that day, they will be sent by post at their expense: And further, when they do send for their copies, they shall send a receipt therefor, that the clerks of Assembly may have evidence of their being delivered.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1779.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 25th day of May, in the year 1780.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, } *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*
JOHN DRYSDALE, }

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 25, 1780.

I.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1780.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 25, 1780.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 27, 1780.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1780.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1780.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The latter part of the additional instructions of 1779 are this year omitted.—*Ed.* 1843.)

VI.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1780.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. 9, June 3, 1780.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 5, 1780.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 24th day of May, in the year 1781.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, }
JOHN DRYSDALE, } *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 24, 1781.

I.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1781.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 24, 1781.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1781.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 26, 1781.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the Birth of another Prince, and on the present situation of Public Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, humbly beg leave to approach your throne, to express our firm attachment to your person and government, and to assure you that the sentiments which we entertain are the sentiments of the people committed by Providence to our charge.

With the most lively joy and heartfelt satisfaction we have beheld the increase of your Majesty's family in your royal offspring; an event which, while it contributes to your Majesty's domestic felicity, must, on that account, give pleasure to all your loyal subjects; but which, in a particular manner, must be felt as of the utmost national importance, by encouraging us to hope for a long continuance of those civil and religious blessings which, as British subjects and Protestants, we have hitherto enjoyed under the government of your Illustrious House.

The tumultuous outrages which, under the mask of religious zeal, have disturbed the peace of your Majesty's subjects, filled us with the deepest concern; and we heard with abhorrence the name of our holy faith prostituted to encourage acts of violence, which were adverse to its principles, and forbidden by the precepts of our blessed Redeemer.

While your Majesty was engaged in a necessary, though expensive war, against the ancient enemies of these realms, and against your own rebellious subjects, in support of the honour, dignity, and just prerogatives of your crown, we have seen with indignation your ancient allies, who ought to have been united to your Majesty, by the closest ties of religion, civil interest, and gratitude, not only refusing to supply your Majesty with such succours as by treaty they were bound to give, but even affording their assistance to your enemies, to enable them the more effectually to pursue hostile measures against your Majesty. We rejoice in the success which it hath already pleased the Almighty to bestow upon your arms, in chastising their perfidy. We indulge the hope that this success may be a mean of opening their eyes, and of renewing the friendship which, to the mutual advantage of both nations, so long subsisted between Great Britain and the States of Holland. And we confide in the wisdom of your Majesty's councils, under the Divine Providence, for bringing the present bloody and destructive war to a happy issue.

In the meantime, we consider it to be our peculiar duty, at this juncture, to cherish the loyalty and affection to your Majesty, and the zeal for the success of your arms, which prevails among all ranks in this part of your dominions; and to impress those over whom we have influence with a due sense of the blessings they enjoy under your Majesty's government, and of those duties of charity and brotherly love which they owe to each other, and to their fellow Christians.

That the Lord of Hosts may go forth with your fleets and armies; that he may crown your arms with victory; and that your Majesty may long reign over a free, happy, and united people, is the sincere and ardent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders, met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by
WILL. DALRYMPLE, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, June 2, 1781.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, June 2, 1781.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The additional instructions of 1779 are this year altogether omitted.—*Ed.* 1843.)

VII.

Sess. 8, June 1, 1781.—Interim Act anent Licensing Probationers.

The General Assembly, in consequence of an overture from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, having taken into their serious consideration the dangerous consequences that would arise to this Church if Presbyteries were allowed to receive on trials young men who have never studied divinity at an university, did, and hereby do, strictly prohibit all Presbyteries from following such a practice; and ordain that this prohibition shall have the force of a law till next General Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. 8, June 1, 1781.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. 8, June 1, 1781.—Overture anent Licensing Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

The following is part of an Overture from the Synod of Perth and Stirling considered by the Assembly of this year. It is appended to the Acts of 1782 in the original edition, having been omitted in the printed Acts of 1781.—*Ed.* 1843.

Whereas the receiving extrajudicial papers into the proceedings of superior judicatories, and founding decisions upon them, is highly irregular, injurious to the rights of inferior courts, and of dangerous consequences to the interests of individuals, and particularly the admitting private letters of non-residing heritors and others, never before the inferior judicatory, and sustaining the same, in place of a call regularly authenticated, is directly contrary to the rules of this Church, confirmed by immemorial practice, of fatal tendency to the interests of religion, and derogatory to the authority of Presbyteries, who have, in the first instance, the only right of judging in the settlement of vacant parishes. For remedying and preventing these abuses, the Synod of Perth and Stirling humbly overture to the General Assembly, that, in conformity to the fundamental constitution of this Church, they will be pleased to resolve and enjoin that no papers or evidence whatever, not offered to the inferior court, shall be received at discussing any appeal or complaint; but that, when any new matter or evidence occurs which the parties judge of importance, the cause shall be remitted to the inferior court. The Assembly finding this part of the overture unnecessary, as what it proposes is already sufficiently secured by the standing rules of the Church, agreed to dismiss it; and did, and hereby do, dismiss it accordingly.

X.

Sess. ult., June 4, 1781.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 23d day of May, in the year 1782.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, }
JOHN DRYSDALE, } *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1782.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1782.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Dalhousie produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1782.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1782.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 1, May 23, 1782.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Public Affairs.**

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in National Assembly, beg leave to embrace this first opportunity of approaching the throne, with our respectful congratulations upon the success with which it hath pleased Almighty God to crown your Majesty's arms.

Convinced that we owe our existence and protection, as a National Church, to the stability of that government under which we live, we take a warm interest in the train of striking events which, in the course of Divine Providence, we have been called to

* The following notice respecting this address appears in the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings of 1782 :—"The draught of an address to his Majesty, on the present state of public affairs, which had been approved of by the committee appointed to prepare it, was produced and read. Another draught, which had not been agreed to by said committee, but being read by a member in his place, and transmitted *simpliciter* by the Committee for Overtures, was also produced and read. And the question being put, which of these should be adopted, it carried that which had been approved of by the committee; against which several members dissented."—*Ed.* 1843.

behold; and it is our constant study to cherish and diffuse sentiments of loyalty amongst the people with whom we are connected. With the heartfelt satisfaction natural to subjects of a free state, we have heard of the important advantages lately gained by your Majesty's arms in Europe, in Asia, and in America. We admire the gallantry and good conduct displayed by the commanders employed in your Majesty's service, both at home and abroad, by which the designs of your combined enemies against some of our most valuable settlements have been in a great measure defeated. Relying upon the wisdom and vigour of your Majesty's councils, we look forward with the most pleasing hopes to the salutary consequences of the glorious victory obtained in the West Indies; and we lift our souls in devout and thankful acknowledgments to the Lord of Hosts.

That the blessing of heaven may continue to attend your Majesty's councils; that your enemies, feeling in every quarter of the globe the force of the British arms, may be disposed to listen to reasonable terms of accommodation; that He who ruleth in the kingdoms of men, who gives to the sword its charge, and who alone can command it to return to its scabbard, may enable your Majesty speedily to accomplish the paternal wish of your royal breast, by restoring to your people the blessings of an honourable and lasting peace; that you may long sway the sceptre over a united, grateful, and happy people; and that the Crown may descend with undiminished splendour, through your illustrious family, to the latest generations, are the daily and earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOS. M'CORMICK, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1782.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr Joseph M'Cormick, minister of the Gospel at Prestonpans, their Moderator, all the ministers who are members of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing Popery and profaneness, and for managing the royal bounty for these ends, according to, and in terms of, his Majesty's grant to this Assembly. In prosecution of which purposes, the committee are to appoint preachers and catechists to go to such places as they shall find, upon due information, to be the most proper, according to his Majesty's design, expressed in his warrant; and, in so doing, that they have particular regard to such parishes in South Uist, Small Isles, Glencoe, Harris, the countries of Moidart, Glengarry, and Lochaber, and the other parishes of the Synods of Glenelg and Argyle, which the committee shall find, by reason of the vast extent, by the prevalency of Popery and ignorance, and other unhappy circumstances, to be in the greatest distress. And they shall take care that the persons they employ be certified, and found, upon due trial, to be properly qualified for these respective offices, of good abilities for the same, of a pious life and conversation, prudent, of undoubted loyalty to his Majesty, and of competent skill in the principles of divinity, and particularly in Popish controversies: Such preachers and catechists being hereby appointed to be subject to, and under the inspection of, the Presbyteries of the bounds to which they are sent, who are to take care that the orders of the committee be duly observed by them. And the preachers are also appointed to catechise, and both they and the catechists to instruct the people from house to house, and to visit the sick; and, in all their labour, among the people, to be careful to teach them the principles and duties of the true Christian

Protestant religion, and the obligations they are under to duty and loyalty to our Sovereign King George, and obedience to the laws. And the committee are empowered to give them such instructions, as to their work and behaviour, as they shall judge meet; which instructions the preachers and catechists are hereby ordered to obey. The General Assembly do further appoint the said committee to have a particular regard, in their proceedings, to the regulations agreed upon by the committee of the Assembly for managing the royal bounty, on the 30th of September 1730, approved by frequent Assemblies; and to take care that Presbyteries, and others concerned, observe the same, which they are hereby ordered to do; particularly, the Assembly ordains the several Presbyteries to insert in their registers the committee's appointments of their designations, salaries, and stations of the several missionaries, and to have an exact regard thereto, in all the letters they shall write about the said missionaries, and in giving of certificates to them; and to direct all their letters, concerning missionaries in their bounds, only to the moderator of the committee; which letters shall be signed, at the appointment of the Presbytery, by the moderator or clerk thereof: And the Assembly does discharge any payment to be made of the salaries of the missionaries, except upon receipts from the missionaries themselves, and upon certificates from the Presbyteries, bearing that they have served for the time mentioned in the receipts. And that every catechist who receives a salary from the royal bounty, on condition that the parishioners or gentlemen of the district shall pay a certain sum in aid of such salary, shall insert, in the body of his receipt to the cashier, a declaration that he has received the particular sum specified; and that the attestation of the Presbytery shall, in like manner, bear that the catechist has received the stipulated sum which the committee make the condition of his appointment; it being understood by this resolution, that the several stations, with regard to which such conditions were originally made by the committee, when no such declaration of the catechist, or attestation of the Presbytery, as is now proposed, is received by the cashier, shall be afterwards suppressed by the committee, though the catechist shall, notwithstanding, receive the salary for the time he is certified to have performed his duty. That a journal of the itinerant's labours in the ministry of the mission committed to him be written on the back of the Presbytery's certificate, and signed by him, as the ground on which the Presbytery have granted him said certificate. The General Assembly do also empower the said committee to apply, for the purposes above mentioned, what may remain of the last year's royal bounty not disposed of, by reason of any of the missionaries not fulfilling the appointments laid upon them; and that they are to keep a register of their proceedings, and likewise distinct books of accounts how the foresaid money is disposed, which shall be patent to any concerned who please to inspect the same. Of the persons above named as members of this committee, five are declared to be a quorum, whereof three are to be ministers; but it is hereby appointed, that at the quarterly meeting of the committee, in which the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the ensuing year is to be approved and determined, not less than fourteen shall be the quorum, whereof nine shall be ministers; and the said committee are appointed to have their general meetings at Edinburgh, the first lawful day after the adjournment of each of the four stated diets of the Commission of the General Assembly, within the Assembly Aisle, at ten o'clock forenoon, except that day shall fall to be Saturday, and then the meeting shall be upon Monday next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find most needful and convenient: And they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly, and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee of directors, and to take their advice and assistance; and also to correspond with the Synods and Presbyteries concerned. They are likewise instructed and empowered, as they shall see cause, to apply to the government, or any magistrate, for assistance and support in carrying on the design of the commission now given to them. And the General Assembly do appoint Mr William Robertson, Advocate, Procurator for the Church, and receiver of the foresaid royal bounty, to pay out the same as he shall be directed and ordered by the foresaid committee, and according to their rules. And the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the

distribution of the royal bounty, and lay the same before the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, or the Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable. And it is agreed, that no person once employed and inserted in the scheme shall be struck out thereof for that year, but by the quorum of at least fourteen, whereof nine to be ministers; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of them on the scheme, it shall not be determined the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but it shall lie on the table till another meeting; and, in the meantime, the person complained of, and the Presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted of such complaint, and those concerned be required to send to the said committee a just account of the matter against the next meeting. And it is further appointed, that after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the royal bounty is settled, in manner above directed, and notice thereof given by letters to the Presbyteries concerned, such Presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answer to these letters at farthest with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not done sooner; and that the committee, at their first meeting after the General Assembly, shall endeavour to complete the next year's scheme themselves; and if they cannot complete it, they shall name a sub-committee of their number for that purpose, who are to lay their draught thereof before a subsequent meeting, which is appointed to meet as soon after the rising of the Assembly as possible. And empowered the committee, at their first meeting, to reject any petition for a new station, in case they shall find sufficient objections against it; and that the said committee, in making up the scheme of missionaries, &c., do not exceed the sum in the grant.

VI.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1782.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1782.—Act Declaratory concerning Moderation of Calls.

Upon a motion, That the resolution of Assembly respecting the moderation of calls should, for the satisfaction of all concerned, be converted into a declaratory Act, and printed amongst the Acts of Assembly, the General Assembly agreed thereto, without a vote; and in terms of said resolution, did, and hereby do, declare, that the moderation of a call, in the settlement of ministers, is agreeable to the immemorial and constitutional practice of this Church, and ought to be continued. *

VIII.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1782.—Act respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

The General Assembly, having taken into their serious consideration the danger that ariseth to this Church, and to the souls of people, by licensing any to preach the Gospel who are not duly qualified, according to the rules laid down in the Holy Scriptures; and considering that the several Acts made by former Assemblies on this subject lie so scattered, in many separate articles, at great distances from one another, that the directions therein given were in danger of being overlooked by Presbyteries, did collect what appeared to them most material in former Acts, and transmit the same, in form of an overture, to Presbyteries; and now finding, by report from their Committee for Overtures, that a majority of Presbyteries

* The other motion made on this occasion, and which was lost, was to the following effect:—"That the Assembly declare that the moderation of a call is agreeable to the immemorial practice of this Church; but not having sufficient evidence laid before them that any Presbyteries have departed so far from established usage, as to lay aside the moderation of a call in the settlement of a minister, dismiss these overtures as at this time unnecessary."—*Ed. 1843.*

have agreed to turn the same into a standing law of the Church, the General Assembly, after reasoning, resolved, by a very great majority, to turn the said overture into a standing law of the Church, and accordingly did, and hereby do, enact and ordain, that the following regulations shall be strictly observed in all time coming :—

1mo, That no Presbytery admit any person to probationary trials but such as are found to be of good report, of sufficient learning, of sound principles, of a pious, sober, grave, and prudent behaviour, and of a peaceable disposition, and well affected to the government in Church and State, and of whom they have sufficient ground to conceive that they shall be useful and edifying in the Church, and that careful inquiry be made thereanent ; and that, without respect of persons, such as are esteemed to be light and vain in their behaviour, proud, worldly-minded, or unacquainted with the power of practical godliness, be kept back from that sacred work.

2do, That none be admitted to trials in order to be licensed, but such as have produced to the Professor of Divinity, at the time of their being enrolled, either a diploma of Master of Arts, or a certificate, bearing that they have gone through a full course of philosophy at the College, and who have either given close attendance on the Divinity Hall for the space of four years, from the time of their names being entered upon the roll of the Presbytery as students of divinity ; or, if their circumstances did not permit them to give close attendance on the Hall, have continued to prosecute the study of divinity for six years, and have in that time delivered the usual number of discourses. Provided also, that at the time of their being admitted to trials they are twenty-one years of age complete.

3tio, The General Assembly, considering the reproach that may be brought on religion in general, and particularly on this Church, by the unworthy behaviour of such as follow the study of divinity, do earnestly recommend to the Presbyteries, Professors of Divinity, and ministers and members of this Church, to keep a watchful eye on such students during the terms above specified. And further, that when any student comes to attend the Professor of Divinity in any university, he shall produce to the professor, and to the minister of the parish where he is to reside during the time of his attendance on the profession, a testimonial from the minister of the parish from whence he comes ; and when he leaves the profession, he shall carry back testimonials, from the minister of the parish, of his grave and suitable behaviour becoming his character ; and from the professor, testimonials certifying the same, and also his regular attendance on the diets of the profession, and the time he has attended. And when any Professor of Divinity shall think fit to recommend a student, in order to probationary trials, his testimonials shall certify his proficiency in his studies and his moral character.

4to, The General Assembly do appoint and ordain, that no Presbytery admit any student to probationary trials, except such as have resided within their bounds for the space of six months, or do produce to them sufficient testimonials from the Presbyteries in whose bounds they have lived, or for the most part resided, expressing that it is the desire of these Presbyteries that these students should be entered upon trials. And such students as come from abroad shall produce satisfying testimonials from the professors under whom they studied ; and the time of their being abroad shall be accounted a part of the six years ; but none of these students shall be entered upon trials for the space of half a year after they come to Scotland.

5to, When any student is proposed to a Presbytery, in order to be taken on trials, the proposal shall lie on the table till the next ordinary meeting, before they give judgment therein, that diligent inquiry may be made, and information had, concerning the said student's qualifications and behaviour ; and the Presbytery shall be alone when the proposal is made and judged on. And the General Assembly enjoins all students to take all opportunities of cultivating an acquaintance with the ministers of the Presbytery where they reside, and where they are to pass trials.

6to, When the Presbytery, after serious inquiry and mature deliberation, shall agree to take the proposed candidate on trials, they shall examine him strictly and privately, in order to enable them to judge whether he possesses the piety, knowledge, abilities, and other qualifications necessary for a preacher of the Gospel.

7mo, The General Assembly appoints the same method to be observed, and trials

to be taken in all the above particulars, before any Presbytery recommend a student to pass trials in another Presbytery.

8vo, The General Assembly do also appoint and ordain, that the terms above specified being expired, and testimonials produced, and previous trials taken, in manner above directed, the Presbytery, before they prescribe any part of public trials, shall write letters to all the Presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod, acquainting them with their design, two months at least before sitting of the Synod; and at the next meeting of the Synod they shall also acquaint the Synod thereof, and obtain their special judgment and advice in that particular. And, that the members of the said Presbytery and Synod may be ripely advised thereanent, the General Assembly appoints the said letters to be duly and carefully transmitted to the several Presbyteries, and that intimation thereof be publicly made at the first diet of the Synod, to lie on the table till the second, or some subsequent diet, and then particular inquiry be made whether any person have anything to object against the student's being entered on trials for preaching the Gospel. Provided always, that in any part of this Church when Synods meet but once a-year, a student may be proposed to the Synod half a year sooner than would have been competent if the Synod had met twice a-year.

9no, The General Assembly recommends to Presbyteries that, before any student is entered on trials, the engagements required by Act 10th of Assembly, 1711, of such as are to be licensed, be read to them; and that the Presbytery take promise of them, that they will subscribe to and particularly observe the same, in case the Presbytery see cause to license them; and that this promise be recorded in their books.

10mo, The General Assembly appoints the public probationary trials of students, who are to be licensed probationers, to be the following, viz.:—1. The catechetic trials to be renewed in presence of the Presbytery, and that previously to all the other parts of public trials; 2. A homily in English on a Scripture text; 3. An exegesis in Latin on a controverted head of divinity, and sustaining a thesis and dispute thereon; 4. An exercise and addition; 5. A lecture on a large portion of Scripture; 6. A popular sermon on a particular text of Scripture; 7. A trial on chronology and Church History, especially the history of our own Church; *Lastly*, A trial on their knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages.

11mo, The General Assembly, judging it fit that the same method shall be followed in all Presbyteries, as to questions put to and engagements taken of probationers when licensed; and that the said probationers should not only give sufficient proof of their piety, literature, and other good qualifications for the sacred ministry, but also come under the strictest engagements to adhere to and maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church,—do, therefore, enact and appoint, that the questions appointed by Act 10th, 1711, be put to all such as pass trials; and likewise that they shall subscribe the Formula set down in the said Act, before they be licensed to preach the Gospel. And the General Assembly strictly prohibits the licensing any person whatsoever, who shall not give explicit and satisfying answers to these questions, and subscribe the said Formula; and discharge any Presbytery to make use of any other questions or Formula.

12mo, When any Presbytery, who, with the Synod's allowance, has entered, or who is about to enter, a student on trials, shall receive a letter from any Presbytery, showing their dissatisfaction with that student, and giving relevant grounds for the same, which they offer to verify to the Presbytery at their next meeting, the said student shall not be licensed until the matter be tried. And the General Assembly appoints Presbyteries who shall receive such letters anent students from any other Presbytery, to write a return with the first post after their meeting, acquainting them of their next diet.

13mo, That the Acts concerning Simony be read before licensing any probationer.

14mo, For the better observation of this Act, it is particularly recommended to the Professors of Divinity to communicate the contents thereof to their students, in a public meeting annually, at such time in the month of January as to them seems most convenient. And all Presbyteries and Synods are peremptorily appointed to

observe the same in all its parts. And it is strictly enjoined, that visitors of Presbytery-books make strict inquiry how the several Presbyteries do observe the same.

IX.

Sess. 7, May 30, 1782.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1782.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May next, in the year 1783.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

GEORGE WISHART, }
JOHN DRYSDALE, } *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

The following Regulations, in regard to Marriages, appear in the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings of 1782.—*Ed.* 1843.

The report of the committee appointed by last General Assembly, to consider regulations proposed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh for correcting some abuses complained of in the solemnization of marriages, given in and read. The Assembly approved of the report, and, agreeably thereto, did, and hereby do, enjoin a strict observance of said regulations.

REGULATIONS.

1mo, That no marriage shall be celebrated, unless when there shall be produced to the minister a certificate, subscribed by the precentor or session-clerk, that the banns have been proclaimed; and every certificate must bear not only the names, but designations and places of abode, of the several parties.

2do, When the parties reside in two different parishes, there must be produced a certificate from the precentor or session-clerk of each parish, that the banns have been proclaimed in each parish church.

3tio, Until persons have resided for the space of six weeks complete within a parish, they are not to be considered as residents, nor entitled to proclamation in the church thereof, but must be proclaimed in the church of the parish where their ordinary residence was previous to their proposed marriage.

4to, No precentor or session-clerk shall grant a certificate of proclamation in behalf of any parties, unless he can attest upon proper evidence, for which he shall be answerable, that they have resided for the space of six weeks within the parish; that they are unmarried persons, and not within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity.

5to, That certificates of proclamation shall be in the following terms:—

FORM I.—*For two Parties residing in one Parish.*

That [here insert his name, designation, and place of abode,] and _____, daughter of _____, have resided in this parish for six weeks preceding the commencement of the proclamation; that they are unmarried persons, and not within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity, has been certified to me, upon satisfying evidence, for which I shall be answerable; and that the above parties have been proclaimed in order to marriage, and no objections offered, is attested by _____.

FORM II.—*Where one of the Parties only reside in the Parish.*

That [here insert the bridegroom's name, designation, and place of abode,] has resided within this parish for the space of six weeks preceding the date hereof; and that he is an unmarried person, has been certified to me, upon satisfying evidence, for which I shall be answerable; and that he and _____, daughter to _____, of the parish of _____, have been regularly proclaimed in order to marriage, and no objection offered, is attested by _____.

N.B.—The above form, *mutatis mutandis*, to be used when the bride only resides in the parish.

6to, The ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh agree, that in future they will celebrate no marriage,

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1783.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1783.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1783.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having the most entire confidence in your duty, loyalty, and affection to our person and government, and being convinced of your unwearied attention to the cause of virtue, piety, and religion, we take this opportunity of assuring you of our fixed purpose and resolution to support the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all its privileges, as by law established.

Convinced that you bring with you the best intentions for promoting the happiness of my government, and the true interest of the church whereof you are members, we have great satisfaction in countenancing your present meeting with our royal authority.

As the preventing the growth of Popery, so repugnant to the constitution of my kingdoms, and the suppressing all vice and immorality, so destructive to Christianity, are objects which will distinguish your zeal in the advancement of true religion, and in all which you will always meet with my steady concurrence, so the avoiding all unnecessary debates and contentions amongst yourselves will be equal proofs of, what we have hitherto experienced, your great prudence, wisdom, and moderation.

As you cannot but be highly sensible of the benefits which will arise from the inestimable blessings of peace, we make no doubt but you will think that an humble gratitude is due to Almighty God for these and other mercies which his Divine Providence has lately vouchsafed to us.

We are persuaded that you will conscientiously discharge your duties to the people committed to your care, by infusing such principles into their minds as their holy religion dictates, and which are the best adapted to the security of our happy constitution, and their and our most valuable interests, both here and hereafter.

We have appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied of his loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service, and of his particular affection for the

except when the preceding regulations are strictly complied with ; and the Presbytery enacts and ordains accordingly.

The Presbytery also appoints a copy of these regulations to be sent to all the ministers of the communion of the Church of Scotland, whose ordinary residence is within their bounds, with a letter from their clerk, requiring that they likewise shall comply with these regulations.

The Presbytery farther appoints a copy of them to be transmitted by their clerk to every kirk-session within their bounds, in order to their being inserted in the session-books ; and the several kirk-sessions are hereby ordained to see them strictly carried into execution ; and as irregularities have been chiefly complained of in the city of Edinburgh and suburbs thereof, the ministers of Edinburgh, and of the parishes immediately adjacent, are enjoined to be particularly attentive that their respective session-clerks do, in all respects, comply with the preceding regulations.

And, *lastly*, the Presbytery ordains a copy of these regulations to be inserted in the several Edinburgh newspapers, for the information of the public.

Church of Scotland, so that our choice of him cannot but be agreeable to you ; and we trust that this meeting will be concluded with the same unanimity and brotherly affection which have distinguished your former Assemblies. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 5th day of May 1783, in the 23d year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

NORTH.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1783.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter to this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the respect and gratitude due to this renewed proof of your royal favour.

Your Majesty's confidence in our loyalty to the best of Sovereigns, and in our attachment to the interests of religion, we feel as a most pleasing recompence of our past conduct ; and your royal assurance that it is your fixed purpose and resolution to support this Church in all its privileges, we consider as a most powerful incitement to persevere in fulfilling your Majesty's desire.

May it please your Majesty to accept our most affectionate gratitude for this fresh proof of your goodness, in countenancing our present meeting with your royal authority.

To prevent the growth of Popery, at once so repugnant to the constitution of these kingdoms, and to the holy and beneficent spirit of the Gospel, is an object worthy of our constant zeal ; and to this, together with the suppressing of all vice and immorality, we resolve, in the strength of God, to exert our strenuous endeavours, animated to so good a work by the declaration of your Majesty's steady concurrence. In this honourable employment, and in avoiding all unnecessary debates and contentions amongst ourselves, permit us to hope, that your Majesty's experience of the prudence, wisdom, and moderation, of former Assemblies, will be received as a pledge of our firm purpose to cultivate the same spirit in our present meeting.

We beg leave to return our humble thanks to your Majesty for your persevering attention to the increase of Christian knowledge, and the interests of the Reformation in the remote parts of Scotland. Your royal donation for this purpose it shall be our endeavour to apply in such a manner as may best promote the generous and pious intention with which it is bestowed.

Your Majesty's well-known affection to your people teacheth us to repose an entire confidence in the wisdom of those counsels that have induced your Majesty to restore to these kingdoms the blessings of peace ; for which, and for all the other mercies of a gracious Providence, we desire to express our thankfulness to Almighty God, and to stir up a like spirit in the people committed to our care.

The inviolable attachment of his noble ancestors to the civil and religious liberties of their country, and in particular to the Church of Scotland, his own exemplary regard to religion, and warm affection to this Church, together with his many other amiable qualities and Christian virtues, make your Majesty's choice of the Earl of Leven, to represent your royal person in this Assembly, most acceptable to us.

That the King of kings may establish your Majesty's throne in righteousness and mercy ; that he may preserve you long to reign over a free, grateful, and affectionate people ; that all your councils may be wise and prosperous ; that he may bless your Majesty in your person and in your family ; and that when at length you shall re-

linquish an earthly crown, you may receive that which fadeth not away, through Jesus Christ our Lord, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

HENRY GRIEVE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1783.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on the Peace.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to address your Majesty, with hearts full of affection and attachment, and with the most grateful sense of your Majesty's paternal goodness, in having pursued measures, by which, under God, we now enjoy the inestimable blessing of peace; a blessing at all times desirable, but especially at a time when this country, pressed by a powerful confederacy of its inveterate enemies, united with its former subjects and old allies, was also afflicted with an uncommon degree of scarcity of provisions,

At the end of a war less successful than former wars have been, we consider ourselves as specially called upon, by the Providence of God, to exert ourselves in the discharge of our duty, and to cultivate in the minds of the people committed to our care those sentiments of religion and virtue, which form the hearts of men to that "righteousness which exalteth a nation."

We are happy in being able to assure your Majesty of the unaltered affection of the people of this part of the United Kingdom to your Majesty's person and government, and of their zeal for your illustrious family, under whose mild administration they have so long enjoyed the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

That Almighty God, the King of kings, and the Ruler of all the nations of men, may continually have your Majesty under his Divine protection; that he may bless you in your person and in your family; that he may reward your Majesty's private virtues with domestic felicity, and your mild government with the love and fidelity of your subjects; that your reign may be long, happy, and prosperous; and that at last your Majesty may, through Jesus Christ our Lord, receive a crown of glory, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

HENRY GRIEVE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1783.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The powers and instructions given to this Commission are the same as last year, and there is very little alteration at any subsequent period.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1783.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 29, 1783.—Resolution of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland relating to a Fast.

There were transmitted to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, overtures from the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, and from the Synod of Moray, proposing, that, upon account of the present scarcity, and other obvious reasons, a day should be set apart for fasting and prayer, to be observed as a national fast through Scotland; which being read, the following motion was made, viz.:—The General Assembly, taking into their serious consideration the late visitation of Divine Providence, in afflicting these kingdoms with an uncommon scarcity of provisions, and also the seasonable relief which the people of Scotland have lately received by the importation of large quantities of grain, the favourable seed-time, and the comfortable prospect of an early harvest, which God, in his great goodness, hath been pleased to afford us, do earnestly exhort and beseech the people of this land to lift up their souls with contrition and thankfulness to Almighty God, who, tempering his chastisements and his mercies together, calleth us to return to himself. And, further, the General Assembly being informed that a day of fasting has already been appointed by some Synods and Presbyteries, and observed within their bounds; and judging it, upon this account, inexpedient to appoint a national fast, do hereby recommend to the several Presbyteries, and to all the ministers of this Church, to exert their utmost endeavours in imprinting upon the minds of the people committed to their charge a sense of their dependence upon our Father which is in heaven, who giveth us our daily bread; and to take such methods as to them shall appear most effectually to minister to edification, in order to fix the attention of all ranks upon those lessons of contrition, of thankfulness, and of liberality, which the various dispensations of Divine Providence are, at this time especially, teaching us. The General Assembly having considered the above motion, approved thereof, and enacted accordingly, and appointed this resolution to be printed separately, and transmitted to Presbyteries as soon as possible.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1783.—Act and Resolution concerning Lawyers and Agents who are Members of the Court, appearing as Procurators or Agents, to plead or agent in Causes at the Bar of the General Assembly or Commission.

The General Assembly, considering that they have a title to the assistance of their members as judges in all causes brought before them, they being expressly commissioned by their constituents to consult, vote, and determine, in all matters that shall come before the Assembly; as also, that those who are appointed members of the Commission of the General Assembly are obliged, by that appointment, to concur in cognoscing and determining in every matter referred to them, do therefore resolve, enact, and declare, that in time coming, none who are constituent members of the Court shall act as counsel or procurators, agents or solicitors, in any causes which come before the Assemblies, or Commissions thereof.

IX.

Sess. 7, May 29, 1783.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1783.—Forms of Commissions, &c.

(This Act is a reprint of Act 4, 1768, entitled, "Act of the Assembly anent the Form of Commissions.")—*Ed. 1843.*

XL

Sess. ult., June 2, 1783.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May, in the year 1784.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN DRYSDALE, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1784.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1784.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1784.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1784.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1784.—The General Assembly's Address to his Majesty on occasion of the Birth of a Princess.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met together in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave, with all humility and respect, to approach your Majesty's throne, and with that affection which we owe to our gracious Sovereign, to assure your Majesty of our sincere and inviolable attachment to your royal person, family, and government.

Sensible of the many inestimable blessings which these kingdoms, and this Church in particular, derive from the beneficent reign of a Prince who is so justly esteemed as the affectionate father of his people, we feel ourselves deeply interested in every event which is conducive to the prosperity and happiness of your Majesty's family.

While we rejoice in such events, as contributing to your Majesty's domestic felicity, we are at the same time convinced that they afford additional security to those privileges, both sacred and civil, which this nation have had the happiness to enjoy under the auspicious government of your Majesty, and of your illustrious ancestors.

Animated by these sentiments, we do, with the most cordial satisfaction, and with the most devout gratitude to Almighty God, the sovereign Disposer of all events, congratulate your Majesty, that, since the last meeting of the General Assembly, God, in his kind Providence, hath been pleased to add to your Majesty's family by the birth of another Princess, and to gratify the ardent wishes of all your Majesty's loyal subjects, by the happy recovery of your Royal Consort, our most gracious Queen, from her late indisposition.

That God may be graciously pleased to preserve your Majesty's most valuable life for a blessing to your kingdom and people;—that he may take under his merciful protection our most gracious Queen, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all your royal family;—that the descendants of your Majesty's illustrious house may sit on the British throne, and be eminent protectors of the liberties of all your Majesty's dominions to the latest posterity; and that your Majesty, after a long, a glorious, and a happy reign over a free and faithful people, may at last, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, be rewarded with a crown of immortal glory in the kingdom of heaven, are, and ever shall be, the most fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN DRYSDALE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1784.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1784.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—(This year the following clause is, for the first time, omitted in the instructions given to the Commission, viz.:—"And the Assembly doth further empower and direct the said Commission to make due application to the King and Parliament for redress of the grievance of patronage, in case a favourable opportunity for so doing shall occur during the subsistence of this Commission."—*Ed. 1843.**)

* At a preceding diet there was a discussion on certain Overtures relative to the repeal of the law of Patronage. The following is the notice which appears on this subject in the *Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings*:—"May 25, 1784.—Agreeable to yesterday's resolution, the Assembly proceeded to consider the overtures from the Synods of Glasgow and Ayr, and Perth and Stirling, relating to the repeal of the law of Patronage, &c.; and after reasoning at great length, two motions were made, and seconded, 1st, To reject these overtures as inexpedient, ill-founded, and dangerous to the peace and welfare of this Church; 2d, That whereas former Assemblies of the Church have, in strong terms, declared the law of Patronage to be a grievance; and the annual instructions to the Commission of every Assembly bear, that the Commission are to embrace every favourable opportunity that may occur to obtain relief from this grievance; and whereas, in many parts of Scotland, the rigorous exercise of this law has been felt, and complained of as productive of most unhappy consequences both to Church and State; from all which, some alteration of the present law appears to be requisite; yet, as different sentiments are entertained upon this subject, therefore, with a view that the minds of those chiefly interested may be known, that the General Assembly do recommend the consideration of this matter to Presbyteries, ordaining them to consult, in the most prudent and respectful manner, with the noblemen and gentlemen of landed property, with the magistrates and town councils of burghs within their bounds, persons chiefly concerned upon the points specified in this motion; and after deliberation, transmit the opinions they have received to the next General Assembly, that it may be known what the sentiments of the gentlemen of landed interest, and their

VII.

*Sess. 9, May 29, 1784.—Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants.**

The General Assembly, having considered the report of their Committee, appointed to take under their consideration the reference from the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, concerning ordained assistants, are of opinion, that both the minister of the parish and his ordained assistant and successor, ought to be constituent members of the Kirk-session; that in the Presbytery and Synod, either of them who is present may deliberate and vote; that if both are present, these privileges belong to the minister of the parish only, and that either of them is capable of being elected a member of the General Assembly, but not both of them in one year. And agreed to enact the same as an interim act, and to transmit it as an overture for the consideration of Presbyteries.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1784.—Resolution concerning Marriages.

The General Assembly do resolve that no session-clerk in this Church proclaim any persons in order to marriage, until he give intimation to the minister of the parish in a writing, dated and subscribed by him, of the names, designations, and places of residence of the parties to be proclaimed, and obtain the said minister's leave to make the said proclamation; with certification, that if any certificate of proclamation of banns is given without observing the above order, the said certificate shall be held as a false certificate, and the session-clerk who subscribes it shall be censured accordingly; and in case of a vacancy, the above intimation is to be made to two of the elders of the parish; and that this resolution be printed in the Acts of this Assembly; and appointed the clerks to transmit copies of this their resolution to the several Presbyteries, to be by them transmitted to the sessions of the parishes within their bounds, in order to its being observed.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1784.—Recommendation respecting Ordination to the Office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge.

The Committee appointed to consider the overture respecting ordination to the office of a minister, without relation to a particular charge, reported as follows:—Having carefully considered the said overture, find that matter attended with so many difficulties, that they are not ripe to propose to the General Assembly any precise rules concerning it, fit for being enacted into standing laws; and can only move, that the Assembly should, in the meantime, recommend it to Presbyteries to be cautious in granting ordination to such persons as have neither a fixed charge, nor a reasonable prospect of such provision as may enable them to support the ministerial character; and that no Presbytery grant ordination to any person who has a near prospect of removing from the bounds of that Presbytery into another, from whom he may, in

constituents, are; that thus the Assembly may be enabled to regulate their procedure, upon a subject so interesting to the public at large, and to this Church in particular, &c. It was proposed, that one state of the vote be 'Reject,' or 'Not;' another state also was proposed, viz. 'Reject,' or 'Consult.' After reasoning on the state of the vote, the Assembly agreed, that the state of the vote be, 'Reject,' or 'Not,' it being understood, that if it carries Reject, the overtures be rejected in terms of the first motion; against which state of the vote Mr Bryce Johnston protested. The question being then put, it carried by a great majority, 'Reject.' The Assembly, therefore, rejected these overtures as inexpedient, ill-founded, and dangerous to the peace and welfare of this Church, against which several members dissented." —*Ed. 1843.*

* This overture was transmitted for four successive years, but does not appear to have passed.—*Ed. 1843.*

due time, receive ordination, if it shall by them be found necessary or proper. Which being considered by the General Assembly, they approved thereof, and do recommend accordingly, and order this recommendation to be printed in the Acts of this Assembly.

X.

*Sess. ult., May 31, 1784.—A new Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.**

Whereas great irregularities have crept into the Church with respect to the ordination of elders, the General Assembly overtures, that it be enacted, that no minister should set apart any person to the office of elder in his congregation who has not a fixed residence in the parish, or who is not an heritor in the parish; it being the true meaning and intent of this overture, to prevent elders being ordained in congregations who are in nowise connected with them; and it being understood that any city or town where there are more congregations than one shall be held as one parish, so far as respects the purpose of this overture.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1784.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May, in the year 1785.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JAMES MACKNIGHT, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1785.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1785.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1785.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1785.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

* This overture was first transmitted in 1778, and it continued to be sent down to Presbyteries till 1791, after which there is no further notice of it.—*Ed.* 1843.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1785.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

*Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.**

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants.
(See Act 7th, 1784.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—Recommendation respecting Ordination to the Office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge.

(See Act 9th, 1784.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—A new Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—Overture from the Synod of Fife, respecting the second paragraph of the Act passed in 1782, concerning the Licensing of Probationers, ordered by the Assembly to be transmitted.†

X.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1785.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May, in the year 1786.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN DRYSDALE, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

* The Assembly had this year under consideration an Overture from the Synod of Perth and Stirling, anent the restoring the clause in the instructions to the Commission, which was last year ordered to be struck out. The Assembly agreed, without a vote, to dismiss the Overture.—*Ed.* 1843.

† It does not appear that this particular Overture was passed.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1786.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1786.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1786.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1786.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

*Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants.
(Re-transmitted.)*

VII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—Recommendation respecting Ordination to the Office of a Minister, without relation to a particular Charge.

(See Act 9th, 1784.)

VIII.

*Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)*

IX.

*Sess. 9, May 27, 1786.—The Assembly agreed to transmit the following Overture to Presbyteries.**

That such an indulgence as shall seem meet to the Assembly, may be granted to the students having the Gaelic language, in the Northern and Western Isles.

X.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1786.—Act appointing the Dist of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May, in the year 1787.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
JOHN DRYSDALE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1787.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1787.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1787.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1787.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

* This Overture was dismissed in the following year.—*Ed. 1843.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Interim Act and Overture concerning Ordained Assistants, re-transmitted and re-enacted.

(See Act 7th, 1784.)

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

*Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Overture anent Certificates of the Ordination of Elders to the General Assembly.**

That, before any Presbytery attest the Commission of a person to represent them, or any burgh within their bounds, for the first time, as an elder in the National Assembly of this Church, there be laid before them a declaration or attestation, by some minister of this Church, of his having been ordained an elder.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1787.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.†

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1787.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May, in the year 1788.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN DRYSDALE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

* No further notice seems to be taken of this Overture.—*Ed.* 1843.

† The attention of the Assembly having been again directed to this subject, an Overture was this year sent down to Presbyteries. Having undergone certain amendments, it was passed into an Interim Act in 1803, and ultimately into a Standing Law in 1813.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1788.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 22, 1788.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced,
and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 22, 1788.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 24, 1788.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 7, May 29, 1788.—An Address by the General Assembly to his Majesty, on the
proposed Commemoration of the glorious Revolution.*

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the National Assembly, beg leave to approach your throne with hearts full of loyalty and affection.

We should be unworthy of the station we hold, if we did not gladly embrace this first opportunity of congratulating your Majesty on the happy effects of your wise and vigorous measures during the course of last year, when, under the direction of Divine Providence, you delivered this nation from the danger of being involved in war, by preserving the independence, and re-establishing the legal government of a neighbouring Protestant State, and happily revived with it an ancient and close alliance, which, for so long a period, had been salutary to your Majesty's kingdoms.

While we contemplate the present posture of our public affairs in general, and our friendly league with the Republic of the United Provinces in particular, with thankfulness to Heaven, and the warmest approbation of your Majesty's conduct, we feel ourselves called upon to commemorate that glorious event, the Revolution of 1688, which delivered us from Popery and arbitrary power, and fixed that constitution of government which is the wonder and envy of the world, not more for civil and political liberty, than for justice and humanity—which has hitherto had force sufficient to repair its internal disorders, as well as to repel external violence, and which the experience of a century now entitles us to hope may be as lasting as it is excellent—an event, the more endeared to our remembrance, as from thence was derived the settlement of the crown of Britain on your Majesty's illustrious family, who have hitherto swayed the sceptre with so much wisdom and equity; and with such a sacred regard to the rights of the nation, as to secure the confidence and affection

of their subjects, and to leave no doubt on our minds that the **stability** of the constitution, and the prosperity of the people, will ever continue to be the great object of their government.

With such deep impressions of the felicity of that great era, to which, besides all other advantages, we owe the restoration and security of our ecclesiastical establishment, your Majesty may be assured that we shall neglect no proper opportunity of making the people under our care duly sensible of the distinguished blessings they enjoy under Divine Providence, and of exciting in their minds sentiments of affection and loyalty to your Majesty, the faithful guardian of all our liberties.

That your Majesty may reign long over a free and happy people; that the Almighty may guard your sacred person from every danger, and bestow on you every blessing; that he may bless and preserve the Queen, Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that a race of kings of your illustrious line may, to the latest posterity, sit on the throne of these realms, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ARCHIBALD DAVIDSON, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1788.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1788.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1788.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1788.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1788.—Act concerning the Attestation of Kirk-Sessions to Commissions from Burghs.

It was overtured to the General Assembly, that, for removing certain difficulties in the mode of attesting commissions from certain burghs, the Assembly should pass an Act to the following purport:—

Whereas, by the 9th Act of Assembly, 1718, and the 4th Act of Assembly, 1720, it is ordained and required, That commissions from royal burghs, to their representatives in the General Assembly, shall be attested by the kirk-sessions of the electing burghs respectively :

The Assembly, considering that in certain of the greater burghs within the bounds of this Church there are several parishes and different kirk-sessions within the royalty; and that, in these cases, there has been hitherto no legal enactment to direct the mode in which the sessional attestations are to be adhibited to commissions from such burghs to their representatives in the General Assembly :

To remove any doubts which may arise in such situations, the Assembly hereby appoints and declares, That the attestation of any one kirk-session within the electing burgh shall be held as competent and sufficient to all the purposes for which sessional attestations are required.

X.

Sess. 7, May 29, 1788.—Act appointing a National Thanksgiving in Commemoration of the Revolution in 1688.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, recollecting, with gratitude to Almighty God, the happy and glorious event, that, in the year 1688, (of which the present year is the secular anniversary,) delivered the nation from civil and religious oppression, set proper bounds to the royal prerogative, secured the liberties and just rights of the people, and confirmed to this National Church all the religious rights and privileges which she now enjoys under the illustrious House of Hanover—and being fully convinced, that the principles of the Revolution settlement are the only foundation on which the security of the throne, and the happiness of the subjects, can be permanently established, They think themselves called upon, by their duty to God and to their country, to embrace every proper opportunity of recalling to the serious and grateful recollection of the people committed to their charge this special interposition of Divine Providence in their favour, of impressing on their minds a lively sense of the value of the civil and religious liberties thereby attained, and of exhorting them, by every constitutional means, to preserve and transmit them inviolate to the latest posterity. And considering that the blessings enjoyed by the people of this free and happy country, in consequence of the Revolution, do far exceed the measure of civil and religious advantages which the Providence of God hath allotted to any other nation : Therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint the fifth day of November this year to be observed within the bounds of this National Church as a day of solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the enjoyment of those inestimable blessings for a century past, and of earnest supplication for their continuance to the latest generations : And the Assembly enjoins all ministers to intimate this Act from their pulpits upon the Lord's Day immediately preceding the said fifth day of November this year, and to accompany the intimation with suitable exhortations.

XI.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1788.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May, in the year 1789.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN DRYSDALE, Cl. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1789.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1789.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1789.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1789.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1789.—An Address by the General Assembly to the King, congratulating his Majesty on his Recovery from Sickness.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in National Assembly, embrace with joy this first opportunity of approaching the throne, with our most dutiful and sincere congratulations upon your Majesty's recovery.

At a time when the inhabitants of the British Empire were rejoicing under your Majesty's mild and auspicious government, in the blessings of peace, and the manifold advantages derived from the rank which Great Britain holds amongst the nations of the earth, it pleased the Almighty, by the alarm which lately filled the hearts of your Majesty's faithful subjects, to teach them how entirely the prosperity of nations depends upon the will of Heaven. The anxiety which they felt during the continuance of your Majesty's illness, and the fervour of their wishes and prayers for your recovery, were the spontaneous tribute of duty and affection to a Sovereign who is endeared to his people, by those amiable virtues of which he is the illustrious pattern, as well as by that sacred regard to the principles of a free constitution, which has uniformly distinguished his reign; and the unanimity and zeal which have marked the public demonstrations of joy, correspond to the sentiments of entire satisfaction and thankfulness, with which a great and happy people, united in affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person and government, receive from Heaven that inestimable gift, by which the Almighty hath graciously vouchsafed to reward the national loyalty.

While we thus presume to speak in the name of the great body of the people of this country who are under our care, with a confidence arising from a perfect knowledge of their sentiments, acquired by a constant intercourse with them in the discharge of our sacred functions, permit us, Most Gracious Sovereign, to assure you

that no class of your Majesty's subjects were more deeply interested in the great event which has diffused such universal joy, than the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland. Entertaining no doubt of a continuance of the royal protection, under the government of a prince who has been the nursing father of the Church, and being assured that our zealous endeavours to promote the interests of religion and virtue will always receive countenance from that piety which ennoble the other graces of your Majesty's character, we number the gracious answer that has been given to our prayers amongst the many mercies which we are accustomed to trace in the history of this favoured land; and we lift our souls in thanksgiving to the God of our fathers, who, by restoring to us a King whom we love and honour as the faithful guardian of our rights, hath afforded us a gracious pledge of their being transmitted unimpaired to latest posterity.

It shall be our constant study to cherish these sentiments of loyalty to your Majesty, and of gratitude to Almighty God, which universally prevail; and the first wish of our hearts will be fulfilled, if a lasting sense of this great national blessing shall revive a spirit of religion, and by disposing the minds of men to learn those lessons of wisdom which it conveys, shall, through the blessing of God, prove instrumental in promoting that righteousness which exalteth a nation.

That your Majesty may live long to be a blessing to your family, to behold the happiness of your people, to enjoy the exalted satisfaction of requiting their affection, and to maintain the glory and prosperity of the British Empire; and that succeeding princes of the House of Brunswick, formed upon your example, may sway the British sceptre with the same justice and moderation, and may receive from their subjects the same homage and love, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE HILL, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1789.—An Address by the General Assembly to the Queen, on the Recovery of his Majesty.

May it please your Majesty,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in National Assembly, presume to approach your Majesty with our humble congratulations upon an event most interesting to your happiness, and most joyful to his Majesty's faithful subjects—the recovery of our beloved Sovereign from his late alarming illness.

The most exalted station is not exempted from those pungent distresses, which, in this mixed state, are often occasioned by the most delicate and amiable affections of the human heart. But the distress of your Majesty was alleviated by those consolations which true religion opens to a devout mind in the hour of deep affliction. The God of grace whom you had honoured in the time of prosperity, while he tried the tenderness of your nature, was pleased to support your faith and patience by that strength with which he strengthens the souls of his servants; and the deliverance which he hath wrought for us, hath graciously rewarded that piety which adorns the throne, by giving you the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Your Majesty witnessed, in the solicitude which all ranks expressed during the illness of the King, how truly he reigns in the hearts of his subjects: Your Majesty received, in the sympathy with which a great nation took part in your sorrows, and in the gratitude, respect, and confidence, with which they looked up to your character, the recompence provided for those qualities by which greatness is rendered amiable;

and your Majesty has now the satisfaction of observing, that the demonstrations of joy for that national blessing, by which God hath wiped the tears from your eyes, are mingled with expressions of the most affectionate interest in the happiness of a Queen, whose virtues have united all his Majesty's subjects in her praise.

That your Majesty may long be preserved to be a blessing to the King, to form the minds of your illustrious offspring—to be the pattern of your sex—and the protectress of virtue and religion; that God, in whom alone the families of the earth are blessed, may perpetuate your domestic felicity; that you may taste the most exquisite delight which a mother's heart can know, in beholding the virtue and happiness of your posterity; and that, after enjoying the largest measure of good which can crown the most excellent characters in this world, you may receive, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that crown of life which fadeth not away, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE HILL, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 8, May 29, 1789.—Act anent keeping the Doors of the Assembly-House shut during the time of calling the Roll.

The General Assembly, considering that whereas it is highly indecent and improper for any person to vote in any cause who has not been present at the deliberations thereon, did, and hereby do, unanimously order, that before the roll begin to be called, the doors of the Assembly-House shall be shut, and shall not be opened until the judgment of the Assembly be declared.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1789.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1789.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1789.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1789.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1789.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1790.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by
ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1790.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1790.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1790.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1790.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1790.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1790.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1790.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1790.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1791.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

The following is appended to the printed Acts of 1790, but it does not appear that any proceedings were founded thereon.—*Ed. 1843.*

Sess. 8, May 28, 1790.

PROPOSALS for the MELIORATION of GLEBES, submitted by the General Assembly to the consideration of the Church.

1. That every minister of the Church of Scotland who shall hereafter be admitted and come to the enjoyment of the full benefice of a parish, shall be liable to pay, in the manner after mentioned, to his last predecessor, or his heirs, executors, or assignees, for all the fences, dikes, ditches, or hedges, enclosing and subdividing his glebe; provided always, that such fences, &c., be done according to a plan seen and approved by the Presbytery in whose bounds the glebe lies, and inserted in a separate register kept by them for that purpose, before such fences, &c. were begun.

2. That within one calendar month after a successor shall be admitted and come to the enjoyment of the full benefice of a parish, all the fences, dikes, ditches, and hedges, enclosing and subdividing a glebe, shall be valued according to their worth at that time, by four competent and sworn comprisers; two of whom to be chosen by the successor, and two of them by the last incumbent, or his heirs, &c.; the said four comprisers having power to choose an oversman, if need be, and their sentence shall be final.

3. That the whole sum at which the fences, &c., enclosing and subdividing a glebe, may be valued, shall be paid by the successor, or his heirs, &c., to the last incumbent, or his heirs, &c., in seven equal parts or instalments; i. e. the first seventh part of said sum shall be paid as above, by the successor, &c., at the first term of Whitsunday that shall happen after he hath been entitled to his second year's stipend.

4. That no successor, or his heirs, &c., shall be liable to pay to his predecessor, or his heirs, &c., above the sum of fifty pounds sterling for all the fences, &c., enclosing and subdividing his glebe.

5. If any minister of the Church of Scotland shall die, or be translated to another parish, after he shall have begun, and before he shall have finished the enclosures and subdivisions of his glebe; in either of these cases, the said minister, or his heirs, &c., shall be entitled to payment in manner above mentioned, according to a comprisement made as above, from his successor, &c., for whatever fences, dikes, ditches, or hedges, he shall have made on his glebe during his incumbency, at the sight of the Presbytery, in the manner above mentioned.

6. That the fences, &c., by which the glebe is enclosed and subdivided, shall be maintained, during a vacancy, from the profits of the glebe. Also, that whoever possesses the glebe during a vacancy, shall pay to the last incumbent, or his heirs, &c., one seventh part of the sum at which the fences, &c., are valued at the last incumbent's death, and that annually during their possession, at first Martinmas after separation of the crop from the ground.

7. That if the foregoing propositions are approved by the majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, an application be made to Parliament for enacting the same into a law, and that the expense of carrying

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1791.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1791.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1791.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1791.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1791.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1791.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1791.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.
(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1791.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

the bill through both Houses of Parliament be raised by a contribution of six shillings from each minister of this Church, to be collected by the moderator of each Presbytery or Synod, and remitted within a limited time to the Procurator of the Church, or some banker in Edinburgh.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1791.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1792.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1792.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1792.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1792.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The experience we have had of your loyalty and affection to our person and government, and of your zeal for the encouragement of true religion and virtue, leaves us no doubt of your disposition, on the present occasion, to persevere in promoting the happiness of our reign, and the true interest of the Church of which you are members.

We therefore feel the highest satisfaction in continuing to countenance your meetings with our royal authority, and to assure you of our fixed determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the perfect enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges.

We are persuaded that you will apply yourselves, with temper and moderation, to promote the good ends for which you are assembled, the advancement of religion, and the service of Almighty God; that you will avoid all unnecessary debates and contentions, and that your deliberations will be directed to the means of checking the growth of vice and impiety, of promoting the practice of all Christian duties, and of keeping alive that respect and regard for the clergy, and that deference and subordination to the magistracy, which are essential to the peace and good order of every society, and must always be conducive to the happiness and prosperity of this kingdom.

You will, no doubt, study to impress upon the minds of our subjects a just sense of the many blessings they at present enjoy under the favour of Providence, that, by manifesting a spirit of devotion, a respect for the laws, and an attention to the various duties of our holy religion, they may render themselves worthy of such blessings, and best ensure the future continuance of them.

We have again appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied with his upright and faithful conduct in the execution of that important trust,

and not doubting but he must continue to be acceptable to you from the affection to the Church of Scotland, and the zeal for the interests of religion, which he has manifested on so many former occasions.

We take this opportunity of repeating to you our earnest exhortations, that you will proceed in the business before you with that unanimity, charity, and brotherly love, which truly become such an Assembly, and without which no real dignity or utility can attend your deliberations; and we trust that you will bring this meeting to a happy conclusion. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 7th day of May 1792, in the 32d year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

HENRY DUNDAS.

Addressed thus,—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1792.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The most gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was received with that respect and gratitude which are due for so signal a mark of your royal condescension and favour.

We offer our most sincere and humble acknowledgments for the confidence your Majesty has been pleased to repose in our loyalty and affection to your person and government, and in our zeal for the encouragement of true religion and virtue. We beg leave to assure your Majesty that we come together at present, possessed of the same dispositions and principles which have regulated our conduct on former occasions. While we regard the approbation of our Sovereign as a most agreeable recompence for our past services, we trust that the hope of being again honoured with it, will animate us to a steady perseverance in our endeavours to promote the happiness of your reign, and the true interests of the Church of which we are members.

That your Majesty continues to countenance our meetings with your royal authority, we consider as a most satisfactory proof of your paternal goodness; and we rely, with the most perfect security, on your fixed determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the perfect enjoyment of all her just rights and privileges.

Assembled for the advancement of true religion, and the service of Almighty God, we shall apply ourselves with temper and moderation to promote these good ends. We shall endeavour to avoid all unnecessary debates and contentions, as not more displeasing to your Majesty than dishonourable to ourselves, and inconsistent with the wisdom that is from above; and we shall bear in mind the special obligations we are laid under, to direct all our deliberations to the means of checking the growth of vice and impiety, of promoting the practice of all Christian duties, and of keeping alive among all ranks of men committed to our charge, that respect and regard for the clergy, and that deference and subordination to the magistracy, which are essential to the peace and good order of any society, which must always be conducive to the happiness and prosperity of this kingdom, and which invariably mark the character of the followers of the Prince of Peace.

In our several stations we shall use our best endeavours to impress upon the minds of your Majesty's subjects a just sense of the many important blessings they at present enjoy under the favour of Providence; and we shall strenuously inculcate upon them

that, by manifesting a spirit of devotion, a respect for the laws, and an attention to the various duties of our holy religion, they will most suitably express their gratitude to that God who hath dealt so bountifully with them, and take the most effectual method to ensure a continuance of his blessing and protection.

We rejoice in the renewed expression of your Majesty's zeal for the propagation of the reformed Protestant religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and it shall be our care, by a faithful application of the sum your Majesty hath graciously bestowed, to fulfil the pious and benevolent intentions of the royal donor.

The unfeigned attachment of the Right Honourable the Earl of Leven to your Majesty's sacred person and government, his approved fidelity and uprightness in the execution of the important trust with which he hath formerly been vested, that zealous and affectionate regard to the civil and religious interests of his country by which he and his ancestors have been distinguished, his amiable character in private life, and his good offices to ourselves, render your Majesty's re-appointment of him to represent your royal person in this Assembly entirely acceptable to us; and for this particular testimony of your royal favour towards us, we feel and desire to express most cordial gratitude.

Convinced that unanimity, charity, and brotherly love, truly become our Assembly, and that without them no real dignity or utility can attend our deliberations, we are solicitous to be possessed of those qualities when we proceed in the business more immediately before us; and we shall study so to comply with your Majesty's earnest and most wise exhortations, as to bring our present meeting to a happy conclusion.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may establish your throne in righteousness, and in the hearts of your people;—that he may long preserve your Majesty, the guardian of religion and liberty;—that he may enrich your Royal Consort, our most gracious Queen, with all heavenly blessings;—that His Divine favour may attend his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all your Royal Family;—that your descendants, to the latest posterity, may sway the sceptre over a free, a loyal, and a happy people;—and that when he shall call you hence, full of years and of glory, he may give you a kingdom which cannot be moved, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANDREW HUNTER, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1792.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to his Majesty, upon the Marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of York with the Princess-Royal of Prussia.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly of this National Church, embrace the first opportunity of approaching the throne, with our respectful congratulations upon the marriage of his Royal Highness the Duke of York with the Princess-Royal of Prussia.

We rejoice in every event which contributes to the domestic felicity of the father of his people, and we regard the auspicious union of a British Prince with the daughter of our illustrious Protestant ally as an additional security to the Protestant succession.

That your Majesty may long continue to reign in the hearts of a free and happy people;—that the Almighty may pour down his choicest blessings upon the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of York, and all the branches of the Royal Family;—that Princes of the House of Hanover, formed upon your Majesty's ex-

ample, may, in every succeeding age, sway the British sceptre with the same moderation and renown ; and that, under their protection, the inhabitants of Great Britain may, to latest posterity, derive from that excellent constitution, by which, through the favour of Providence, we are distinguished amongst the nations of the earth, the same full measure of religious and civil liberty which we at present enjoy, and for which we daily bless the God of our fathers, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANDREW HUNTER, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1792.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—The Act this year contains the following additional instructions, viz. :—And if the Commission approve of the report to be made to them by the committee appointed by this Assembly, to consider the proposals for a general augmentation of the parochial stipends, &c., they are hereby specially empowered and instructed to make application to the legislature, for obtaining an Act of Parliament for the purposes therein mentioned.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1792.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 4, May 21, 1792.—Recommendation and Injunction anent the sending up of Synod-Books to the Assembly.

None of the Synod-books, nor the Presbytery-book of Zetland, except the Synod-book of Fife, and the Synod-book of Lothian and Tweeddale, being produced to this Assembly, the General Assembly recommends to the several Synods to be punctual in sending up their books for the future ; enjoins the Synod clerks to attend to this recommendation, as they shall be answerable for their conduct to the Assembly ; and ordains that this recommendation and injunction be inserted among the printed Acts of the Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 25, 1792.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Overture of 1787, with a few corrections and alterations.)

IX.

*Sess. ult., May 28, 1792.—Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes.**

That the Assembly, in all proposed cases of annexation and suppression, do enjoin Presbyteries to communicate to the Synod of the bounds the proposal that is made, that although it does not appear to them proper for the Church to give any opposition, it shall not be competent for them to express their consent to the proposed annexation and suppression, either by a deliverance in their minutes, or at the bar of the Court of Teinds, until they have obtained the consent of the Synod of the bounds; and, further, that when they resolve to give opposition to any proposed annexation or suppression, they shall communicate their resolution, together with the grounds of their opposition, and the directions which they have given thereanent, to the Synod of the bounds.

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1792.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1793.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1793.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1793.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1793.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

* The above Overture was transmitted this and the following year. In 1794 it was again transmitted, and also passed into an Interim Act, but in the Abridgment of the Proceedings of 1795 the following notice appears respecting it:—"It appearing to the Assembly that the object of the Overture and Interim Act concerning the annexation and suppression of parishes is already attained by a law of the Church, contained in Act 5, Assembly, 1740, the Assembly judge it unnecessary to re-transmit the above mentioned Interim Act and Overture, but recommend it to Presbyteries to pay a strict attention to the said Act 5, Assembly, 1740."—*Ed.* 1843.

III.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1793.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1793.—The General Assembly's dutiful Address to his Majesty on the subject of the present War.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, think it our duty, in the present situation of public affairs, to express our zeal for the welfare of our country, and our affectionate regard for a Prince, who is the guardian of liberty, and the father of his people.

We have beheld, with the strongest feelings of disapprobation, the insidious designs and violent attempts of the French nation to overturn the constitutions and disturb the peace of most of the other nations in Europe. We are fully sensible, that, in consequence of the declaration of war by the National Convention of France against Great Britain, and by the acts of hostility in which they have been engaged, your Majesty, with the approbation of Parliament, was necessarily led to take vigorous measures for repressing their ambition, and defeating their unjust enterprises.

Though some of the people under our care were deluded by the dangerous principles which were industriously propagated, we can assure your Majesty that the great body of the members of this National Church continues strongly attached to your Majesty's person and government, and ardently desirous of the success of those measures, which, with the blessing of Providence, may transmit our excellent constitution unimpaired to the latest posterity.

Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to express, by the Lord High Commissioner, the sense which you entertain of the boldness and zeal with which the ministers of the Church of Scotland manifested their loyalty upon a late trying occasion; a mark of your royal approbation which we received with profound respect, and which affords us the most entire satisfaction, because we are conscious that it is not misplaced.

Attached by the genius of Presbyterian government to good order, no less than to freedom, we have employed all our influence in counteracting the tendency of the seditious writings which were assiduously circulated, and in warning the people committed to our care against the busy efforts of designing or deluded men. In the true spirit of those principles which our fathers, in former seasons of danger and alarm, strenuously asserted, we shall continue to cherish in the minds of the people loyalty to our gracious Sovereign, veneration for the British constitution, and obedience to the laws. And having nothing so much at heart as the glory of God, the honour of your Majesty, and the support of your government, we trust, that while we approve ourselves the dutiful servants of the Prince of Peace, we shall enjoy the continuance of your royal protection, and the good opinion of all the true friends of their country.

While we congratulate your Majesty upon the check which, under Divine Providence, has already been given to the alarming progress of our enemies, we offer our earnest supplications that the God of battles may continue to bless your fleets and armies with success, and may bring the present war to a speedy and happy termination. That mutual love and confidence may ever subsist between your Majesty and your subjects; and that a race of Kings of your royal line, lovers of religion, liberty,

and their country, may always sway the sceptre over these lands, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

THOMAS HARDY, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1793.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

(Same as in the years 1784 to 1791.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1793.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1793.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1793.—Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1793.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 15th day of May 1794.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 15, 1794.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 15, 1794.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced,
and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 15, 1794.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The uniform experience which we have had, during so long a course of years, of your unalterable attachment to our person and government, and of your zealous and prudent attention to the important objects of your meeting, has not failed to make the deepest impression upon our mind, and justly calls for our highest commendation of your conduct. At the same time, you may be assured that this so faithful discharge of your duty will ensure to you the continuance of our undiminished confidence and affection. In declaring our firm reliance upon that wisdom and discretion which have at all times so eminently marked your proceedings, we cannot press too earnestly upon your minds the necessity of redoubling your common efforts to check that prevalent spirit of licentious innovation, by which the present times are so unhappily distinguished, and which threaten to fill the whole Christian world with violence and confusion. By so doing, you will contribute the most effectually to promote the great and important ends for which you are assembled, the maintenance of true religion and virtue, the prosperity of your Established Church, and the security of those invaluable blessings which you have derived from our happy constitution. We have again appointed our righty trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven, to represent our royal person in this Assembly, being well satisfied with his upright and faithful conduct in the execution of that important trust, and not doubting but he must continue to be acceptable to you, from the affection to the Church of Scotland, and the zeal for the interests of religion, which he has manifested on so many former occasions. We take this opportunity of repeating to you our earnest exhortations, that you will proceed in the business before you with that unanimity, charity, and brotherly love, which truly become such an Assembly, and without which no real dignity or utility can attend your deliberations. Firmly trusting that the Divine Providence will bless your endeavours, in bringing this meeting to a happy conclusion, we feel the highest satisfaction in continuing to countenance your meetings with our royal authority, and to assure you of our fixed determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the perfect enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 7th day of May 1794, in the thirty-fourth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

HENRY DUNDAS.

*Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and well-beloved, the Moderator,
Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.*

III.

Sess. 3, May 17, 1794.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We received with the utmost respect and gratitude the gracious letter with which your Majesty hath been pleased to honour this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. It affords us the highest satisfaction to be assured that our unalterable attachment to your person and government, and our attention to the important objects of our meeting, have, on former occasions, made so favourable an impression on your royal mind. We regard your Majesty's commendation as a most pleasing recompence for our past services, and a most animating inducement to persevere in that faithful discharge of our duty, which your Majesty has graciously declared will ensure to us the continuance of your undiminished confidence and affection.

Anxious to justify that firm reliance on our wisdom and discretion which your Majesty hath been pleased to express, we feel ourselves powerfully called upon to obey your Majesty's paternal admonition, by redoubling our common efforts to check that prevalent spirit of licentious innovation by which the present times are so unhappily distinguished, and which threaten to fill the whole Christian world with violence and confusion. By so doing, we are sensible that we shall most effectually contribute to promote the important ends for which we are assembled, the maintenance of true religion and virtue, the prosperity of our Established Church, and the security of those invaluable blessings which we have derived from our happy constitution.

The choice which your Majesty has been pleased to make of the Earl of Leven to represent your royal person in this Assembly, we consider as an additional instance of your Majesty's favour. The approved fidelity and loyalty of this noble Lord, that sincere attachment to the Church of Scotland by which he and his ancestors have so long been distinguished, his amiable character in private life, and the happy experience of former Assemblies, render your Majesty's nomination of him most acceptable to us.

We beg leave to offer our humble and grateful acknowledgments to your Majesty for your attention to the propagation of the Protestant religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and it shall be our care, by a proper application of the sum with which your Majesty hath entrusted us for that purpose, to promote the pious design for which it is bestowed.

Permit us to assure your Majesty that we shall endeavour to proceed in the business before us with that unanimity, charity, and brotherly love, which become us, as the servants of the Prince of Peace, and without which, we are convinced, that no real dignity or utility can attend our deliberations. Such conduct, we hope, will induce your Majesty to continue to us that countenance with which you have hitherto been pleased to honour our meetings, and we rely with entire confidence on your gracious determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the perfect enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may direct your Majesty's councils, and prosper the administration of your government;—that He may bless our gracious Queen, his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, and all your Royal Family;—that He may preserve you long to reign in wisdom and felicity over a free, a loyal, and a virtuous people, and bestow on you hereafter that crown of righteousness which fadeth not away, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT ARNOT, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 17, 1794.—The General Assembly's dutiful Address to his Majesty, on the subject of the present War.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach your Majesty with sincere sentiments of attachment to your person and government.

In the interesting situation of the affairs of Europe at the present juncture, we are thankful to Divine Providence for those pledges of security to the British nation which we enjoy in your Majesty's paternal care, and in the wisdom and vigour of your councils.

When the rulers of the people of France avowed their hostility to all existing governments, and, by an unprovoked declaration of war against this country, obliged your Majesty to draw the sword in defence of the constitution, we, your faithful subjects, with full approbation of this necessary exertion of the public force, offered up our prayers to Heaven for the protection of our country, and have since, without ceasing, continued to implore success to your Majesty's arms.

Fully convinced that our religion, our liberty, our laws, and all that is dear to us, as men and as Christians, are now at stake, we consider the war with France as the most important contest in which this nation has ever been engaged. Happy in the experience of those high blessings we have long enjoyed, we look up with gratitude to our Sovereign, when he adopts the most effective measures to repel any force which threatens to endanger or overthrow our unequalled constitution.

Under these impressions, we beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on the success which has attended your arms, and those of your allies in Europe, and on the conquests which have been achieved by your Majesty's forces in the East and West Indies; and we look forward with good hope to such further advantages as may enable your Majesty to bring the war to a termination, which shall ensure safety to Britain, and protection from anarchy to other nations.

We cannot without sorrow reflect, that any instances of disaffection should have occurred among our people, to deserve the just reprehension of the laws. But, from what we know of the general spirit of the country, it affords us the greatest satisfaction to be able to assure your Majesty, that the sound principles of loyalty, and of attachment to the constitution in Church and State, are fixed in the hearts of the great body of your Majesty's subjects in Scotland. These principles it shall be our most zealous care to cherish and to promote.

Our prayers and intercessions are offered up to God for our King and country. May He who rules among the nations give success to the means which are employed for resisting the progress of disorder and the spirit of impiety and anarchy, which has gone forth in a neighbouring country. May the Divine blessing attend your fleets and your armies, and lead them to victory in every quarter. May your Majesty be long preserved to reign over this nation, and may your descendants to latest posterity fill the British throne, and ever prove the faithful guardians of religion, of liberty, of law, and of the constitution. These are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ROBERT ARNOT, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 24, 1794.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—The instructions are the same as last year, with this addition, viz.:—And in the event of any appeal or complaint taken against the judgment of the Presbytery of Stirling, on the call of Mr Robert Knox, preacher of the Gospel, presentee to the united parishes of Larbert and Dunipace, or in any other step of the proceedings in this cause, the Assembly empower their Commission to judge of such appeals and complaints, and to give such orders as they shall see necessary for carrying on the settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church. And the General Assembly refer to their Commission to follow out what is contained in the report of the Committee on the Due Observation of the Lord's day, granting to them full power to that effect.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 24, 1794.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 24, 1794.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

*Sess. 9, May 24, 1794.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Annexation and Suppression of Parishes.**
(See Act 9th, 1792; re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1794.—Act and Resolution respecting the Religious Education of Youth.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into their serious consideration the growth of licentiousness, both in principle and practice, and being fully persuaded that this evil, wherever it prevails, is in a great measure to be ascribed to the neglect of the religious education of youth; and the Assembly being well informed that the ancient and laudable practice of instructing youth in the principles of religion, by means of the Holy Scriptures, and the Catechisms received and acknowledged by this Church, has been much neglected in many parochial and other English and Latin schools, particularly in the cities and towns of this kingdom; wherefore, the General Assembly being resolved, as far as in them lies, to provide a remedy for this evil, did, and hereby do, strictly require and enjoin that all parochial schoolmasters, and other teachers of schools within this Church, shall cause the Holy Bible to

* On the 26th, the Assembly agreed that this Overture should be converted into an Interim Act.—Ed. 1843.

be read, as a regular exercise in their several schools, by the children under their care. The General Assembly do moreover require and enjoin, that the Shorter Catechism agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and approved of by this Church, shall be taught in all parochial and other schools; and that the children be required to commit this Catechism to memory, and by frequent repetition to fix it deep in their minds. And in order that the above regulations may be carried into effect, the General Assembly, in conformity to many preceding Acts of Assembly, enjoin all the ministers of this Church to visit and examine, from time to time, the schools within their respective parishes, and take care that the teachers do their duty in those respects. And for a farther security in matters of such important concern, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, ordain all Presbyteries to make inquiry concerning the obedience given by their several members to this Act; and farther, the General Assembly ordain all the Presbyteries of this Church to appoint presbyterial visitations of the schools within their respective bounds, at least once in every year, and exercise that authority which, by the law of the land, as well as of the Church, is vested in them for obtaining the important end in view. The General Assembly moreover ordains that this Act shall be printed separately; and a copy thereof transmitted to every minister and every parochial schoolmaster within the bounds of this Church. And finally, that every Presbytery shall report their diligence, in compliance with the terms thereof, upon the back of their commission to their representatives in the ensuing General Assembly.

X.

Sess. ult., May 26, 1794.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1795.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1795.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1795.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1795.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

Note.—The "Admonition and Information respecting the Profanation of the Lord's Day," which appears in the original edition of the Acts, 1794, will be printed in the Appendix.—Ed. 1843.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1795.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1795.—Address to his Majesty on the Nuptials of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with her most Serene Highness Caroline Princess of Brunswick.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave humbly to approach the throne, with our warmest congratulations on the marriage of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales with an amiable Princess of the illustrious House of Brunswick,—an House from which has sprung a race of kings, under whose auspicious government our national liberty and prosperity have been secured and increased.

This important event must, at any time, have been interesting to us, as it flatters us with the pleasing hope of having your Majesty's royal line extended down to the latest posterity, and as it contributes to your domestic happiness; but especially, in the present period, have we seen, with the most unfeigned joy, your Majesty's paternal wishes so happily fulfilled by this auspicious union, which, having diffused such universal satisfaction through the whole empire, gives your Majesty at once the amplest proof, that you possess unimpaired the warmest affection of your subjects, and the strongest security that your Royal Family shall ever retain it.

But while we contemplate with pleasure the increased stability of your Majesty's throne, and the internal happiness of your people, we cannot turn our eyes on the present distracted state of Europe without the most anxious solicitude; nor behold the vigorous exertions of this nation under your Majesty's direction, without praying fervently, as servants of the God of peace, that he may be pleased to bless, with full and speedy success, the energy of your Majesty's councils and arms, for the restoration of public tranquillity, entertaining full confidence in your Majesty's wisdom, that no favourable opportunity shall be lost in procuring the blessing of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace.

That Almighty God may ever have your Majesty under his peculiar care; that you may reign long and happily over a free and loyal people; that he may bless our gracious Queen, and all the Royal Family; that he may bless their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, with all domestic felicity, and preserve them in the paths of religion and virtue, and that a race of kings descended from them may sway the sceptre of these lands to the latest ages, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES MEEK, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1795.—Address to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on the event of his Marriage.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General As-

sembly, beg leave, respectfully, to approach your Royal Highness with our warmest congratulations on your marriage with an amiable Princess of the illustrious House of Brunswick.

Zealously attached to our free and happy constitution in Church and State, we most cordially rejoice in an event which, while it brings to your Highness so great an accession of domestic happiness, affords to the British empire an additional security for the continuance of the many and important blessings it has so long enjoyed, under the mild and auspicious government of the august House of Hanover.

That your Royal Highness and your amiable Consort may be adorned with all those virtues which give true dignity and lustre to your exalted station; that Divine Providence may bestow upon you a large portion of prosperity and glory, and bless you with a race of princes to sway the sceptre of these realms over a free, loyal, and happy people, to latest posterity; and that, after a long enjoyment of earthly blessings, you may be received into the mansions of eternal felicity, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, your Royal Highness's most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES MEEK, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1795.—Act enjoining Prayer for Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

The General Assembly, considering that it hath pleased God to bless this nation with an addition to the Royal Family, by the happy marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, do, therefore, enjoin all the ministers of this Church that they pray for her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, as well as for his Majesty King George, his Royal Consort the Queen, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales be named immediately after the Prince.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1795.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The instructions are the same as formerly, omitting the addition of last year.)

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1795.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1795.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1795.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1796.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1796.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1796.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1796.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1796.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1796.—Address on his Majesty's late Preservation.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal, dutiful, and affectionate subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly of this National Church, beg leave to take this earliest opportunity which our annual meeting affords us, of presenting our most sincere and heartfelt congratulations upon your Majesty's late Providential deliverance from the attack made by wicked and daring assassins,—an attack the more peculiarly disgraceful to the times in which we live, in having been made upon your sacred person when in the discharge of one of the most important duties entrusted to your Majesty by the constitution. Impressed, as we have ever been, with the strongest and most unalterable sentiments of respect and attachment to your Majesty's person and government, we have seen, with the deepest concern and astonishment, the views of the seditious and disaffected manifestly displayed in an act of such daring atrocity.

We have, however, observed with the highest satisfaction, that the several branches of the legislature, the constitutional guardians of the public interest, have concurred in the adoption of such laws as, we trust, will, under the influence of Divine Providence, have the effect of ensuring the safety of your Majesty's person, repressing the machinations of seditious and disaffected men, and of securing the true liberty, happiness, and tranquillity of these kingdoms.

That the manifold advantages which we and our forefathers have long enjoyed under that form of government administered by your Majesty and the other Princes of your Illustrious House, may be transmitted entire to the latest posterity, and that

your Majesty may long continue to reign over a free, loyal, and affectionate people, are the most earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WM. GREENFIELD, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1796.—Address to his Majesty on the Birth of a Princess, the Daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met together in the General Assembly, take this first opportunity of congratulating your Majesty on the late increase of the Royal Family, by the birth of a Princess, the daughter of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.

As our sentiments of duty and affection to your Majesty lead us to take part in whatever may add to your domestic felicity, we cannot fail to rejoice in an event which gives farther security to the permanent continuance of the crown of these realms in your Majesty's illustrious family, under whose mild and equitable government our happy constitution has been so much strengthened and confirmed, and our national prosperity so greatly increased.

That Almighty God may bless and long preserve your Majesty to reign over a happy and affectionate people;—that he may bless your Royal Consort the Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, Princess Caroline, and all the Royal Family, and that, after reigning long with increasing felicity, you may at last be rewarded with that crown of glory that fadeth not away, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WM. GREENFIELD, *Moderator*.

VL

Sess. 7, May 26, 1796.—Regulations and Overture respecting the Erection of Chapels of Ease.

(See Act 5th, 1798.)

VII.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1796.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate, commission, and appoint, the Reverend Dr William Greenfield, one of the ministers of the city, and Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator; and from the Presbytery of Dornoch, Mr Walter Ross at Clync, Mr Alexander Sage at Kildonan, ministers; Captain Robert Bruce Aeneas Macleod of Calboll, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tongue, Mr John Thomson at Diurness, Mr William Mackenzie at Tongue, ministers; Mr William Maclean, merchant in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Caithness, Mr William Sutherland at Wick, Mr Patrick Nicolson at Thurso, ministers; Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, Bart., ruling

elder. From the burgh of Wick, Mr James Horne, Writer to the Signet. From the Presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr William Anderson at Evie, Mr James Watson at South Ronaldsay, ministers; Mr Alexander Youngson, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the burgh of Kirkwall, Malcolm Laing, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Cairnston, Mr James Bremner at Walls, Mr John Malcolm at Firth, ministers; Mr Richard Richardson, merchant in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of North Isles, Mr John Anderson at Stronsay and Eday, Mr Walter Traill at Lady Parish, ministers; John Grieve, Esq., one of the Commissioners of Excise, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Zetland, Mr James Sands at Tingwall, Mr David Thomson at Walls, ministers; Professor Andrew Dalzel, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Dr John Erskine, Edinburgh, Dr David Johnston at North Leith, Mr James Robertson at Ratho, Mr William Moodie, Edinburgh, Mr Robert Dickson, South Leith, Mr Archibald Bonar at Cramond, ministers; Lord Meadowbank, Bailie George Spankie, William Simpson, Esq., cashier to the Royal Bank, ruling elders. From the city of Edinburgh, the Right Honourable Sir James Stirling, Bart., Lord Provost of the city, Mr Thomas Hay, Convener of the Trades. From the Presbytery of Linlithgow, Mr Hugh Meiklejohn at Abercorn, Mr Robert Rennie at Borrowstounness, Mr John Sommers at Mid-Calder, Mr John Bell at Carriden, ministers; Mr James Taylor, shipmaster, John Meek of Campfield, Esq., ruling elders. From the burgh of Linlithgow, Robert Blair, Esq., of Avontown, his Majesty's Solicitor-General for Scotland. From the burgh of Queensferry, James Hopkirk, Esq., merchant in Glasgow. From the Presbytery of Biggar, Mr Bernard Halden at Glenholm, Mr John Ritchie at Dunsyre, Mr Robert Anderson at Symington, ministers; John Dickson of Culter, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Peebles, Mr William Welsh at Drummelzier, Mr William Marshall at Manner, ministers; James Montgomery, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dalkeith, Dr Alexander Carlyle at Inveresk, Mr Thomas Maccourty at Pennycuik, Mr Leslie Moodie at Newton, ministers; the Right Honourable the Lord Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Haddington, Mr Hugh Cunningham at Tranent, Mr George Hamilton at Gladsmuir, Mr George Murray at North Berwick, ministers; the Most Honourable George Marquis of Tweeddale, ruling elder. From the burgh of Haddington, Mr William Cunningham, merchant in Haddington. From the burgh of North Berwick, Sir Hew Hamilton Dalrymple, Bart. From the Presbytery of Dunbar, Dr Patrick Carfrae at Dunbar, Mr James Williamson at Whitekirk, ministers; John Anderson, Esq., of Windygoul, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunse, Mr Selby Ord at Longformacus, Mr Alexander Girvan at Langton, ministers; Matthew Sandilands, Esq., Clerk to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chirnside, Mr James Landales at Coldingham, Mr Robert Scott at Coldstream, ministers; George Buchan, Esq., of Kelloe, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kelso, Mr Andrew Bell at Roxburgh, Mr William Blackie at Yetholm, ministers; Sir James Pringle of Stitchell, Bart., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Jedburgh, Mr William Scott at Southdean, Mr John Hunter at Oxnam, Mr James Rutherford at Hownam, ministers; Captain John Rutherford of Mosburnford, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lauder, Mr Laurence Johnston at Earlston, Mr James Baird at Legerwood, ministers; Colonel John Pringle of Georgefield, ruling elder. From the burgh of Lauder, the Right Honourable James Earl of Lauderdale. From the Presbytery of Selkirk, Mr William Campbell at Lilliesleaf, Mr Charles Paton at Ettrick, ministers; Mark Pringle, Esq., of Clifton, ruling elder. From the burgh of Selkirk, Alexander Cunningham, Esq., younger of Hyndhope. From the Presbytery of Annan, Mr James Yorston at Hoddam, Mr Thomas Smith at Cummertrees, ministers; Joseph Norris of Newfield, Esq., ruling elder. From the burgh of Annan, Charles Hope, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Langholm, Mr John Russell at Canonbie, Mr William Brown at Eskdalemuir, ministers; Mr James Robertson, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochmaben, Mr Thomas Henderson at Dryfesdale, Mr William Sibbald at Johnston, Mr William Wightman at Dalton, ministers; William Tait, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the burgh of Lochmaben, Mr William Johnston, writer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Penpont, Mr

William Keyden at Penpont, Mr James Keyden at Keir, ministers; Mr William Carson, merchant in Closeburn, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dumfries, Mr Alexander Scott at Dumfries, Mr William Macmorine at Caerlaverock, Mr Theodore Edgar Keyden at Terreagles, ministers; Thomas Crichton, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Dr John Scott at Twynholm, Dr Robert Mutter at Kirkcudbright, Mr John Johnston at Crossmichael, ministers; James Gordon, younger of Culvenan, Esq., ruling elder. From the burgh of Kirkcudbright, Horatius Cannan, Esq., of Barley. From the burgh of New Galloway, Mr Robert Heron, preacher of the Gospel. From the burgh of Wigton, Mr John Jaffray, writer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Stranraer, Mr Anthony Stewart at Newluce, Mr William Rose at Kirkcolm, ministers; Thomas Adair, Esq., of Genoch, ruling elder. From the burgh of Stranraer, Thomas Smith, Esq., one of the Principal Clerks to the Bills. From the Presbytery of Ayr, Dr William McQuhae at St Quivox, Mr John Shepherd at Muirkirk, Mr Robert Duncan at Dundonald, Mr James Thomson at Girvan, Mr William Ritchie at Tarbolton, ministers; Lord Glenlee, Thomas Kennedy, Esq., of Dunure, ruling elders. From the burgh of Ayr, George Fergusson, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Irvine, Mr Alexander Miller at Kilmaurs, Mr Robert Urquhart at Kilbirnie, Mr Robert Macvey at Beith, ministers; the Honourable Mr Patrick Boyle of Shewalton, ruling elder. From the burgh of Irvine, David Boyle, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Paisley, Mr Walter Young at Erskine, Mr John Monteith, junior, at Neilston, Mr George MacLachlan at Mearns, Mr Stevenson Macgill at Eastwood, ministers; Hugh Jameson, Esq., eldest magistrate of Paisley, Robert Davidson, Esq., Advocate, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Hamilton, Dr James Meek at Cambuslang, Dr Alexander Hutchison at Hamilton, Mr Patrick Macbeth at Glassford, ministers; Professor George Jardine, Glasgow, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lanark, Mr James Fergusson at Pittenain, Mr Joseph Henderson at Wiston, ministers; James Miller, Esq., of Hallhill, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Glasgow, Dr William Taylor at Glasgow, Mr William Dun at Kirkintulloch, Mr David Dow at Cathcart, Mr John Pollock at Govan, ministers; Sir John Stirling of Glorat, Bart., John Corbet, Esq., of Tolcross, ruling elders. From the city of Glasgow, John Dunlop, Esq., of Rosebank, Lord Provost of the city. From the University of Glasgow, Dr Hugh Macleod, Professor of Ecclesiastical History. From the burgh of Rutherglen, James Davidson, Esq., Writer to the Signet. From the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Mr James Graham at Killearn, Dr John Stuart at Luss, Mr John Gillespie at Arrochar, ministers; the Right Honourable Ilay Campbell, Lord President of the Court of Session, ruling elder. From the burgh of Dumbarton, Archibald Campbell, Esq., younger of Succoth. From the Presbytery of Dunoon, Mr Charles Stewart at Strachur, Mr Dugald Macdougall at Lochgoilhead, ministers; John Lamont of Lamont, Esq., ruling elder. From the burgh of Rothesay, William Macleod Bannatyne, Esq., of Kames. From the burgh of Campbeltown, William Campbell, Esq., of Fairfield. From the burgh of Inverary, Humphrey Trafford Campbell, Esq., younger of Ashnish. From the Presbytery of Lorn, Mr Patrick Campbell at Kilmiver, Dr Joseph Macintyre at Glenorchy, ministers; John Campbell, Esq., of Lochend, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Mull, Mr Alexander Campbell at Ardnamurchan, Mr Archibald Maccoll at Tirce, ministers; Allan Macdougall of Hayfield, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunkeld, Mr William Innerarity at Caputh, Mr Alexander Niven at Dunkeld, Mr Colin Macvean at Kenmore, Mr Hugh Macdougall at Killin, ministers; Thomas Elder, Esq., of Forneth, David Stewart, Esq., merchant in Leith, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Perth, Mr John Inglis at Tibbermuir, Mr James Beatson at Dunbarnie, Mr William Aitkin at Scone, Mr David Dow, junior, at Errol, ministers; Archibald Campbell, Esq., younger of Clathick, Mr Alexander Beatson, Writer to the Signet, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Stirling, Mr Robert Moodie at Clackmannan, Mr Robert Knox at Larbert and Dunipace, ministers; Burnet Bruce, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr John Baird at Dunning, Mr William Graham at Fossaway, Mr Andrew Duncan at Auchterarder, ministers; Peter Murray, Esq., younger of Ochertyre, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presby-

tery of Dunblane, Mr Robert Stirling at Dunblane, Mr Patrick Murray at Kilmadock, ministers; Professor William Richardson, Glasgow, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr Archibald Smith at Kinross, Mr Allan Maclean at Dunfermline, Mr Andrew Robertson at Inverkeithing, ministers; Sir Charles Preston of Valleyfield, ruling elder. From the burgh of Culross, George Abercromby, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, Mr George Willis at Leslie, Mr John Thomson at Markinch, Mr George Gib at Wemyss, ministers; Alexander Park of Lochore, Esq., ruling elder. From the burgh of Dysart, Mr Alexander Whyte, shipmaster. From the Presbytery of Cupar, Mr Robert Bogie at Logie, Mr Robert Macculloch at Dairsie, Dr Thomas Stewart at Newburgh, Mr Lawrence Adamson at Cupar, ministers; George Greenlaw, Esq., of Hilton, Mr David Simpson in Dunbog, ruling elders. From the burgh of Cupar, Major John Melville of Cairnie. From the Presbytery of St Andrews, Dr John Adamson at St Andrews, Mr Thomas Kettle at Leuchars, Mr Andrew Bell at Crail, Mr David Williamson at Ferry-Port-on-Craig, ministers; Lieut.-Colonel Alexander Monypenny of Pitmilny, Professor Henry David Hill, St Andrews, ruling elders. From the burgh of St Andrews, the Honourable Henry Erskine, Advocate. From the University of St Andrews, Dr George Hill, Principal of St Mary's College. From the burgh of Crail, Mr Thomas Weir, writer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Meigle, Mr James Ogilvie at Essie, Mr Alexander Thomson at Lintrathan, Mr Colin Symers at Alyth, ministers; Sir William Ramsay of Banff, Baronet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forfar, Mr David Fernie at Kinnettles, Mr James Mitchell at Aberlemno, ministers; Mr John Moncreiff, apothecary in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the burgh of Forfar, Robert Graham, Esq., of Fintrie. From the Presbytery of Dundee, Mr Walter Tait at Lundie and Foulis, Mr Patrick Macvicar at Dundee, Mr James Scott at Auchterhouse, ministers; George Paterson, Esq., of Castlehuntly, ruling elder. From the burgh of Dundee, James L'Amy, Esq., Advocate, younger of Dunkenny. From the Presbytery of Aberbrothock, Mr John Gowans at Lunan, Mr William Milligan at Kirkden, ministers; Mr Thomas Milne, merchant, Canongate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Brechin, Mr Robert Hannah at Strickathrow, Mr James Mitchell at Montrose, Mr Andrew Fergusson at Maryton, ministers; James Wauchope, Esq., younger of Edmonston, Advocate, ruling elder. From the burgh of Brechin, Adam Gillies, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Fordoun, Mr Alexander Thom at Glenbervie, Mr James Leslie at Fordoun, Mr George Cook at Laurencekirk, ministers; John Burnet, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberdeen, Dr George Gordon at Aberdeen, Mr George Morison at Banchory-Devenick, Mr Alexander John Forsyth at Belhelvie, Mr Alexander Simpson at Old Machar, ministers; William Robertson, Esq., Advocate, Procurator for the Church, John Gordon, Esq., of Craig, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Kincardine-O'Neil, Mr Robert Farquharson at Logie Coldstone, Mr Alexander Mearns at Cluny, Mr Alexander Robertson at Coul, ministers; William Macdonald, Esq., of Reneaton, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Alford, Mr John Harper at Kildrummy, Dr George Minty at Kinnethmont, Mr John Gordon at Cabrach, ministers; James Gordon, Esq., younger of Craig, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Ellon, Mr Alexander Cock at Cruden, Mr George Pirie at Slains, ministers. From the Presbytery of Garioch, Mr Thomas Tait at Meldrum, Mr Alexander Duff at Monymusk, Mr William Cock at Culsalmond, ministers; William Gordon, Esq., younger of Rothney, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Deer, Mr John Lundie at Lonmay, Mr William Cumin at Rathen, Mr William Fraser at Tyrie, ministers; Mr John Taylor, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Turriff, Mr John Falconer at Fyvie, Mr Robert Gordon at Drumblade, ministers; Mr Archibald Miln, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordyce, Mr Robert Grant at Cullen, Mr Alexander Gray at Ordiquhill, ministers; Mr George Andrew, writer in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the burgh of Banff, George Cranstoun of Dewar, Esq. From the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr James Miln at Rhynie, Mr Francis Forbes at Grange, ministers; Mr Baron Gordon, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberlour, Mr George Cruikshank at Rothies, Mr William Spence at Inveraven, ministers; the Honourable Arthur Duff, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abernethy, Mr Lewis

Grant at Cromdale, Mr John Anderson at Kingussie, ministers; Dr Gregory Grant, physician in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Elgin, Mr James Gillan at Speymouth, Mr William M'Bain at Alves, ministers; Mr Thomas Gordon, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the burgh of Elgin, Mr Francis Nicol, preacher of the Gospel. From the Presbytery of Forres, Mr William Stephen at Rafford, Mr John Hoyes at Kinloss, ministers; George Cuming of Relugas, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Nairn, Mr John Morrison at Nairn, Mr John Paterson at Auldearn, ministers; Mr Alexander Grant, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverness, Mr Alexander Fraser at Inverness, Mr Hugh Mackay at Moy, ministers; Simon Fraser of Faraline, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chananry, Mr Roderick Mackenzie at Kilmuir Wester, Mr Robert Smith at Cromarty, ministers; Convener John Lindsay of Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tain, Mr John Mathison at Kilmuir Easter, Mr Thomas Urquhart at Rosskeen, ministers; Charles Ross, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dingwall, Mr John Fraser at Kilmorack, Mr Charles Calder at Urquhart, ministers; Mr Kenneth Mackenzie, Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abertarff, Mr Thomas Ross at Kilmanivaig, Mr James Grant at Urquhart, ministers. From the Presbytery of Skye, Mr Martin Macpherson at Slate, Mr Malcolm Macleod at Snizort, ministers; the Right Honourable Alexander Lord Macdonald, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Uist, Dr John Macleod at Harris, Mr Edmund Macqueen at Barra, ministers; Hector Macdonald Buchanan, Esq., Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochcarron, Mr John Macrae at Glenshiell, Mr Alexander Downie at Lochalsh, ministers; Bailie Daniel Miller, Canongate, ruling elder. And the General Assembly added thereto, Dr Henry Grieve, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, in place of the Moderator; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1796.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1796.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1796.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May 1797.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, Cl. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1797.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1797.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven and Melville produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1797.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1797.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 6, May 24, 1797.—Address to his Majesty on the Marriage of her Royal Highness the Princess-Royal with his Serene Highness the Hereditary Prince of Wirtemberg.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach your throne with our most respectful congratulations on the marriage of her Royal Highness the Princess-Royal of Great Britain, your Majesty's eldest daughter, with his Serene Highness the Hereditary Prince of Wirtemberg Stutgard.

While we sincerely rejoice in every event that may increase your Majesty's domestic comfort, and enlarge the sphere of your paternal affections, we regard every extension of your Royal Family as an additional security to our religion and liberties.

Note.—The Assembly of 1796 had under their consideration certain Overtures relative to the diffusion of the Gospel. The following notice of the subject appears in the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings for that year :—"The Assembly proceeded to consider the Overtures from the Synods of Fife and Moray, relative to the diffusion of the Gospel. After reasoning, a motion was made and seconded, 'That the General Assembly are of opinion, that the object proposed in the Overtures is of the highest importance; but in respect the facts and circumstances, which are necessary for the General Assembly to come to any resolution upon this subject at present, are not sufficiently explained and instructed; therefore, the Assembly appoint a committee to take the subject of them into consideration, and report the result of their inquiries to the next General Assembly.' And, after farther reasoning, another motion was made and seconded, 'That the General Assembly, having considered the Overtures, and judging it highly inexpedient, at this time, to appoint a collection over Scotland, by the authority of the General Assembly; and not considering the circumstances of the times as favourable for the General Assembly's adopting any particular measure, in relation to the object of the Overtures, dismiss the same. At the same time, recommend to all the members of the Church of Scotland, in their different stations, to take every competent method of promoting, within the sphere of their influence, the knowledge of the Gospel, a just sense of the inestimable benefits which it conveys to all who embrace it, and the practice of those virtues, by which Christians make their light to shine before others. And while they offer their fervent prayers to Almighty God for the fulfilment of his promise, in giving his Son the Heavens for an inheritance, they resolve that they will embrace, with zeal and with thankfulness, any favourable opportunity of contributing, by their exertions, to the propagation of the Gospel of Christ, which Divine Providence may hereafter open.' The Assembly agreed to the following state of a vote,—Appoint or Dismiss,—and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Dismiss. Therefore, the Assembly dismissed the Overtures in terms of, and with the recommendation contained in, the second motion accordingly."—*Ed. 1843.*

In the present situation of public affairs, so deeply interesting to the British empire, we feel it to be our duty to renew the warmest expressions of our steady and zealous attachment to your Majesty's sacred person, and to that constitution which was established by the wisdom and virtue of our forefathers, has been improved under your royal ancestors, and is so happily administered by your Majesty, for the security of those laws which give equal protection to all your subjects, and for the advancement of national prosperity. We have the satisfaction of assuring your Majesty, that the great body of the people under our care concur with us in the same sentiments of loyalty, and in the same reverence for the laws and institutions of our country; and that there is no abatement of that spirit which has produced so many voluntary and generous exertions for the preservation of internal order, for the defence of those realms against the secret machinations and open violence of foreign enemies, and for the support of national honour. They continue to feel and to act as becomes Britons, ready to sacrifice every private consideration in behalf of their beloved Sovereign, of the independence of their country, and of their religion and liberties.

While our people patiently and cheerfully endure the inevitable toils and burdens of a war, they join with us in cherishing the pleasing hope of peace, when peace can be obtained on terms fair and honourable, such as will give full security for the many blessings by which your Majesty's subjects are distinguished. For the attainment of which most desirable object, we rely, under God, with the most entire confidence on the wisdom and vigour of your Majesty's councils.

That Almighty God, whose Providence rules the nations, and determines the issues of war, may, by the means which he hath chosen, and at his appointed time, turn the hearts of our enemies; that he may diffuse a spirit of union and loyalty among all your Majesty's subjects; that he may prosper the measures of government, and may continue to bless the British empire under the light of his countenance; and that your Majesty may long reign over a free, happy, and affectionate people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN ADAMSON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 8, May 26, 1797.—Regulations and Overture respecting the Erection of Chapels of Ease.

(Re-transmitted.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1797.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1797.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

*Sess. ult., May 29, 1797.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)*

IX.

*Sess. ult., May 29, 1797.—Overture respecting the attendance of Students on the
Divinity Hall.**

The committee on the overture from the Synod of Aberdeen, respecting the attendance of Students on the Divinity Halls, having maturely deliberated on the said overture, report to the venerable Assembly, that, in their opinion, it ought to be expressed in the following terms, viz. :—"It is overtured, that Students in Divinity who purpose to prosecute their studies for six sessions, should be required to give as much partial attendance, during the currency of those sessions, in the Divinity Halls which they respectively attend, as shall, in the whole, amount to six months."

The General Assembly approved of the above report, and ordered the same to be transmitted, as an overture, for the consideration of Presbyteries.

X.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1797.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1798.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1798.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 17, 1798.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven and Melville
produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 17, 1798.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The experience of many years authorises us to repose the fullest confidence in the wisdom of your counsels

* This Overture was transmitted for four successive years, but in 1801 it was agreed that it should not be again sent down to Presbyteries.—*Ed.* 1843.

and measures, and the temper of your minds, and calls upon us to repeat those assurances of our paternal affection towards you so justly due to your venerable body.

We are firmly persuaded, that our entire kingdom will derive the greatest advantages from the deliberations of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. At the same time, we trust that your proceedings will continue to be distinguished by that gravity and calmness, by that loyal attachment to our person, by that love for the people committed to your charge, and that spirit of Christian charity, one towards another, which cannot fail to confer dignity on yourselves, and to give authority to your decisions.

We recommend it to you, most earnestly, to persevere in your attention to the advancement of piety, and the practice of all Christian duties, both moral and positive; to the preservation of sound doctrine, and the checking those loose notions, both in faith and morality, which are the disgrace of these times, and which, unless timely counteracted, must operate to the destroying of all good principles in the hearts of men, to the dissolving all the bands of society, and to the provoking of the displeasure of Almighty God.

We have again constituted and appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven and Melville, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly. We know his ardent zeal for the great cause of religion, and the steady regard which has ever filled his mind for the peace and prosperity of the Church of Scotland, and, therefore, we do, with the greater satisfaction, repose in his faithful hands the execution of this important trust.

We avail ourselves of this fresh opportunity of assuring you of our full determination to maintain and preserve the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges; and we do solemnly adjure you to reflect upon and fulfil, conjointly and individually, all those various duties which the well-being of the establishment, the interests of civil society, and religion itself, so forcibly, at this awful moment, demand. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 11th day of May 1798, in the thirty-eighth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

PORTLAND.

Addressed thus:—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1798.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter to this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the highest respect.

The full confidence which your Majesty is pleased to repose in the wisdom of our proceedings, and the renewed assurances of your paternal affection, are most endearing testimonies of your royal favour, and fill our minds with the warmest gratitude to our beloved Sovereign.

The persuasion your Majesty has condescended to express of the great advantages which will result to your entire kingdom from the deliberations of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is a most powerful incitement to us, in all our proceedings, to conduct ourselves with that gravity and calmness, and that loyal attachment to your sacred person; and to cultivate that love for the people committed to our charge, and that spirit of Christian charity, one towards another, which will best secure the dignity of our order, and give authority to our decisions.

Feeling, as we do, the utmost abhorrence of those loose notions, both in faith and morality, which are the disgrace of these times; and animated by an ardent zeal to

counteract their pernicious influence, we listen, with profound reverence, to your royal recommendation; and shall steadily persevere in our exertions for the preservation of sound doctrine, and for the advancement of genuine piety, and the practice of all Christian duties, both moral and positive; in the humble hope that we may thus prove the means of averting the displeasure of Almighty God, and of promoting the happiness of your Majesty's subjects, by contributing to the maintenance of pure religion, of good government, and of social order.

Your Majesty's knowledge of the ardent zeal of the Earl of Leven and Melville in the great cause of religion, and of his steady regard for the peace and prosperity of the Church of Scotland, and the long and pleasing experience we have had of his fidelity in the discharge of the duties of that high and important trust with which he is now invested, render the re-appointment of him to represent your royal person peculiarly acceptable to this Assembly.

Your royal donation for propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we receive as a continued proof of your Majesty's paternal concern for the spiritual as well as temporal interests of your subjects; and we shall study, by a wise and faithful application of it, to promote the pious and benevolent purpose for which it is granted.

We rely, with perfect confidence, on the fresh assurance of your Majesty's determination to maintain and preserve the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges. Deeply affected with the impressive charge of our Sovereign, who, with paternal affection, solemnly adjures us to reflect upon our sacred obligations, we pledge ourselves to your Majesty, that, through the help of God, we will, both conjointly and individually, fulfil all those various duties which the well-being of the establishment, and the interests of civil society and of religion do, at this awful moment, so forcibly demand.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may long preserve your sacred person, direct your councils, and crown your undertakings with abundant success; that He may bless our most gracious Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; that there may never be wanting one of your royal house to sit on the throne of these kingdoms to latest ages; and that, after a long, useful, and happy reign, you may exchange an earthly for a heavenly crown, are, and shall be, the sincere prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM TAYLOR, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 5, May 22, 1798.—Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Public Affairs.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to embrace this opportunity of approaching your throne, in order to express the sentiments which we feel on occasion of the arduous contest in which this nation is engaged with a neighbouring hostile power.

During former times of tranquillity and peace, the ministers of this Church had always studied to confirm the people under their charge in principles of loyalty to your Majesty's person and government, and to inspire them with veneration for that happy constitution, civil and sacred, with which we have long been blessed. Now, when the day of trial is come, it is with the utmost satisfaction we behold the

happy effects of those sentiments which we have long endeavoured to instil. We behold the great body of the people, in this country, united in zealous attachment to your Majesty's government, and in resolute endeavours to defend their ancient rights against every invader. We have the happiness of expressing to your Majesty our firm persuasion, that the spirit of the country is now fully roused among all ranks of men. They are sensible that all that is sacred to them as Christians, and dear to them as men, is at stake; and that, in resisting their impious and outrageous foes, they are not only defending a Sovereign whom they love and revere, and supporting a constitution under which they have long been happy, but defending, at the same time, their own families, their persons, and property. We can assure your Majesty that, on our part, nothing shall be wanting to cherish these patriotic dispositions, to stimulate the general ardour in the public cause, and to promote every measure which the wisdom of your councils shall deem necessary for the security of the realm.

We beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on the brilliant successes with which it has pleased the Almighty already to bless your arms in various quarters. Trusting to that gracious aid of Heaven, which has so often signally supported the British throne, and defeated the attempts of unjust and violent enemies, we entertain the firmest hopes that the insolent menaces of our present foes shall be completely baffled, and that an honourable and lasting peace shall terminate the contest in which your Majesty and the nation are now engaged.

That the God of battles may continue to bless your Majesty's fleets and armies; that He may speedily give a check to the ambition and anarchy of those tyrannical rulers who have disturbed the peace of so many surrounding nations; that He may long preserve your Majesty's precious and important life, and still increase the lustre and prosperity of your reign over a loyal and grateful people, shall ever be the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM TAYLOR, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, May 23, 1798.—Act and Regulations respecting the Erection of Chapels of Ease.

The General Assembly, judging it expedient that no Chapel of Ease should be erected without the knowledge and approbation of the General Assembly, unanimously did, and hereby do, ordain, that in future, if any petition shall be laid before any Presbytery of this Church for the erection of a Chapel of Ease, the said Presbytery shall strictly observe the following regulations:—

“That in future, when a petition shall be laid before any Presbytery of this Church for the erection of a Chapel of Ease, it shall lie upon the table till their next ordinary meeting; and at that meeting, unless it shall appear to the Presbytery, from the circumstances in which the petition is offered, that the erection of the said Chapel of Ease is unnecessary and inexpedient, they shall cite the minister and kirk-session of the parish within which the chapel is intended; and shall summon, by edictal citation, the heritors of the parish; and if there is a burgh in the parish, the magistrates of that burgh, to attend the next meeting of Presbytery, and to appear for their interest in the subject of the petition, if they shall see cause: That such Presbytery, after having heard the parties, shall sufficiently ascertain the circumstances on which the petition is founded,—the facts stated as reasons for the necessity or expediency of the chapel intended,—the general plan of the chapel itself,—

the estimate of the expense to be incurred in completing it,—the scheme laid down for discharging the debts which it may be necessary to contract,—the plan on which it is proposed to dispose of the collections to be made at the chapel,—the names and designations of the persons in whom the property is to be vested,—the mode proposed for the election of the minister,—the stipend to be provided to him,—and the security offered for the regular payment of the stipend. That such Presbytery shall thereafter report the whole above mentioned circumstances of the case, from their minutes, to the next meeting of the General Assembly, and shall not pronounce any final judgment on the petition, till they shall have received the special directions of the Assembly thereon;—and that it shall be competent for the petitioners, and for all parties having interest, to be heard on the subject at the bar of the Assembly.”

VI.

*Sess. 8, May 25, 1798.—Overture respecting the course of University Education to be observed by Students, previous to their entering the Divinity Hall.**

Whereas it has been represented, that students intended for the holy ministry do sometimes hurry over their course of philosophy in two sessions of the university, it is overtured, that it be recommended to students, previous to their entering a Divinity Hall, to study literature and philosophy at a university during a course of five complete sessions, in the following order, viz. :—

Session 1st, Humanity or Latin, with the elements of Greek, in the first Humanity and Greek classes.

Session 2d, Latin and Greek, in the higher Humanity and Greek classes, with the elements of Mathematics.

Session 3d, Logic, with Greek and Mathematics in the higher classes.

Session 4th, } Natural and Moral Philosophy, but not both in the same session;

Session 5th, } together with Latin again, or Greek, or Mathematics, in one or more of the higher classes.

But that it shall be expressly enacted, that no Professor of Divinity shall admit any student into the Divinity Hall, until he produce certificates of his having studied at a university during three complete sessions, in the following classes, viz. :—Logic, together with Greek in the higher Greek class, and Natural and Moral Philosophy; it being, in this case, understood that such students are well grounded in Latin and the elements of Greek, previous to their entering the University.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1798.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1798.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

* This Overture was sent down to Presbyteries this and the two following years; but in 1801 it was agreed that it should not be re-transmitted.—*Ed.* 1843.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1798.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1798.—Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall.
(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1798.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 23d day of May 1799.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

Sess. 7, May 24, 1798.—Regulations adopted by the General Assembly, 1798, for a new Gaelic Chapel in the City of Glasgow.

I. That the property of the house shall, for behoof of the congregation, be vested in Donald Munro, merchant, John Macintosh, manufacturer, and the other petitioners, trustees and managers of said chapel, and their successors in office.

II. That the house shall be used only as a Chapel of Ease, and that it shall not be competent to elect any minister or preacher to officiate therein but a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, or a person who is an ordained minister according to the rules of this Church; and who, before his ordination or admission, shall produce a certificate of his having taken the oaths to government, according to law; and that the minister of the Chapel of Ease shall be under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose bounds the chapel lies, subject to censure or deposition by the Presbytery, and not removeable but according to the rules of the Church relating to ministers on the Establishment; and that the congregation which meets in said chapel shall remain subject to the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, and her different judicatories.

III. That the funds arising from the seat-rents shall be under the management of the said Donald Munro, John Macintosh, and the other trustees and managers of the said chapel, and their successors in office, and shall be applied, in the first place, to the payment of the minister's stipend, precentor, and church-officer; and that, if there is any overplus, it shall be converted into a sinking fund, out of which, as soon as the present debt of the chapel shall be paid, the stipend of the minister may, from time to time, be augmented.

IV. That the conduct of the managers, in the administration of the funds of the chapel, shall be under the inspection and control of the Presbytery of Glasgow; and, if the Presbytery shall see cause to summon them, the managers shall attend the Presbytery, upon a citation of ten free days.

V. That the present managers shall supply any vacancy that may happen in their number during the space of five years; that at the end of every five years there shall be a new election of managers, by the same persons, and in the same manner, as shall hereafter be directed in the case of the election of a minister.

VI. That the managers shall be liable and give security for the minister's stipend, which shall be payable half-yearly or quarterly, as may be most convenient for the managers.

VII. That the minister's stipend shall not be under seventy pounds sterling yearly.

VIII. That collections be made regularly at the chapel-doors, or in the chapel, and that the sum arising therefrom shall be, *bona fide*, paid into the hands of the treasurer of the General Sessions of Glasgow, and applied by them for the support of the poor of the said city.

IX. That the minister first chosen is to be elected by a majority of the managers, and all future elections shall be made only by those who possess seats in the chapel; and to prevent all confusion and faction, those of each pew shall name one of their number, on the day preceding the election, who shall vote for the minister; and the name of the person so nominated, with the number who occupy the pew, shall be immediately given in to the managers; provided always, that where a whole seat is set to one sinner, for himself, or his family, or others, he alone shall have the vote for such pew; that previous to any election the managers shall cause intimation to be made to the congregation in the chapel of the time fixed for the election, at least ten days previous to the time so fixed, that, in the meantime, the vote for each pew, where there are more sitters than one, shall be vested in one person. That the preses of the managers for the time being shall preside at such election, and the candidate having the majority of votes shall be preferred, and certified by the said preses; in consequence of which, the reverend Presbytery shall be requested to proceed to his trials and ordination or admission, according to the rules of the Church. That in any future vacancy, if no day of election shall be fixed by the managers within the space of six months, then it shall be in the power of the Presbytery to fix a day of election, by giving due previous intimation to the congregation of the said chapel.

X. That previous to the election a list of candidates, not exceeding five in number, shall be laid before the Presbytery of Glasgow.

XI. That when a vacancy happens in the Chapel of Ease, it shall be reported to the Presbytery by the minister of the parish. That during the vacancy the managers shall apply to the Presbytery of Glasgow, and shall have power, with consent of the Presbytery, to employ any minister or preacher of the Established Church to supply the chapel.

XII. That no candidate who is a probationer shall preach in said chapel before having laid his licence and other certificates before the Presbytery of Glasgow, and obtained their approbation; and no ordained minister, before he has produced to the Presbytery a certificate of his ordination from the Presbytery to which he belongs.

XIII. That the election of a new minister, when reported to the Presbytery, shall be accompanied with a letter of acceptance from the person elected, with a renewal of the security for payment of the stipend.

XIV. That after the candidate preferred is admitted and ordained a minister, it shall be lawful for him to perform all ministerial services for the members of his own congregation; particularly, to perform every part of public worship in his own pulpit, to which he shall have an exclusive right under the authority of the reverend Presbytery; to marry after legal proclamation of banns, and to baptize after legal registration.

XV. That upon a certificate of the moral character of the persons applying to be admitted to the Sacraments from members of the parochial sessions to which they belong, the minister may dispense the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to the people who shall attend his ministry in the chapel, according to the Word of God, and the Standards and practice of this National Church.

XVI. That as often as the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be dispensed in said chapel, a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds Scots shall be allowed, from the collections made on these occasions, for communion-elements, &c.

XVII. That the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered in the chapel on the same day in which that ordinance is dispensed in the parish churches of Glasgow; and that, during a vacancy, the minister to preside on that occasion shall

be appointed with the consent of the minister of the parish in whose bounds the chapel lies.

XVIII. That as this chapel is intended for the accommodation of those who speak Gaelic only, or chiefly, seats shall be set to persons of this description only. That for the same reason, the service shall be performed in Gaelic in the forenoon of every Lord's Day; and that on occasion of dispensing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the sermons shall all be in Gaelic.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 23, 1799.

I.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1799.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven and Melville produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 23, 1799.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. We have thought fit again to constitute and appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven and Melville, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The manner in which he has heretofore executed this high office, his attachment to ourself, and his affection for the Church, fill us with assurance that he will adequately answer every purpose of the trust with which he is invested.

We do most solemnly repeat our determination to maintain and preserve the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges; and we are firmly persuaded that the conduct of the Church, and the proceedings of the General Assembly, will continue such as to merit our approbation, and to increase more and more that paternal love with which we unceasingly regard you.

At a time when the very principles of religion and morality are denied by some, and confounded by others; in these perilous days, when wicked men have derided every thing which is grave, just, and holy, we esteem it a duty to express our satisfaction at the unabating zeal and exemplary piety which distinguish the Church of Scotland; and also to exhort you to undeviating perseverance in the same.

We charge you to be instant at all seasons in seeking after truth, in defending, teaching, and spreading it; remembering that the eyes of the whole Church and nation are upon you, and that your brethren look to the decisions of the General Assembly as rules to guide them in all matters of doctrine and discipline.

More particularly, we call upon you to aid, by precept and example, the cause of religion and virtue in the world, to dispel the dangerous delusions of an arrogant and vain philosophy, and of science, falsely so called, and to direct the minds of the people

Note.—There is bound up with the original edition of the Acts of 1798 a "Warning and Admonition to the People of Scotland by the Commission of the General Assembly, March 1, 1798," issued on the occasion of the French Revolution. It will appear in the Appendix.—*Ed.* 1843.

over whom you individually exercise the pastoral care, to the revealed will of Almighty God.

Finally, we desire your prayers to the Supreme Disposer of all events, that he will be pleased to prosper all our designs for the good of the Church of Scotland, and the advancement of the Christian religion, to avert from these kingdoms those errors which have brought ruin and desolation upon those who have embraced them. To his Almighty protection we commend you; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 17th day of May 1799, in the thirty-ninth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

PORTLAND.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1799.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

The letter which it hath pleased your Majesty to address to this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the most profound respect and gratitude.

We account ourselves highly honoured by the representation of the royal person in our General Assemblies, as the gracious symbol of the connection between the Church and the State. We have beheld with much satisfaction, in many preceding years, this high office committed to a nobleman, whose warm attachment to your Majesty, whose hereditary affection for the Church of Scotland, whose steady regard to religion, and whose many amiable virtues, render him eminently qualified to answer every purpose of the trust with which he is invested: And we receive your Majesty's renewed appointment of the Earl of Leven and Melville as a pledge of the paternal love with which you have unceasingly regarded us.

We rely, with entire confidence, upon the solemn assurance of your Majesty's determination to maintain and preserve the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its just rights and privileges; and we shall study, upon all occasions, to conduct ourselves in such a manner as may entitle us to hope for the continuance of your royal approbation.

Your Majesty's donation of L.1000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, was received with the sincerest gratitude, as a renewed instance of your persevering attention to the religious interests of the people committed to our care; and it shall be our endeavour to apply it with fidelity to the pious purpose for which it is bestowed.

Placed in the perilous days so well described in your Majesty's most gracious letter, when the very principles of religion and morality are denied by some, and confounded by others; and when wicked men have derided every thing which is grave, and just, and holy, we have unspeakable consolation in thinking that we live under the reign of a Prince, whose exemplary piety adorns the throne; who condescends to mention, with approbation, the zeal of the Church of Scotland, who calls us by his authority to an undeviating perseverance in the discharge of our duty, and assures us of all the encouragement and support which the circumstances of the times require.

We listen, with the most profound respect, to the solemn charge which we receive from your Majesty. And it is our determined resolution, that, in compliance with

that charge, and in fulfilment of the duties of our sacred office, we will, through the strength of the Lord Jesus, be instant at all seasons in seeking after truth, in defending, teaching, and spreading it; that we will labour, by precept and by example, to aid the cause of religion and virtue in the world; that we will endeavour to dispel the dangerous delusions of an arrogant and vain philosophy, and of science, falsely so called; and, in all our ministrations, will direct the minds of the people over whom we exercise the pastoral care to the revealed will of Almighty God, as the only infallible standard of truth, and perfect rule of manners. We feel the sacred obligations of which your Majesty is graciously pleased to remind us, that arise from our being, in the words of our great Master, "a city set upon an hill;" and we look up to Him for those influences of his Spirit, which may enable us so to frame our decisions, that they may secure the respect of our brethren, and may guide them in all matters of doctrine and discipline.

Conscious that our exertions, however unremitting and well directed, are of none avail without the blessing of Heaven, we cease not to offer our fervent prayers to the Supreme Disposer of all events, beseeching him to avert from these kingdoms those errors which have brought ruin and desolation upon all who have embraced them. We bless the Lord our God, who, because he loved us, hath raised up a succession of princes in the illustrious House of Hanover, to be the nursing-fathers of his Church. We pray that it may please Him to prosper all your Majesty's designs for the good of the Church of Scotland, and the advancement of the Christian religion. And, relying upon His Almighty protection, we trust, that, under the wise and vigorous administration of your Majesty's government, our ecclesiastical establishment, which has been cherished with warm affection by the people of Scotland, and which has been the means of diffusing amongst all ranks the knowledge and the principles of pure and undefiled religion, shall be preserved from being shaken by external violence, or undermined by the machinations of secret foes.

That the best blessings of Heaven may descend upon your Majesty, upon our gracious Queen Charlotte, upon the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; that your Majesty may long continue to reign in the hearts of a pious, loyal, free, and happy people; and that, after swaying the British sceptre for many years with felicity and renown, you may be received into those regions where an unfading crown awaits the faithful, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM MOODIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 25, 1799.—Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Public Affairs.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne with sentiments of the most affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person and government.

Beholding with reverence the conduct of Providence, in the permission of those calamitous events which, for years past, have afflicted and desolated so many of the neighbouring nations, we feel the most lively gratitude to Almighty God, when we contemplate the prosperous condition of Great Britain. Preserved by the wisdom of your Majesty's councils from the traitorous attempts made to disturb its internal

tranquillity, this happy country flourishes even in the midst of war, and communicating to its allies a portion of its own vigour, it has been justly regarded as the great bulwark raised by Divine Providence, for resisting the progress of those destructive principles which threatened the total subversion of religion and good government in every quarter of the world.

We are sincerely grieved to learn that there are still among us men insensible to the inestimable blessings we enjoy; but we trust that their numbers are daily decreasing; and your Majesty may be assured that the Church of Scotland, faithful to her duty, will, in her proper sphere, co-operate zealously with the civil power in counteracting their insidious designs. We have reason to think that the blessings of your Majesty's paternal government, aided by the salutary restraints imposed on the licentious, have already produced a favourable impression on the minds of many of our fellow-subjects, who were formerly discontented. And we are persuaded that the great body of the people under our charge, notwithstanding the artful endeavours employed to agitate and divide them, continue firmly attached to the religious and civil constitution of their country, and deeply interested in whatever may have any tendency to strengthen its security, and to transmit it unimpaired to the latest posterity.

Amidst the general satisfaction with which we contemplate the state of the country, we embrace, with peculiar pleasure, this first opportunity which our meeting affords us of congratulating your Majesty on the splendid naval victories gained in the course of last year by your Majesty's arms at the mouth of the Nile, and on the coast of Ireland, under the conduct of Lord Nelson and Sir John Borlase Warren—victories honourable in the highest degree to the good and gallant men by whom they were achieved, highly conducive to the national security, and most important in their consequences to the general issue of the war. And while our devout acknowledgments rise to the Lord of Hosts, from whom alone cometh wisdom and strength, on account of the brilliant events, which, under your Majesty's more immediate administration, have contributed so much to the advantage of the common cause; we have beheld also, with the most grateful satisfaction, the rapid tide of victory which has followed of late the arms of your Majesty's allies on the Continent. And we cherish the hope, that, by a continuation of success, your Majesty will be soon enabled, in concert with your allies, to bring this arduous contest to a termination, glorious to our country, and salutary to the general interests of Europe.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, direct your councils, and prosper your administration; that He may bless our Gracious Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that, after reigning long with wisdom and felicity, over a free, happy, and grateful people, you may receive that crown of righteousness which fadeth not away, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful,
and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM MOODIE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 5, May 28, 1799.—Declaratory Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, respecting Unqualified Ministers and Preachers.

The General Assembly, having received overtures from many Synods, which propose that some effectual regulations shall be made in order to prevent persons not duly qualified from being employed to preach the Word, and to dispense the other ordinances of the Gospel in the congregations under the care of the Church; considering that the rules laid down by the Apostles of our Lord require from all who

are invested with the solemn trust of committing the ministry of the Word to others, prudence and strictness in the trial and judgment of those whom, in the exercise of that trust, they pronounce faithful and apt to teach; considering that the laws of this Church, in conformity to the rules of Scripture, have prescribed a certain previous course of education, as necessary for all the probationers thereof, and have directed the Presbyteries of this Church to employ inquiries and trials of various kinds, in order that they may be fully satisfied concerning the literature, sound doctrine, and steady attachment to our constitution in Church and State, of those who apply to them for a licence to preach the Gospel; and considering further, that the judicial proceedings of the General Assembly, in particular cases, have interpreted and enforced those laws; do hereby enact and declare, that it is agreeable to the constitution, the laws, and the decisions of this Church, that no probationer, who has obtained a licence without the bounds of this Church, or who has not obtained a licence from some Presbytery of this Church; and no ordained person, who did not obtain his licence from a Presbytery of this Church, or who, either by going without the bounds of the Church to obtain ordination, although he was not called to a particular congregation in another country, or by any other part of his conduct, has forfeited the licence which he had obtained, shall be held qualified to accept of a presentation or a call to any parish in this Church, or to any Chapel of Ease connected therewith. And the General Assembly do hereby enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church, if a presentation or a call to any such probationer or ordained person, as is described in this Act, shall at any time be given in to them, instantly to pronounce a sentence refusing to sustain such presentation or call, and declaring it null and void.

And further, the General Assembly, considering that it is of the greatest importance to the interests of true religion, to the sound instruction of the people, to the quiet of their minds, and the peace of the Church and State, that unqualified persons, who intrude themselves into the ministry of the Word, shall not receive any countenance from the ministers of this Church; more especially in the present times, when men, who avow their hostility to our ecclesiastical establishment, and their contempt of all the rules which the wisdom of our ancestors framed upon the model of Scripture, for the orderly dispensation of the word and sacraments, are traversing all the districts within the bounds of this Church, and attempting to alienate the minds of the people from their established teachers; considering also, that it is essential to the unity and good order of the Church, and implied in the fundamental principles of Presbyterian government, that no minister shall presume to set up his individual judgment in opposition to the judgment of those to whom, at his ordination, he promised subjection in the Lord; and that every minister shall consider himself as answerable to his Presbytery for the manner in which all the parts of Divine service are performed during his incumbency, within the stated place of worship provided by law for that congregation which is committed to his care; do hereby discharge and prohibit, under pain of such censures as the judicatories of this Church may see cause to inflict, all the ministers of this Church, and the ministers of all Chapels of Ease connected therewith, from employing to preach upon any occasion, or to dispense any of the other ordinances of the Gospel, within any congregation under the jurisdiction of this Church, persons who are not qualified, according to the laws of this Church, to accept of a presentation, and from holding ministerial communion in any other manner with such persons. And the General Assembly do hereby enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to attend to any transgression of this prohibition which may occur within their bounds, and to summon the minister who is reported as being guilty of such transgression to answer for his conduct.

And the Assembly ordain their clerk to transmit a copy of this Act, separately printed, to each of the moderators of the Presbyteries of this Church, with an injunction to them to cause the same to be engrossed in the records of their respective Presbyteries.

VI.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1799.—Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall.

(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1799.—Overture respecting the Course of University Education to be observed by Students previous to their entering the Divinity Hall.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

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IX.

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The General Assembly, &c.

X.

Sess. 9, June 1, 1799.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

XI.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1799.—Pastoral Admonition, addressed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, met at Edinburgh, May 23, 1799, to all the People under their Charge.

Dearly Beloved Brethren,

You well know that it has been prophesied in Scripture, that in the last days perilous times were to come, when many false teachers should arise, scoffers walking after their own lusts, and when men should turn away their ears from the truth. The prophecy has been brought to our recollection by the subjects which, in the course of the business of this Assembly, have come under our review. We have contemplated, with devout reverence, events in the conduct of the Divine government, which appear to us to be a fulfilment of this prophecy; and, from a sense of the dangers to which you are exposed by those events, we feel ourselves bound in duty, and engaged by affection, to issue this fatherly admonition, which your ministers, in the name and by authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, will read to you from their pulpits.

It is too well known, that in a neighbouring country an evil and pernicious spirit has arisen, which, like a pestilential vapour, has spread its malignant influence

over several surrounding States. The unhappy nation of the French, not content with having first slaughtered their Sovereign, and overturned their own Government; not content with endeavouring, by acts of violence, to subvert the established governments of other nations, and to introduce amongst them their own principles of rebellion and anarchy; have also impiously attempted to wage open war against the Christian faith. They have shut up their churches, studied to abolish the memory of the Lord's Day, declared the belief of a future state to be an empty dream; and by their emissaries, and their numerous publications, have sought to spread everywhere abroad their Atheistical tenets, and to render every nation dissatisfied with their own rulers, and with their own governments, both ecclesiastical and civil.

Hence has arisen that variety of books and pamphlets, containing the most impious opinions, and propagating the spirit of sedition and rebellion, which have been disseminated with much care amongst all ranks of men in this land. While such doctrines are abroad, and many, through ignorance or inadvertence, are in hazard of being poisoned by them, the solicitude which we entertain for your welfare, in time and in eternity, has led us to warn you against the seduction of false teachers. Now is the time, dear brethren, to show that you are not ashamed of your blessed Saviour, and of his words, "earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints;" and to reject with contempt and indignation that false philosophy, pregnant with lies, which has wrought so much mischief amongst mankind. Listen not to any insinuations from those who seek to pervert you from the sound and good principles you early imbibed; and beware, particularly, that they instil not into your minds sentiments of disaffection to that wise and mild government under which you live. Remember, with gratitude, that goodness of the Almighty, which, when so many other nations have been distracted with civil commotions, and laid waste by hostile devastations, has preserved you in tranquillity and peace, "every man under his own vine, and his own fig-tree," enjoying with safety the fruit of his labours, under the protection of laws which afford equal justice to the poor and to the rich. Instead of being captivated by that empty sound of liberty, which has proved to be only another name for anarchy or tyranny, let zeal for true religion ever remain in your minds, united with attachment to our happy constitution, and with loyalty to that gracious Sovereign with whom Providence has blessed us.

It is much to be lamented, that, while we are assaulted by false principles imported to us from abroad, there should of late have arisen among ourselves a set of men, whose proceedings threaten no small disorder to the country. We mean those who, assuming the name of missionaries from what they call the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, as if they had some special commission from Heaven, are at present going through the land, not confining themselves to particular stations; but acting as universal itinerant teachers, and as superintendents of those who are established the teachers of religion by the Church; intruding themselves into their parishes without any call; erecting in several places Sunday schools, without any countenance from the Presbytery of the bounds, the minister or heritors of the parish; committing in those schools the religious instruction of youth to ignorant persons, altogether unfit for such an important charge, who presume not only to catechise, but also to expound the Scriptures; or to persons notoriously disaffected to the civil constitution of the country; and connecting those schools with certain secret meetings, in which, as we are informed, every person is bound not to spread abroad any thing that is said or done in the meeting, to the prejudice of any of the members; into which no person is admitted without the consent of the whole of the members; and which keep a correspondence with other societies in the neighbourhood. You see the men, who by themselves, or their associates, conduct those Sunday schools and secret meetings, bringing together assemblies of people in the fields, or in places not intended for public worship; where, pouring forth their loose harangues, they frequently take the liberty of censuring the doctrine or the character of the minister of the parish; studying to alienate the affections of the people from their own pastors; and engaging them to join this new sect, as if they alone were possessed of some secret and novel method of bringing men to heaven.

Hitherto, brethren, you have regarded a regular standing ministry as a Divine institution. You have been taught that the Lord Jesus Christ himself did not act in a public character, without producing and proving a heavenly commission; that the extraordinary endowments which he conferred upon his Apostles were their warrant for appearing as the preachers of his religion; and that the evident connection between those endowments and the appointment of the first ministers of the word, is a direction to Christians in all succeeding ages, to consider the office of public teachers as a Divine ordinance, the exercise of which requires talents corresponding to the importance and difficulty of the charge. You know that the Church of Scotland, in conformity to these principles, prescribes a long course of education to those who are trained for the holy ministry; and, in order to prevent the misapplication of literary studies and talents, requires from all whom she licenses to preach the Gospel, the most solemn engagements, that they will adhere to the Standards which she has published of her doctrine, worship, discipline, and government. But all this care and solicitude concerning the ministry of the Word, which we and our fathers learned from Scripture, is now ridiculed as unnecessary. The men who assume the character of missionaries declare that every man has a right to preach the Gospel; and they are now traversing the whole country as evangelists, without any sort of authority, without giving any public pledge for the soundness of their faith, or the correctness of their morals, and without those advantages of regular education, and of preparatory knowledge, which, under every form of a Christian Church, ever since the age of miraculous gifts, have been held as indispensably necessary for the useful and successful discharge of a Gospel ministry.

We wish to judge charitably of all men. We are willing to hope that amongst these missionaries there are several worthy, well-meaning people, who have been led astray by men more artful and designing than themselves. But it is impossible not to perceive that the whole scheme, and the manner in which it is conducted, discover more of a spirit of ambition and vanity, and of a desire to claim a lordly dominion over your faith, than of the spirit of the Gospel, which is a meek, an humble, and a peaceable spirit, and a spirit of order, not of confusion; and whatever may be the intentions of some who have engaged in this scheme, the manifest tendency of their proceedings is to foster the violence of a blind intemperate zeal; to unsettle the minds of many; to throw their principles loose, by distracting them with novelties, and to make them become like "clouds without water, carried about of winds."

You may have been led by curiosity to listen for a little to what these strange and self-authorised teachers of religion have to say. But that any of you will give them lasting countenance, or adhere to them as guides, forsaking, upon that account, the Established Church, in whose principles you were baptized, and under whose wings you have been bred up, we are persuaded better things of you than to believe or suspect. For, is it to be imagined, that any well-disposed and sober-minded Christians could think of deserting those houses of God, in which their fathers have so often worshipped, and which have so often resounded with their own songs of praise, in order to follow up and down a sect of men, whom you know not whence they be? Is not the Church of Scotland, which has been distinguished by the testimony of many generations for the purity of its doctrines, and the character of its ministers, worthy of your most steady and zealous attachment; that Church, in defence of which your forefathers fought and bled, and which has produced so many confessors and martyrs in the cause of our common faith? Much reason there is to suspect, that those who openly profess their enmity to our ecclesiastical establishment are no friends to our civil constitution; and that the name of liberty is abused by them, as it has been by others, into a cover for secret democracy and anarchy. Persevere, therefore, in those principles in which you have been bred, and which you have hitherto honourably manifested. Beware, beloved brethren, of all who would shake your attachment to the Established Church of Scotland. By diligently improving those stated means of instruction which she provides for you, and always consulting the sacred Scriptures as your supreme rule, the path of duty will be clearly pointed out to you. But those who "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears," those who are con-

tinually seeking new guides, wander into many unknown paths, which lead them into dangerous snares and errors.

In these giddy times, when the love of innovation so much prevails, and when the spirit of innovation has broken forth in so many forms, listen “to the words of truth and soberness. We speak as to wise men; judge ye what we say.” Recollect the counsels and the practice of your fathers; recollect your own experience of instruction and edification, under a well educated and regularly ordained ministry. “Stand, brethren, in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” And may God enlighten and fortify your minds by his good Spirit, and, amidst all dangers, enable you to “behave yourselves wisely in a perfect way!”

Subscribed, in name of the Assembly, by

WILLIAM MOODIE, D.D., *Moderator.*

XII.

*Sess. ult., June 3, 1799.—Report concerning Vagrant Teachers and Sunday Schools.**

The General Assembly, upon considering that part of an overture from the Synod of Aberdeen which respects Vagrant Teachers and Sunday Schools, having directed a committee of their number to inquire into the existing laws which place schoolmasters and teachers of youth under the inspection and control of the Established Church, and to report to the Assembly a statement of those laws, together with their opinion concerning the most effectual method of preventing unqualified persons from being employed in the important office of instructing youth: The committee accordingly gave in their report this day; and the same being read and considered, was unanimously approved of, and adopted by the Assembly, of which report the tenor follows:—

Your committee do not judge it necessary to enter into a minute detail of the more ancient laws with respect to the power of the Church over all schools and teachers of youth. The General Assembly of this Church, as early as the year 1565, claimed it as their right that none should be permitted to teach publicly or privately, but such as were tried by the superintendents or visitors of the Kirk, and found qualified. This claim was confirmed by an Act of Parliament, which was passed in the year 1567, in the following words:—“Forasmeikleas, be all laws and constitutionis, it is provided, That the zouth be brocht up and instructed in the fear of God and gude manneris; and gif it be utherwise, it is tinsel baith of their bodies and saules, gif God’s Word be not ruted in them. Quheirfore, our Sovereign Lorde, with advice of my Lorde Regent, and the three estates of this present Parliament, has statute and ordained, that all schules to burgh and land, and all universities and colledges, be reformed; and that nane be permitted nor admitted to have charge and cure thereof in time coming, nor to instruct the zouth privatelie or openlie, bot sic as sall be tryed be the superintendentes or visitouris of the kirk.”

* The following is the notice in the Abridgment of the Assembly’s Proceedings of the committee to draw up this report, as well as to prepare the preceding Pastoral Admonition: “The Overtures from the Synods of Aberdeen, and Angus and Mearns, respecting vagrant teachers and Sunday schools, and respecting irreligion and anarchy, heard. The General Assembly having deliberated on the subject of these Overtures; upon a motion made, unanimously resolved, that a Pastoral Admonition be addressed by the General Assembly to the People of Scotland, warning them of the danger of encouraging, or listening to the addresses of those men, who, under the name of missionary or itinerant preachers, from a Society styling themselves the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, have, of late, been travelling over all the districts within the bounds of this Church; and that a committee be appointed to prepare this Admonition, and to report on Monday. That the same committee be appointed to inquire into the existing laws which place schoolmasters and teachers of youth under the inspection and control of the Established Church, to report to the Assembly on Monday a statement of those laws, together with their opinion concerning the most effectual method of preventing unqualified persons from being employed in the important office of instructing youth.”—*Ed.* 1843.

After the abolition of the office of superintendent, in the General Assembly, held in the month of April 1581, certain articles were remitted by the Synod of Lothian to that General Assembly, the fifth of which is, "That the trial and admission of all masters of schools be now committed to the Presbyteries." The Act, 1565, already noticed, is ratified and confirmed by the Act, 1581; and this Act, 1581, is again confirmed by the Act, 1592, which is the great charter of the Church, and which is confirmed by the Act of Security, 1707, cap. 6, and thereby declared to be an essential and fundamental article in the Treaty of Union, into which it is accordingly engrossed, so that the superintending power of the Church over all schoolmasters and teachers of youth is clearly established by the most solemn acts of the legislature, and even by the Treaty of Union itself.

It is well known that the Church has been in the constant exercise of those powers, by visiting and examining schools, and taking cognizance of the sufficiency and qualifications of teachers. See the Acts of Assembly, 1638, 1642, 1649, 1699.

When Episcopacy was re-established, on the restoration of Charles II., an Act was passed, 1662, c. 4, by which it is, *inter alia*, enacted, "That none be permitted, hereafter, to preach in public, or in families, within any diocese, or to teach any public school, or to be pedagogues to the children of persons of quality, without the licence of the ordinary of the diocese."

Soon after the Revolution, the Act, 1693, c. 22, was passed, which declares, "That all schoolmasters, and teachers of youth in schools, are and shall be liable to the trial, judgment, and censure of the Presbyteries of the bounds, for their sufficiency, qualifications, and deportment in the said office." This Act is declaratory of a right which constitutionally belongs to the Church; and, accordingly, the various Presbyteries of the Church have been in use of exercising that power, not merely with regard to parochial schoolmasters, but to teachers of youth of all denominations and descriptions. And the General Assembly, 1700, appoints all Presbyteries to take special, particular, and exact notice of all schoolmasters, chaplains, governors, and pedagogues of youth within their respective bounds.

By the Act, 1707, cap. 6, which is declared a fundamental and essential condition of the Union, it is provided, "That no Professors, &c., or others bearing office in any university or school within Scotland, be capable, or be admitted, or allowed to continue in the exercise of their functions, but such as shall own and acknowledge the civil government, and shall subscribe the Confession of Faith, and that they will conform themselves to the worship in use in this Church, and submit themselves to the government and discipline thereof, and never endeavour the prejudice or subversion of the same, and that before the respective Presbyteries of their bounds, by whatsoever gift, presentation, or provision, they may be thereto provided."

By the Act 19th Geo. II. cap. 39, sect. 21, it is enacted, "That it shall not be lawful for any person in Scotland to keep a private school, or to officiate as master or teacher in any school, until the situation and description of such school is registered, together with a certificate of the teacher being properly qualified according to law, by taking the oaths to government; and any person who acts without such register and certificate shall, for the first offence, suffer six months' imprisonment; and for any subsequent offence, upon the conviction before the Court of Justiciary or Circuit, shall be transported for life." Severe penalties are also imposed upon any parent or guardian, &c., who shall employ any such unqualified teacher. The same Act also requires, that chaplains in families, and governors, tutors, and teachers of children, shall take the oaths to government; and Sheriffs, &c., are required, from time to time, to make diligent inquiry concerning any offences that shall be committed against this Act, and to cause the same to be prosecuted, for the first offence, before themselves; and in case of any subsequent offence, to give notice of the same to his Majesty's Advocate, who is required to prosecute the same before the Court of Justiciary or Circuit Courts.

Schools in the universities and in royal burghs are excepted; also parochial schools, and those established by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and by the General Assembly, or committees thereof.

To this statement of the laws, the committee beg leave to subjoin their opinion,—

That the General Assembly shall enjoin all Presbyteries of this Church to be diligent in exercising those powers which the laws of the land, and of the Church, have committed to them, with respect to the education of youth within their bounds; and particularly to call before them all teachers of youth, whether in parochial schools, or schools of another description, and to take trial of their sufficiency and qualifications in those branches of education which they profess to teach. And that the Assembly shall recommend to the Procurator of the Church to give his advice and assistance to all Presbyteries of the Church relative to this matter, and authorise him to carry on, at the public expense, such processes as may appear to be necessary for enforcing the sentences, or ascertaining the powers, of the judicatories of the Church relative to schools; and that the Assembly shall request his Majesty's Advocate and Solicitor-General to concur with the Procurator in supporting the jurisdiction of the Church. And farther, that the General Assembly shall enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to report to the next Assembly a list of all the schools within their bounds, specifying what is taught in each school; whether the schools be held on the Lord's Day, or on other days of the week; in what way the schoolmasters are supported or maintained; whether they act for themselves, or are employed by or under the direction of others; what number of scholars attend each school at the time of making the report; and, in general, whatever else shall appear to the Presbytery of importance respecting the schools within their bounds.

XIII.

Sess. ult., June 3, 1799.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1800.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1800.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1800.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven and Melville produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1800.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The uniform experience we have had for so long a course of years of your attachment to our person, of your zeal for the interests of religion, and of the wisdom and prudence of your proceedings, cannot fail to enhance the satisfaction we have always felt in giving the sanction of our royal authority to the meetings of your venerable body.

The objects of your deliberations are among the most important that can engage the attention of men. The propagation of Christian knowledge, the maintenance

of the reformed religion, the discouragement of vice and immorality, and the diffusion of a spirit of charity and benevolence, and of submission to the laws, are ends which must excite in you the most ardent zeal for their attainment.

You will, doubtless, have felt, that your labours are become doubly important, and, in the same proportion, more painful and difficult, from the opposition of factious men, enemies of our religion, and of all social order and legal government. The success with which you have hitherto withstood their pernicious designs, affords the surest ground of confidence, that the continuance of your exertions, united with those of our other good and loyal subjects, will ultimately prove effectual, and that we shall be enabled, with the aid of Divine Providence, to transmit to posterity the unimpaired enjoyment of all the blessings, civil and religious, of our free and happy constitution.

The distress under which a large portion of your fellow-creatures must inevitably labour, during these times of scarcity with which it has pleased Almighty God to visit us, will not escape your attention; and will call upon you individually, in the discharge of your sacred functions, to inculcate with additional ardour the indispensable obligation of relieving, according to the abilities of each, the necessities of the poor.

We have again thought fit to appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven and Melville, to be our Commissioner, to represent our person and royal authority in this present Assembly; not doubting but that the same eminent qualifications which have recommended him to our repeated choice will continue to make him acceptable to you, in the execution of the high and important trust committed to his care. And we have charged him, in a most especial manner, to assure you of our great sense of your steady and firm zeal for our service, and of our resolution to preserve and maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in the full and free enjoyment of all its rights and privileges.

Trusting in the goodness of Almighty God, that He will bless your pious labours with his especial favour, we commend you to his gracious protection. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court of St James's, the 6th day of May 1800, in the 40th year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

PORTLAND.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 2, May 23, 1800.—Address to his Majesty, on his late Providential Escape from Assassination.

May it please your Majesty,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach your Majesty's throne with trembling yet joyful hearts, on your late Providential escape from the hand of a traitorous assassin.

That even treason itself should dare to attempt a life so precious to your faithful subjects, which has been endeared to them by the exercise of every virtue that can adorn the character of a patriot King, excites our utmost horror and indignation; while, at the same time, the guardian care of Divine Providence, in preserving the father of his country to his grateful and affectionate people, raises in our breast every sentiment of piety and thankfulness to the God of heaven.

When we convey to your Majesty our warmest congratulations on this awful event, we cannot fail to observe how much the most imminent dangers illustrate your Majesty's Christian fortitude and magnanimity; endear you still more and

more to your admiring subjects ; and call forth our most fervent prayers for the prolongation of a life so important at this juncture to them and to all the nations of Europe, till your Majesty shall have completed the glories of your reign, in the accomplishment of all your exalted plans for the security of Great Britain, and the peace of the world.

That Almighty God may ever keep your Majesty under His Divine protection ; that He may bless you in your person, family, and government ; that He may bless your royal consort the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family ; and that, after a long and prosperous reign, you may exchange an earthly for a celestial crown, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE BAIRD, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1800.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was received with the utmost respect and gratitude.

The approbation of the spirit and proceedings of former Assemblies, which your Majesty's benignity has condescended to express with so much paternal affection, is peculiarly grateful to us as a body, and operates on our feelings as an encouragement to follow, in attachment to your Majesty's person, in zeal for the interests of religion, and in charity towards one another, the example of those enlightened and virtuous men who have gone before us ; and to deserve, like them, that sanction of royal authority which gives solemnity and effect to the decisions of our National Church.

Impressed with a just sense of the important nature of those objects which claim our consideration, we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that the propagation of Christian knowledge, the maintenance of the reformed religion, the discouragement of vice and immorality, and the diffusion of a spirit of charity and benevolence, and of submission to the laws, are ends which shall continue to excite in our minds the most ardent zeal for their attainment.

In the trying and eventful period in which we live, we have felt that our labours have become doubly important, both to private happiness and the public safety ; while we have also had the mortification to discover, that, in the same proportion, they have been rendered more painful and difficult by the opposition of factious men, enemies of our religion, and of all social order and legal government. We rejoice, that our honest and unremitted exertions, in union with those of your Majesty's other good and loyal subjects, have hitherto been successful in frustrating their pernicious designs ; and in full assurance of the continued favour of Providence to a righteous cause, we look forward with confidence to the termination of this great conflict, when your Majesty shall be enabled to transmit to posterity the unimpaired enjoyment of all the blessings, civil and religious, of our free and happy constitution.

The distress under which a large portion of our fellow-creatures has inevitably laboured, during these times of scarcity with which it has pleased Almighty God to visit us, has repeatedly claimed our serious attention ; and amidst the hardships to which our people must still submit, it gives us the most sincere satisfaction to assure your Majesty, that in no period known to us have the good sense, the patriotism, and the charity of the country, been more conspicuously displayed. The care employed

by the opulent and well-informed to point out the nature and extent of the visitation, and to provide the means of alleviating its pressure, has been most meritorious. Of this the poor themselves are not insensible; and the patience and resignation which they have very generally exercised under difficulties seldom known in our land, give us room to hope, that, in the honest pursuits of industry, and in dutiful submission to lawful authority, they will quietly wait for the return of a more favourable harvest. Meanwhile, we beg leave to assure your Majesty, that, in the individual discharge of the duties of our function, we shall not fail to inculcate, with additional ardour, the indispensable obligation of relieving, according to the abilities of each, the necessities of the poor.

Your Majesty's donation of L.1000 for propagating Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was received with much gratitude, as a fresh instance of your paternal solicitude for the best interests of your people, as well as of the confidence which you are pleased to repose in the wisdom and fidelity of this Assembly; and it shall be our endeavour, by a prudent and just application of it, to promote the pious purposes for which it is bestowed.

The appointment of the Earl of Leven and Melville to represent your Majesty's sacred person and royal authority in this present Assembly, we regard as a pleasing testimony of your affection to our Church. The attachment of this noble Lord to your Majesty's person, his zeal for the interests of the Church of Scotland, and the virtues of his private life; the eminent qualifications which have recommended him to your Majesty's repeated choice, endear him to us in the execution of the high and important trust committed to his care. The flattering manner in which he has communicated the gracious assurance of the sense which your Majesty is pleased to entertain of our steady and firm zeal for your service, has given us the truest pleasure. And we rely with entire confidence in your Majesty's resolution to preserve and maintain the Church of Scotland, as by law established, in the full and free enjoyment of all its rights and privileges.

That Almighty God may continue to preserve your sacred life, to guide your councils, and prosper your administration; that He may bless our most gracious Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that, after a long life of eminent and exemplary virtue upon earth, you may, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, receive in heaven the recompence of reward, are the sincere prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE BAIRD, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 6, May 28, 1800.—Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Public Affairs.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne with sentiments of the sincerest attachment to your person and government.

Grateful to Providence for that happy constitution under which Britons have so long enjoyed every blessing that can sweeten and adorn social life, we reflect with the deepest regret on those groundless complaints and murmurings which were heard at no distant period in every corner of our land, and which furnished a just subject of alarm to the friends of order and peace. But we rejoice to think, that the exertions of the virtuous, the writings of the wise, and the seasonable interposition of public authority, have served, by the blessing of Heaven, to counteract the insidious arts of the disaffected; and it affords us the sincerest satisfaction to be able to assure

your Majesty, that among the great body of the people committed to our care, there prevails an unshaken attachment to our excellent constitution in Church and State, and a just abhorrence of that system of impiety and anarchy which hath spread misery and desolation through many parts of the earth.

In reviewing the events of a war, on the success of which depends the preservation of all that is dear to a virtuous mind, we admire the wisdom and the steadiness of your Majesty's councils, which have kept alive the hopes, and animated the exertions of the other States of Europe; and while our devout acknowledgments ascend to the Lord of Hosts, who hath supported our righteous cause, with heartfelt pleasure we congratulate your Majesty on the many important advantages which have been obtained in the course of last year, by the arms of our country and our allies. We recollect, with joy, that during this period, Italy hath been delivered from the tyranny of lawless force; that to the kingdom of Naples its ancient constitution hath been restored; that in Egypt a desperate plan hath been frustrated, by which our enemies hoped to spread sedition and tumult through the remotest regions of the earth; and that the defeat of a formidable rival, whom their restless hostility had excited against us, hath placed the British possessions in India in a state of permanent tranquillity; and that, on the coast of Holland, a fleet, equipped for the very purpose of conveying invaders to our shores, hath surrendered to us without a battle, adding a new and glorious trophy to the many signal victories which the valour of our seamen hath obtained.

In this rapid succession of events, which contribute so much to the security of our native country, and the general interests of mankind, we adore the Providence of that Almighty Being, to whom "the glory and the victory belong;" and we would improve them as a ground of hope, that the cause of religion and good order will triumph over all opposition; and that the efforts of Britain and her allies will be crowned with such further success as may ensure a happy termination of the important contest in which they are engaged.

That Almighty God may protect your Majesty's person, direct your councils, and prosper your administration: that He may bless our gracious Queen Charlotte, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that, after swaying the sceptre for many years, with wisdom and felicity, over a loyal, a virtuous, and a happy people, you may, through Jesus Christ our Lord, receive that unfading crown which awaits the righteous, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE BAIRD, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1800.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1800.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—Overture respecting the Attendance of Students on the Divinity Hall.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—Overture respecting the Course of University Education to be observed by Students previous to their entering the Divinity Hall.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Vagrant Teachers and Sunday Schools; and the same was given in and read. The General Assembly having considered this report of the committee, who had been directed to class the reports of Presbyteries concerning schoolmasters, whether of parochial schools, or schools of any other description; and it appearing that not a fourth part of the Presbyteries of the Church have made any report, the Assembly peremptorily enjoin all the other Presbyteries of the Church to send up to next General Assembly particular reports of their obedience to the order of last Assembly. The General Assembly trust, that those Presbyteries which have sent up particular reports, will continue the same laudable and vigilant attention to the important object specially committed to their inspection; and that they will not fail to transmit to next Assembly any new facts which may fall within their observation. The General Assembly recommend to all Presbyteries to take the method which appears to them most expedient of examining the teachers on the branch of knowledge which they profess to teach, to require all parochial and established schoolmasters to subscribe the Confession of Faith and Formula, if they have not already done so, and to ask all teachers of youth, without exception, to produce to the Presbytery attestations of their having taken the oaths to government; and they order a particular report of obedience to this recommendation to be made to next Assembly. And further, the General Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to transmit, without delay, attested copies of their reports to the Assembly, to the Sheriffs within whose jurisdiction they are situated. And they instruct the clerks to keep the reports sent up to this Assembly, and the report of the committee on this subject, in safe custody. And the General Assembly appoint their clerks to cause separate copies of this order to be printed, together with the injunction of last Assembly relative to this matter, and to transmit copies thereof to the moderator of each Presbytery of the Church, to be laid by him before the Presbytery at their first ordinary meeting after receiving the same.

The Injunction of the General Assembly, 1799, is then repeated:—

The General Assembly enjoin all Presbyteries of this Church to be diligent in exercising those powers which the laws of the land and of the Church have committed to them, with respect to the education of youth within their bounds, &c.

XII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—Recommendation by the General Assembly, for promoting a Subscription towards Defraying the Expense of the Appeal in the Cause relating to the Schoolmaster of Bothwell; and Order for Printing the Appeal Case prepared by the Procurator.

The committee appointed to take the necessary steps in the cause relating to the schoolmaster of Bothwell, having reported to the Assembly that the appeal from the two last interlocutors of the Court of Session in that cause has been heard and determined by the House of Peers; and that the interlocutors complained of have been finally reversed: That though the committee had received L.118, 14s. 10d. from the voluntary contribution of the Presbyteries, and L.80 from the funds of the Church, the expense incurred has, notwithstanding, considerably exceeded the funds with which the committee were entrusted, and that the deficiency amounts to upwards of L.196. The General Assembly, considering that the judgment which has been ultimately pronounced in this cause is of general importance, as it has effectually established the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church, with regard to the qualifications and the trial of parochial schoolmasters: and considering, at the same time, that the state of the funds of the Church does not allow the Assembly at present to make good the whole of the expense incurred, did, and hereby do, earnestly recommend it to the several Presbyteries within the bounds of this Church, and especially to those who have not hitherto contributed, to promote a subscription among their members, in order to assist the funds of the Church, in extinguishing a debt which the final decision of this cause, so important in its consequences to the whole country, has occasioned. And the General Assembly appoint the clerks of Assembly to cause this minute to be immediately printed at the public expense, and to transmit a copy thereof, without delay, to the moderators of the several Presbyteries, which they hereby enjoin them to lay before the said Presbyteries respectively, at their first ordinary meeting after it shall come to their hands. And further, the General Assembly appoint the said moderators to remit to Mr William Murray, Agent for the Church, whatever sums shall be subscribed within their respective Presbyteries, and, if possible, to do this on or before the 1st day of October next. And the General Assembly renew the appointment of the committee, with instructions to attend to the progress of the subscription, and to the application of the sums which shall be received by the Agent; and to report the result to next General Assembly.

The General Assembly, considering, at the same time, that the appeal case prepared by the Procurator in this cause contains a statement of facts, which it would be extremely useful to render generally known through the Church, they appoint the clerks to cause such a number of copies thereof to be printed as the committee shall think expedient, to circulate them among the several Presbyteries, and to apply to the cashier of the Church for the sum necessary to defray the expense, which the Assembly hereby authorise him to advance.

XIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1800.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1801.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1801.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1801.—The King's Commission to David Earl of Leven and Melville produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1801.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. It is your peculiar duty to provide for the preservation of pure religion, both in faith and morals, and to remember that the advancement of piety, and the practice of every Christian duty, at all times demand from you the greatest assiduity and care. But if these considerations are at any time entitled to more than ordinary attention, it is when notions and principles, equally destructive of the temporal and eternal welfare of those who entertain them, have been industriously propagated amongst all orders and degrees of men.

It is to the credit of those to whom the interests of Christianity are more peculiarly consigned, that the evil tendency of these notions and principles has been exposed, and that their progress has in a great degree been checked; but the exertions of every day still serves to convince us that the slightest relaxation of those exertions (which Divine Providence has hitherto crowned with success) may be productive of the most fatal and ruinous effects; that the enemies of the Christian religion (like the enemies of social order) are always on the watch, and will not fail to profit by every advantage which lukewarmness or inadvertence may afford them, and that, therefore, the friends of piety and good morals still look up to you for that protection which they can most effectually receive from your unremitting vigilance and attention.

That these expectations will not be disappointed, your past conduct affords us a sufficient pledge; and we feel the fullest assurance, that that gravity and devotion of mind, that loyal attachment to our person, that tender concern for the welfare of the people committed to your charge, and that spirit of Christian love and charity towards each other, which have hitherto characterized your proceedings, will not be withdrawn from them, at a time when they are calculated to produce the best effects, and to avert the most disastrous evils.

The just rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland are objects of our especial care; and when we repeat the assurance of our firm resolution to maintain them unimpaired, we adjure you duly to consider the various important duties which it is incumbent upon you faithfully to discharge, and to reflect that not only the welfare of the establishment, and the interests of civil society, claim from every individual the strictest attention to his conduct, but that the very existence of religion itself may depend upon the precepts and example of its appointed ministers.

We have again constituted and appointed our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, David Earl of Leven and Melville, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in this Assembly; and it affords us the greatest satisfaction to reflect, that the sentiments, which we formerly expressed, of confidence in his zeal for the cause of religion, and for the peace and prosperity of the Church of Scotland, have been confirmed by the experience of another year; and that you will consequently continue to receive from his faithful services the most effectual co-operation

and support in promoting the two great ends of religion, the glory of God and the welfare of mankind. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court of St James's, the 12th day of May 1801, in the forty-first year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

PORTLAND.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1801.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We have received, with the most sincere respect and gratitude, the very gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Sensible that it is our peculiar duty to provide for the preservation of pure religion, and remembering that the advancement of piety, and the practice of every Christian duty, at all times demand from us the greatest assiduity and care, we feel that these considerations are entitled to more than ordinary attention, when notions and principles equally destructive of the temporal and eternal welfare of those who entertain them, have been industriously propagated amongst all orders and degrees of men. These notions and principles, we beg leave to assure your Majesty, it is our firm purpose steadily and uniformly to oppose; and we hope that our endeavours, combining with the efforts of all to whom the interests of Christianity are sacred, and aided by the blessing of the Most High, may still be effectual to expose their evil tendency, and check their progress.

In times like the present, when the enemies of religion (like the enemies of social order) are always on the watch, and will not fail to profit by every advantage which lukewarmness or inadvertence may afford them, we feel that the duties incumbent on us are unusually difficult and momentous. We are convinced that any relaxation of these exertions, which Divine Providence has hitherto crowned with success, may be productive of the most fatal and ruinous effects; and acting under the influence of this conviction, we shall study to afford to the friends of piety and good morals, every protection which can result from the vigilant discharge of the important duties which your Majesty has so earnestly recommended to our attention.

We are encouraged to apply ourselves, with the most unwearied zeal and assiduity, to the accomplishment of this great object, by the confidence which your Majesty is pleased to repose in us; and while we have a proper sense of the difficulties with which the friends of religion and good order have to contend, we are grateful to Almighty God, that we are blessed with a Sovereign whose example and authority are uniformly employed to enforce the sanctions of religion, and give weight to the admonitions of its teachers. We trust that, both as individuals, watching over the people under our care, and as an Assembly, consulting for the general interest of the Church of Scotland, we shall ever maintain that sacred sense of religious obligation; that loyal attachment to your Majesty's person and government; that tender concern for the welfare of the people committed to our charge; and that spirit of Christian love and charity towards each other, which have hitherto recommended us to your royal protection, and which your Majesty has condescended to mention with approbation.

We rely, with entire confidence, on your Majesty's gracious assurance, that the just rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland are objects of your especial care, and that it is your resolution to maintain them unimpaired. That your Majesty has deigned to admonish us with such affectionate zeal, of the various and important duties incumbent on us, we consider as a renewed proof of that warm concern for

the interests of religion, and the prosperity of your people, which has rendered your Majesty so justly dear to all good men. We are sensible that in the manner in which these duties are discharged, the welfare of the establishment, the interests of civil society, and the influence of religion, must, in a great measure, depend; and we take the liberty to assure your Majesty that, both by our precepts and our example, we shall ever study to promote the interests of religion and virtue, and to diffuse among the people under our care sentiments of attachment to our happy constitution, loyalty to your Majesty's person and government, and zeal for the public good.

The representation of your royal person in our General Assemblies we regard with the highest respect, as the symbol of that union between Church and State which tends to give stability to both. We receive as a testimony of your paternal regard for the interests of the Church of Scotland, the appointment of the Earl of Leven and Melville as your Majesty's Commissioner in this Assembly. His approved loyalty to your Majesty; his warm zeal for the cause of religion; his hereditary attachment to the Church of Scotland, and his tried fidelity in the high office with which your Majesty has again been pleased to invest him, give us the fullest confidence that we shall continue to receive from his faithful services the most effectual co-operation and support, in promoting the two great ends of religion, the glory of God and the welfare of mankind.

Your Majesty's donation of L.1000, for the propagation of Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we have received with the most sincere gratitude; and it shall be our care to employ this mark of your royal munificence for promoting, in the most efficacious manner, the pious purpose for which it is bestowed.

That Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person and prolong your reign;—that He may bless the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family;—that He may direct your councils, and prosper your administration;—that He may continue with us the inestimable advantages which we enjoy under your Majesty's mild and equitable government, and transmit them as an inheritance to future generations; and that, after a long and happy reign over a free, a loyal, and a religious people, He may receive you into those mansions where the just inherit an unfading crown, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM RITCHIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1801.—Address to his Majesty on the present Situation of Public Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met together in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach your throne with the warmest sentiments of thankfulness to God, and of affection to your Majesty, which your recovery from a late dangerous sickness can raise in the minds of dutiful subjects, who have so long enjoyed the blessings of your mild and auspicious administration.

It is with much satisfaction, that we can assure your Majesty of the steady loyalty and attachment of the great body of your Majesty's subjects in this part of the United Kingdom to your Majesty's person and government, of the strong sensation of alarm which they felt on your Majesty's late illness, and their unfeigned joy on your restora-

tion to health. At the same time, we gladly bear testimony to their patient endurance of all the hardships of the late uncommon scarcity, which could be equalled only by the generous exertions of the superior ranks for their relief.

When we consider the unprecedented state of war and desolation, of fear and alarm, into which Europe has been thrown, by the daring ambition and unjust usurpations of France; the repeated and audacious attempts she has made to corrupt the minds of your Majesty's subjects in their principles of religion and loyalty, and the implacable rage with which she has persisted in her enmity to the British Empire, we contemplate with the highest admiration the steadiness and magnanimity of your Majesty's councils and conduct amidst the wreck of so many states; and we return thanks to Almighty God, for having inspired your Majesty with such unshaken fortitude and persevering wisdom.

Amidst the splendid achievements of your Majesty's reign, permit us to say, that we admire and rejoice in none more than in your most fortunate completion of a legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, a measure of state so long wished for with anxiety by the wise, and which, whether we consider its magnitude, the difficulty of its accomplishment, or the great and important effects it is likely to produce, must stand recorded in the annals of the world as a masterpiece of human policy, and a lasting monument of your Majesty's paternal wisdom. The experience which your Majesty's subjects, in this part of the United Kingdom, have had, for nearly a century past, of the happy consequences of a similar measure, entitles them to look forward with joyful expectation to no distant period, when the United Empire in general, and the neighbouring Island in particular, shall reap the full fruits of your Majesty's wise and magnanimous councils.

While we congratulate your Majesty on having so happily increased the energy and security of your dominions by this memorable act of union, we rejoice in having, at the same time, an opportunity of expressing our fervent gratitude to Almighty God for the success with which he has crowned your Majesty's arms. We consider those victories achieved in the Baltic and Egypt, as having added new splendour to the conduct and valour of your Majesty's naval and military forces; and we trust that, by the blessing of Heaven, they may be the means of opening the eyes of those nations, who, deluded or overawed, have tamely yielded to the haughty mandates of an ambitious and arrogant power, of terminating speedily the horrors of war, and of leading to a general peace, which may secure the just rights of contending nations, and restore to the world concord and tranquillity.

Your Majesty, we humbly hope, will not consider it as unbecoming or unseasonable, if we mingle with our joy for the victory in Egypt, our regret for the death of the good and gallant hero, Sir Ralph Abercromby, under whom it was achieved. We unite with the rest of our fellow-subjects in feeling that, by his death, your Majesty's service and kingdom have sustained a signal loss. But this General Assembly has, at the same time, peculiar motives to indulge a tender interest in his fate, as one who was a member of our Church, and whose name stands on the roll of our present Assembly. The nation will raise a monument to his valour—it is our melancholy duty to record and attest to posterity his virtue.

That Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, direct your councils, and render your administration prosperous;—that He may bless our gracious Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that, after you have reigned long with felicity and wisdom over a free, grateful, and happy people, He may bestow on you that crown of righteousness that fadeth not away, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM RITCHIE, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 8, May 29, 1801.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1801.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1801.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1801.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters.

The General Assembly find, from the report of their committee, that fifty Presbyteries of this Church have sent up reports of their obedience to the order of last Assembly, concerning teachers and schoolmasters; that many of those Presbyteries, probably from the circumstance of not having received in due time a printed copy of the order, have not complied with all the injunctions contained in it; and, in particular, have failed in taking trial of the qualification of private teachers, and in transmitting a copy of their report to the sheriff of the county; and that twenty-eight Presbyteries have not yet reported their obedience.

The General Assembly being satisfied from the report of their committee, that the order of last Assembly has produced the most beneficial and important effects in various districts of this Church, unanimously agree to renew the order of last Assembly in all its parts; peremptorily enjoin those Presbyteries who have not yet obeyed the order to send up reports to next Assembly; enjoin those Presbyteries whose reports do not come up to the terms of the order, to cause it to be read at their first ordinary meeting, to proceed without delay to supply the deficiencies of their former procedure, and to report their obedience to next Assembly: And recommend to those Presbyteries whose reports are complete to continue their laudable attention to this important object; and to report to next Assembly any new facts relative to teachers and schoolmasters that may arise within their bounds during the ensuing year. And the General Assembly appoint their clerks to cause separate copies of this resolution to be printed, together with copies of the order of Assemblies, 1799 and 1800, relative to this matter; and to transmit copies thereof to the moderator of each Presbytery of this Church, to be laid by him before the Presbytery at their first ordinary meeting after receiving the same.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1801.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1802.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1802.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1802.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1802.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The uniform experience we have had, for so many years, of the happy effects resulting to my good people of Scotland from the General Assembly of your Church, has induced us to countenance your present meeting by our royal authority; and, for this purpose, we have made choice of our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier to be our Commissioner, and to represent our person in this Assembly, being fully persuaded that his zeal for our service, his affection for the Church of Scotland, and his firm attachment to the true interests of his country, will make this our choice highly acceptable to you.

We gladly embrace this opportunity of renewing to you our fixed purpose and resolution to support the Church you represent in the full possession and enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established. Convinced, at the same time, that its prosperity will ever essentially depend upon the due discharge of their duties by all the members of it, in their several ranks and stations, we cannot too earnestly recommend to your most serious consideration the means you possess of accomplishing so desirable an object, by a zealous and prudent exertion of the influence belonging to your sacred function.

At this moment, in particular, whilst you endeavour to impress upon the minds of the people committed to your charge a due sense of gratitude to that Divine Providence which has enabled me to put an end to a long and arduous war, and to restore to them the blessings of peace, you will not fail to remind them that nothing but a strict obedience to the will of God, a firm adherence to our reformed faith, a disinterested love of their country, and submission to its laws, can give these blessings permanence and stability.

We shall receive the highest satisfaction on being informed of your having applied yourselves, with your accustomed piety and prudence, to matters so well deserving

our recommendation and all your care. You may at all times depend upon our most ready concurrence in whatever may conduce to the advancement of purposes so essential to the welfare of my people ; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 14th day of May 1802, in the forty-second year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

PELHAM.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1802.—Act respecting the Arrangement of the Assembly-House for the proper Accommodation of the Members.

Upon the report of the committee appointed by last Assembly, respecting the better arrangement of the Assembly-House for the accommodation of the members, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the following regulations, viz. :—

- 1st, That the upper galleries shall, as formerly, be set apart for strangers.
- 2d, That the under galleries shall, as usual, be reserved for preachers and students in Divinity, and that the said preachers and students shall be required to produce tickets, authorising their admission, from the Professors of Divinity.
- 3d, That one bench, contiguous to each of the under galleries, shall be separated from the middle part of the house by a proper rail, for the accommodation of those ministers who are not members of the Assembly.
- 4th, That no person shall be admitted into the remaining part of the house except members of the Assembly, the magistrates of the city of Edinburgh for the time being, the Lord Commissioner's attendants, and parties with their counsel and agents.
- 5th, That the members shall, when they deliver their commissions to the clerks of the Assembly, receive tickets, containing their respective names, from the said clerks; and that the beadles shall be strictly enjoined to refuse them admittance into the house unless they shall produce their tickets, or shall, upon a motion for that purpose, be admitted by the authority of the Assembly.
- 6th, That a beadle shall be appointed to superintend the other beadles, and be made responsible for their conduct.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1802.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty hath honoured this meeting of our National Assembly, hath been received by us with all the respect and gratitude due for such a mark of royal favour.

The approbation which your Majesty is pleased to express of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland we feel as an animating motive to persevere in the conduct which procures for us the sanction of your royal authority.

The appointment of the Right Honourable Francis Lord Napier to represent your royal person in this General Assembly, we regard as a fresh proof of your Majesty's favour. His zeal for your Majesty's service, his affection for the Church of Scotland, and his firm attachment to the true interests of his country, ensure to him the most respectful and cordial reception.

We rely, with gratitude and confidence, upon the assurance that it is your Majesty's fixed purpose and resolution to support the Church which we represent, in the full possession and enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

We feel most deeply the importance of your Majesty's paternal warning, that the prosperity of our Church will ever essentially depend upon the due discharge of the duties incumbent upon all the members of it, in their several ranks and stations; and we shall not cease to pray that we may be enabled, through the Divine blessing, by a zealous and prudent exertion of the influence belonging to our sacred functions, to promote the accomplishment of an object so desirable. At this moment, in particular, whilst we endeavour to impress upon the minds of the people committed to our charge a due sense of gratitude to that Divine Providence which has enabled your Majesty to put an end to a long and arduous war, and to restore to them the blessings of peace, we shall not fail to remind them, that nothing but a strict obedience to the will of God, a firm adherence to our reformed faith, a disinterested love of their country, and submission to its laws, can give these blessings permanence and stability. We bless the King of kings, that we live under the government of a Prince who recommends to our attention objects so worthy of all our care; whose ready concurrence will support, and whose high approbation will reward, every exertion to promote them.

We receive with much gratitude the royal donation of L.1000, for promoting the knowledge of the Protestant religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. We shall apply it, with fidelity and diligence, to the pious and important purpose for which it is given.

That Almighty God, by whom Kings reign, may preserve your Majesty's person, and direct your councils;—that He may bless the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family;—that He may continue to us the many national blessings in which your subjects now rejoice; and that, after enjoying long the affection of a loyal and grateful people, you may receive a heavenly crown, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES FINLAYSON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1802.—Address to his Majesty on the Present Situation of Public Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne of our gracious Sovereign, with every sentiment of warm affection and profound respect, to congratulate your Majesty on the happy issue which God, in his Providence, hath given to a bloody, extended, and expensive war, by restoring to Europe the blessings of peace.

When we consider the singular nature of the late war, which threatened in its progress the subversion of social order, and of every political establishment in the civilized world, we offer up the devout homage of grateful hearts to the Sovereign of the universe, who, by his blessing on the wisdom of your Majesty's councils, on the splendid achievements of your fleets and armies, on the steady, affectionate, and zealous loyalty of your people, not only hath maintained our independence as a nation, but, from the furnace of war, hath brought us forth a people increasing in

our numbers, united in our strength, growing in prosperity, attached with warmer affection to your Majesty's person and government, and animated by a steadier zeal in support of our unrivalled constitution, both in Church and State.

The Church which we represent has uniformly experienced, and we gratefully acknowledge, the benign influence of your Majesty's auspicious reign. We bless the God of heaven for having given us a King whose public and private virtues adorn the most exalted state of human greatness. We renew the declarations of former Assemblies, that, in the faithful discharge of our duty, we will continue to cultivate in the minds of the people that reverence of God, and zeal for revealed religion; that loyalty to our Sovereign, and attachment to the constitution; those habits of persevering industry, and of domestic virtue, which have stamped upon Britons a national character, that is the glory of our country, and the admiration of the world. As the servants of the God of peace we have, with deep commiseration of afflicted humanity, contemplated the workings of that spirit of insubordination, which has convulsed the world; and in review of the late eventful contest we find, highly endeared to our affectionate veneration, a Sovereign, who is the father of his subjects, and the watchful guardian of a constitution which, built upon the permanent foundation of religion and liberty, shall, we trust, be preserved, through ages, a sacred pledge of the protecting care of Heaven—a majestic monument of the wisdom of our ancestors, by whose enlightened patriotism it was reared,—an illustrious trophy to the valour of our contemporaries, by whom it has been so bravely defended,—and a blessing to the succeeding race of Britons, who, we hope, shall receive it unimpaired as the rich inheritance of their fathers.

That Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may prolong your Majesty's life, and prosper your administration; that He may bless the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all your Royal Family; and that, after a useful and happy reign on earth, you may obtain a crown of glory, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES FINLAYSON, *Moderator*.

VI.

Sess. 7, May 27, 1802.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters, renewed.

(The Injunctions of 1799, 1800, and 1801, are first repeated in the original edition.)

The General Assembly find, from the report of their Committee respecting the examination of Schools, That sixty Presbyteries have made returns of their obedience to the injunctions of the General Assembly; and that eighteen have hitherto made none: That of the additional returns this year, six Presbyteries report that they have completely fulfilled the instructions of the Assembly; four that they have made considerable progress, and will proceed in their diligence; and three state that they have met with considerable difficulties: That in one Presbytery there is a united parish where there is no parochial schoolmaster, nor any school-room, nor schoolmaster's house; and that, though a large district, it has been deprived of a public teacher for these six years past. That in another Presbytery there are missionaries, who have evaded the order of the sheriff, to cease from teaching till they had complied with the laws of the country respecting teachers. And that, in a third, a certain student has become a missionary preacher; and that, under his direction, and that

of others, various schools are taught, and irregular teachings and preachings persisted in; and that the said student refuses either to sign the Formula, or to qualify to government: That several Presbyteries who had formerly sent reports, have again made returns of a satisfactory nature.

The General Assembly, having taken the above circumstances into their serious consideration, did, and hereby do, renew their former injunctions to Presbyteries, and expressly require reports from such Presbyteries as have hitherto made none; recommending it to all Presbyteries to send lists of refractory teachers to the sheriffs of counties, that they may proceed against them according to law.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 27, 1802.—Declaration and Instruction of the General Assembly in favour of the Parochial Schoolmasters in Scotland.

The General Assembly, having taken into their serious consideration *Overtures* from the Presbyteries of Lochmaben and Annan, concerning the present state of the parish schools of Scotland, feel themselves called upon, as the constitutional superintendents of all teachers of youth within the bounds of this Church, to declare, that the parochial schoolmasters of Scotland being entrusted, in a considerable degree, with the important charge of instilling into the minds of the rising generation the principles of religion and morality, are well entitled to public encouragement; that they are a most useful body of men, whose exertions, by disseminating amongst all ranks of the community solid and practical instruction, have contributed very much to the improvement, the good order, and the success of the people of Scotland; that, by the depreciation of the value of money, their salaries and emoluments, which, with a very few exceptions, are paid entirely in money, are not equal to the gains of a day-labourer; that in many parts of the country it has of late been found impossible to fill the parish schools with persons properly qualified, and that the whole order is sinking to a state of depression most hurtful to their usefulness; that it is extremely desirable that means should be devised for holding forth to men of sound principles and good capacity sufficient inducement to undertake the office of parochial schoolmasters; and that such men, when properly encouraged, having an interest in the prosperity of the country, would prove the most effectual instruments of counteracting the operations of those who, at present, or in any future time, may attempt to poison the minds of the rising generation with principles inimical to religion, subversive of order, and destructive of our happy constitution in Church and State.

The General Assembly instruct their Moderator, and the Procurator for the Church, to embrace every favourable opportunity of expressing, in the name of the Church, the sentiments contained in this Declaration; to correspond upon this important subject with his Majesty's Officers of State for Scotland, and to co-operate in every way that may appear to them most prudent and effectual, for giving to any plan that may be formed for the relief of the parochial schoolmasters all the weight which it can derive from the countenance of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

VIII.

Sess. 8, May 28, 1802.—Act concerning the Extent and Marches of Glebes.

The General Assembly, having taken into their consideration the 8th Act of Assembly, 1762, entitled, "Act against Dilapidation of Stipends, and for ascertaining the Extent of Glebes," did, and hereby do, enjoin the Synods of this Church to take care that Presbyteries strictly obey the same, particularly respecting the ex-

tent and marches of glebes, and other emoluments, as expressed in the said Act, whereof the tenor follows :—&c.

(See Act 8th, Assembly, 1762.)

IX.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1802.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

X.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1802.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

XI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1802.—Overture and Recommendation respecting the Promoting of Theological Learning.

It was overtured to the General Assembly, That, for the important purpose of promoting Theological Learning, the Assembly recommend in the following terms :—

Whereas there is nothing more essentially connected with the best interests of the Church, than the improvement of those who are in a course of preparation for becoming ministers of it; and that it is of the utmost importance they should make theological literature not a secondary, but the first and chief subject of their study; and considering that the law respecting the licensing of probationers shortens the period of study, when regular attendance is given; the General Assembly, with the design of following out the meaning of this provision, and making students of divinity embrace every opportunity of improvement which the Universities afford where they give such attendance, hereby most earnestly recommend to all Presbyteries, that when students apply to be taken on trials, as having given regular attendance, they shall require from them certificates of their having attended all the Professors of Divinity who regularly deliver lectures in the Universities where they have studied, whether these lectures be delivered by those Professors usually denominated Professors of Divinity, or of Church History; and likewise of their having attended the Professor of Hebrew at least for one session.

The General Assembly, having taken this overture into their serious consideration, unanimously approved thereof, and did, and hereby do, most earnestly recommend the same to all the Presbyteries of this Church accordingly. And, with the design of making this their recommendation completely known, the Assembly ordain, that it be printed in a commodious form, and transmitted to the several Presbyteries; and also, that a copy be sent to every Theological Professor in the different universities of Scotland, to be read by him at some convenient time towards the beginning of each session.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1802.—New Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1802.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1803.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1803.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1803.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1803.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1803.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, May 27, 1803.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

V.

Sess. 8, May 27, 1803.—Recommendation respecting the Promoting of Theological Learning.

(Renewed.)

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1803.—Address to his Majesty, on the Providential Discovery and Defeat of a most Atrocious and Daring Conspiracy.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, humbly approach the throne, to express our sincere and heartfelt congratulations on the Providential discovery and defeat of the late most atrocious and daring conspiracy against your Majesty's person and government. Enjoying the blessings of your mild and equitable administration, witnessing in your conduct the unceasing exercise of every public and private virtue, and convinced, by long experience, of your affectionate concern for the happiness of all your people, we look back with astonishment and indignation on the desperate plans of the disaffected; and with grateful hearts we bless the God of our fathers, who, in his great goodness, disappointed their counsels, and averted from us the projected horrors of insurrection and rebellion.

While we thus rejoice in the preservation of our Gracious Sovereign, and of the domestic tranquillity of our country, we cannot, at this interesting crisis, reflect without anxiety on the renewal of hostilities with France. As servants of the Prince of peace, lovers of our country, and of mankind, we feel all the sentiments of concern and regret which become us on the commencement of war. But when we consider the spirit of ambition and encroachment which actuates the present governors of the French nation; their violation of the rights of independent states, especially their undisguised determination to leave no expedient untried for diminishing the power and influence of Great Britain; their repeated and insulting attempts to interfere with the internal arrangements of this kingdom, and to procure, by menaces, an infringement of our free constitution; together with the arrogance or the neglect with which they have persisted to treat the remonstrances made in behalf of the just rights of your Majesty's crown and subjects—we cannot fail to be persuaded that the hostile measures to which your Majesty has at last so reluctantly resorted, had become indispensably necessary for maintaining the honour and security of the nation. Deeply impressed with these considerations, we shall omit no means becoming our station of cherishing in the people committed to our charge, that loyalty to the King, that submission to the laws, that zeal for the defence of their religion, of their liberties and independence, which the circumstances of the times so imperiously demand. Proud of the privileges which Britons enjoy, the people of this happy land feel, as one man, the inestimable value of the great interests that are now at stake; they see with due solicitude, but without dejection or fear, the dangers that threaten them. And we are persuaded, that, at this moment, we can do nothing which will be more acceptable to them, than to convey to the throne their fixed and unalterable resolution to defend, at all hazards, and against every aggressor, the honour and independence of their country.

We are thankful to Providence, that the seditious spirit which a few years ago had infected some of your Majesty's subjects in this part of the United Kingdom has now ceased to show itself. And we trust that the unanimity of the people, under the guidance of your Majesty's paternal wisdom, will, through the blessing of Heaven, be effectual for the protection of our national security, and for restoring to us, at no distant period, the blessings of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace.

That Almighty God may bless your Majesty's fleets and armies with success; that He may direct your councils, and make your reign long and prosperous; and that a race of kings of your royal line, friends of religion, liberty, and their country, may always sway the sceptre of these lands, are, through Christ, the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GILBERT GERARD, *Moderator.*

VII.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1803.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1803.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1803.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1804.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1804.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1804.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1804.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. It is with the highest satisfaction that we have again thought fit to sanction with our royal authority this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Assured by the experience of a long course of years, we look forward with perfect confidence to the continuance of that zeal, wisdom, and moderation, which have uniformly marked your proceedings, and to a steady perseverance in those sentiments of loyalty and affection towards us and our government for which you have ever been distinguished. On our part, you may firmly rely upon our effectual co-operation and support, and upon our unalterable resolution to maintain the Church you represent in the full possession and enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established. The objects of your care are

both arduous and important. To your charge are committed the most essential interests of my people, their morals and their religion ; the indispensable means of their happiness here, and the only ground of their hopes hereafter. Like faithful shepherds of the flock, you will watch over them with unceasing vigilance ; and if this be at all times your bounden duty, and the effectual discharge of it so essentially necessary to the public welfare, I need not remind you what a peculiar degree of importance is at present attached to it, and how nearly we are concerned to secure, by our unremitting and best endeavours, in these awful times of difficulty and danger, that Divine protection with which we have been hitherto so signally favoured. We have again thought fit to constitute and appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier to be our Commissioner, and to represent our person in this General Assembly, not doubting but that he will continue to be acceptable to you, as well from his zeal and affection for our person and government, as for the knowledge and uprightness with which he will fulfil the duties of this high and important office. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 9th day of May 1804, in the forty-fourth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

C. YORKE.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1804.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour the present General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the most lively sentiments of respect and gratitude.

The entire approbation which, from the experience of a long course of years, your Majesty has condescended to express of former General Assemblies, is to us a most valuable recompence for our past labours in the discharge of duty. And it forcibly reminds us of the many signal blessings which, by the favour of Divine Providence, our Church and nation have enjoyed under the auspices of a King, to whose heart nothing is dearer than the happiness of his people, and to whose regard nothing is a more effectual recommendation than a sincere desire to promote that object.

The confidence which your Majesty is pleased to repose in this General Assembly we are anxious to justify and confirm, as well by persevering attention to the great interests of religion and order, as by that moderation in our proceedings, and that mutual charity which are so congenial to the spirit of the Gospel, and so conducive to the dignity and usefulness of our deliberations.

We receive with the utmost satisfaction the renewed assurance of your Majesty's unalterable resolution to maintain the Church we represent in the full possession and enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established ; and in the exercise of our functions we firmly rely upon your Majesty's effectual co-operation and support.

We are deeply sensible of the importance of the objects of our care. We know and feel that to our charge are committed the most essential interests of your Majesty's people in this part of the United Kingdom, their morals and their religion ; the indispensable means of their happiness here, and the only ground of their hopes hereafter.

Animated in the work of our ministry by your Majesty's affectionate recommendations, we will watch over the flock with unceasing vigilance, and be careful to lead

them in those paths of righteousness, in which we may hope to obtain the continuance of that Divine protection with which we have hitherto been so signally favoured. We feel that this is at all times our bounden duty, and that a peculiar degree of importance is attached to the effectual discharge of it in the present times of difficulty and danger. We should be wanting, however, in the duty we owe to those over whom we preside in the offices of religion, if we did not assure your Majesty that their good dispositions in the present trying circumstances at once encourage and assist our exertions.

The re-appointment of the Right Honourable Francis Lord Napier to represent your Majesty's royal person in this General Assembly is to us most acceptable. The experience we have had of the affection of that Noble Lord for your Majesty's person and government; of the knowledge and uprightness with which he has formerly fulfilled the duties of that high office; and of his zeal for the interest of the Church of Scotland, entitles him to our highest honour and regard.

We receive your Majesty's royal donation for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and the principles of the Reformed religion, in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as a pleasing expression of your Majesty's unremitted attention to the best interests of your people. It shall be our care to secure, by a faithful and considerate application of this bounty, the valuable objects for which it has been bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, and prosper the administration of your government; that He may bless the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that, after a long and happy reign over a loyal and affectionate people, you may at length be received to the glories of the heavenly kingdom, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN INGLIS, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1804.—Address to his Majesty on the present Arduous Situation of Public Affairs.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne, in the present alarming situation of the affairs of Europe, with sentiments of the most sincere and affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person and government.

Persuaded that your Majesty's paternal care preserved to us the blessings of peace, so long as they could be retained with safety and honour, we beheld with indignation that spirit of aggression and aggrandisement in the ruler of France, which obliged your Majesty to draw the sword in defence of every thing we regard as dear.

His lawless ambition, not satisfied with the overthrow of several independent governments, with the extinction of some of the most free and prosperous states, and with the subjugation of France itself to a most odious tyranny, seems to aim at nothing less than universal domination.

Regarding the prosperity and power of Britain as the chief obstacles to the progress of his despotism, he directs all his force, and that of his allies, to the invasion of our country, and, by a mighty and unprecedented armament, in the fierceness of his rage, threatens us with desolation.

Although we consider the present war as the most arduous and important contest in which our country has ever been engaged; although we feel that our religion, our liberties, our laws, and our existence as a nation, are at stake; yet, trusting in the

justice of our cause, and looking up with humble confidence for the continuance of that Divine protection which has hitherto supported us, we behold the immense preparations of the enemy without dismay.

We rejoice in that ardour and enthusiasm in the cause of their country which animate all classes of your Majesty's subjects; and we have peculiar satisfaction in being able to assure your Majesty that this generous and patriotic spirit glows in the hearts of the people of Scotland.

We beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on the success which has attended your arms, in confining within their ports formidable armaments, intended to carry war, in all its horrors, into the heart of our country, and on the important conquests achieved by your forces in the East and West Indies.

Happy in the inestimable privileges we enjoy under your Majesty's mild and paternal rule, we trust that the united efforts of a brave nation will, by the blessing of the Almighty, defend and maintain our free constitution, against the hostile enterprises of a haughty enemy, and convince him that he shall never be able to wrest from us and from our children the prosperity at which he may repine.

That the God of armies, the Arbiter of battles, may give success to the means employed for the protection and security of our country; that He may shield your Majesty's fleets and armies, and lead them to victory; that He may speedily restore to us the blessings of an honourable, an advantageous, and a lasting peace; that, happy in your family and government, your Majesty may long reign in the hearts of your subjects; and that descendants of your illustrious house, steadily maintaining the civil and religious rights of a free people, may sway the British sceptre to the latest posterity, are the fervent prayers of,

Most Gracious Sovereign, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful,
and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this
General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN INGLIS, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1804.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1804.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1804.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Renewed and re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1804.—Recommendation respecting the Promoting of Theological Learning.
(Renewed.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1804.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held with-
in the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1805.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1805.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 16, 1805.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced,
and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 16, 1805.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 18, 1805.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 3, May 18, 1805.—Address to his Majesty on the present Arduous Situation of
Public Affairs.*

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the
Church of Scotland, met in our General Assembly, desire to approach the throne in

the present circumstances of national danger, for the purpose of expressing our affectionate and zealous attachment to your Majesty's person and government.

Deeply impressed with a sense of the invaluable blessings which our country has so long enjoyed, under the operation of equal laws, and under your Majesty's mild and auspicious reign, we cannot look, without much anxiety, to the progress of a war in which the avowed design of our inveterate foe is the subversion of our liberty and independence. And we lament that the conduct of another nation, under the influence of the enemy with whom we chiefly contend, has, at length, rendered it indispensable for your Majesty to extend still more widely the scene of this arduous contest. Yet it is impossible not to perceive, in the present condition of that nation, and of other states that have yielded to the same domineering foe, the most decisive evidence that our safety, under God, depends upon a spirit of vigorous and determined resistance, proportioned to whatever shall be the difficulties, and the necessary duration of the war in which we are engaged.

As servants of the God of peace, we rejoice to hear that a pacific overture had been received by your Majesty. But while we repose entire confidence in your Majesty's councils, for acceding at any time to such terms of peace as may be consistent with the permanent safety and interests of the British empire, we cannot forget that these objects are intimately connected with the general security and independence of Europe, and that the maintenance of our national honour is indispensable to our national safety. We, therefore, congratulate your Majesty on the patriotic zeal, so universally manifested by your subjects, as the best pledge of our ultimately rising superior to the power of our enemies. And feeling ourselves, in some measure, responsible for those under our own charge, we have much satisfaction in assuring your Majesty of the confirmed loyalty and ardent patriotism of the people of Scotland.

We are proud to think, that, notwithstanding the extensive preparations that were early made for the invasion of our coasts, the enemy has been hitherto deterred from the attempt by the well known state of our national defence, and the unexampled ardour that has been manifested in our country's cause; and, if the perseverance of our countrymen shall be equal to their ardour, we are confident that, under God, we shall remain a free and independent people.

While we look, therefore, to the great Arbiter of nations for his continued protection, we feel that no other worldly object is, in such circumstances, entitled to stand in competition with an unremitted discharge of our duty to our country. We pledge ourselves to our King, in the presence of God, that we shall be unceasing in our own endeavours to impress upon the people under our charge an indelible sense of what they owe to our national cause. And we hope, that to whatever period the destructive machinations of our enemies may be protracted, it will be found that Britons are not unprepared to defend an inheritance derived from men who thought it worthy to be purchased with their blood, and who have left it to us, but in trust, for the generations that are yet to come.

That Almighty God may continue to bless the means employed for our national defence;—that He may guide your Majesty's councils, and give success to your fleets and armies; that He may soon restore to us the blessings of an honourable and permanent peace;—that your Majesty may long reign over a free and loyal people; and that you may at length exchange an earthly for a heavenly crown, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE HAMILTON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1805.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1805.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1805.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Renewed and re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1805.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1806.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1806.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1806.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1806.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The season of your annual

meeting being arrived, we have thought fit to constitute and appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier to represent our royal person in your General Assembly. This appointment, we are confident, will be received by you as the best proof we can give, both of our firm attachment to the Christian religion, and of our tender regard for the particular rights and privileges of our Church of Scotland; inasmuch as we are firmly persuaded, that the well-known zeal of this our Commissioner in the cause of revealed religion, as well as his long experience in the ecclesiastical affairs of this part of our United Kingdom, will render him an active supporter of all good measures, and an able adviser in all difficulties. That you are met together in times of extraordinary pressure and evident danger, both to Church and State, is a remark which cannot fail forcibly to strike every member of your learned and venerable body, and that your duties, as pastors of the Church of Scotland, are, in consequence, greatly multiplied, and your responsibility much increased, is an observation too plain to require illustration. At no former period of our history have we stood more in need of the aid and support of religion; at no time have sound principles and virtuous practice been more necessary to our preservation as a Church and nation. To you, therefore, to whom are entrusted the oracles of God, and to whose lot it has fallen to instruct our subjects, and lead them in the paths of righteousness, to you we naturally look, in the hour of trial, for a conscientious and vigorous discharge of your pastoral duties. We expect from your tried wisdom and approved virtue, that your flocks will be fed with the wholesome doctrines of the Gospel; that the morality you inculcate, and the rules of good conduct which you prescribe, will be constantly referred to, and regulated by the pure standard of God's holy Word; and that faith in our Lord Jesus Christ will be so preached by you, as to become a motive to newness of life, and an obligation to reformation of manners. You cannot fail to have noticed that some have lately attempted to build on other foundations, vainly relying on false philosophy and worldly wisdom; but their principles have been made manifest of what sort they are; that they are not principles of purity and excellence, but of refinement and subtilty. But we are assured of better things concerning you; that as heretofore you have proved yourselves discreet and diligent dispensers of God's holy Word, so now, that your best endeavours will not be wanting to the good of our Church, and the welfare of our people, and that you will so adorn the one by your life and doctrine, and so zealously and faithfully watch over the other, that both, by your guidance, may continually advance in happiness and prosperity. Wherefore, most earnestly recommending you to the Divine blessing and protection, we heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 12th day of May 1806, in the 46th year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

SPENCER.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1806.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty hath been pleased to honour this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the warmest feelings of respect and gratitude.

The renewed appointment of Lord Napier to represent your royal person in this Assembly is to us a most gratifying pledge of your Majesty's firm attachment to the

Christian religion, and tender regard for the particular rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. His well-known zeal in the cause of revealed religion, and his long experience in the ecclesiastical affairs of Scotland, teach us to look to him with confidence and respectful affection, as the steady friend of our National Church.

Met, as we now are, in times of extraordinary pressure and evident danger, both to Church and State, we feel that our duties, as pastors of the Church of Scotland, are, in consequence, greatly multiplied, and our responsibility much increased. Sensible that at no period of our history have we stood more in need of the aid and support of religion; that at no time have sound principles and virtuous practice been more necessary to our preservation as a Church and nation; entrusted with the oracles of God, that we may instruct our people, and lead them in the paths of righteousness, we feel the strength of the obligations which bind us, in this hour of trial, to a conscientious and vigorous discharge of our pastoral duty.

Impressed with these sentiments, and deeply affected with your Majesty's paternal admonitions, we do most solemnly pledge ourselves, through the assistance of Divine grace, to feed our flocks with the wholesome doctrines of the Gospel; to regulate, by the pure standard of God's holy Word, the morality which we teach, and so to preach faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as that it may become a motive to newness of life. We pledge ourselves especially to lay to heart the warning, so impressively and seasonably given by your Majesty, concerning the attempts which some have lately made to build on other foundations, vainly relying on false philosophy and worldly wisdom. Knowing the principles of such men to be as impure in their source as debasing in their tendency, we trust that we shall never forget the sacred duty of keeping the Church of Scotland free from their stain.

The approbation which your Majesty is pleased to bestow on our former labours shall animate our future exertions to promote the good of this Church, and the welfare of the people under our charge. We pray that the God whom we serve may enable us so to adorn the one by our life and doctrines, and so zealously and faithfully to watch over the other, that, by his blessing on our humble endeavours, the happiness and prosperity of both may be advanced.

We entreat your Majesty to accept our humble acknowledgments for your attention to the advancement of religious knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Your royal donation for this purpose we shall faithfully endeavour to apply, so as most effectually to promote the design for which it is bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may direct your Majesty's councils, and prosper your government; that He may bless our gracious Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all your Royal Family; that He may long preserve your Majesty to reign over a free, a loyal, and a virtuous people; and that He may, through Christ, bestow upon you hereafter an eternal crown, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM TAYLOR, JUN., *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1806.—Address to his Majesty on the present Arduous Situation of Public Affairs.

Most gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach the

throne of our gracious Sovereign, with the unanimous expression of our affectionate and zealous attachment to your person and government.

The present circumstances of national danger unite the exertions of all your Majesty's faithful subjects; and the immense accessions of strength acquired by our enemy on the Continent of Europe, although they increase the difficulties of the arduous contest in which the nation is engaged, invigorate in our hearts every sentiment of loyalty and public spirit. In the whole course of his unexampled career, the present ruler of France has never obtained any triumph over Britain, and he has not hitherto been able even to attempt the execution of his threats of invasion. The protecting arm of Divine Providence has been extended over a nation which has persevered in opposing its influence to the wild progress of inordinate ambition. A succession of the most brilliant naval victories, clouded, alas! by the death of Lord Viscount Nelson, but illumined by the glory of many heroes who emulate his fame, has given security to our shores, our colonies, and our commerce; and the magnanimity and patriotism with which all orders of men combine their efforts in maintaining the independence of Britain, have been rewarded by its remaining, amidst the wreck of nations, a great and powerful state, with all its institutions entire, with its spirit unbroken, and its dominions enlarged by the most valuable conquests.

As servants of the Prince of Peace, we pray for a termination of the present commotions of Europe. But beholding with just indignation the growing iniquity of a system which shakes the stability of all regular governments, and reading in the fate of many states on the Continent, an awful warning against that unwise policy which would seek to escape present danger by grasping at a delusive peace, inconsistent with the principles of justice and honour, we recognize your Majesty's paternal care for your people, in calling forth the resources of this flourishing country to resist the repeated aggressions of our foe. Far from murmuring at the sacrifices and burdens which the duration of the contest may require, we join the unanimous voice of our fellow-subjects in applauding the promptitude and energy of the measures lately taken for vindicating our just rights in the north of Europe. And we trust in God, that the wisdom and vigour of your Majesty's councils, the valour and good conduct of your fleets and armies, and the firmness, fortitude, and good sense of a loyal people, will enable your Majesty to conduct the operations of a vigorous and successful war to an honourable conclusion.

Deeply impressed with a sense of the sacred duty which, at such a time as this, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland owe to their country, we pledge ourselves to your Majesty that we will continue, in our several stations, to exert our influence with alacrity and zeal in cherishing those sentiments of public spirit which become a people who know the value of their unrivalled constitution, and in promoting that righteousness which exalteth a nation, which is the best expression of gratitude to the God of our fathers, and the best encouragement to hope that he will continue to bless our land.

That Almighty God may give success to your Majesty's arms by sea and land; that the means employed for the national defence may effectually defeat the designs of our enemy; that peace and truth may meet in our days; that the administration of your Majesty's government may continue to establish your throne in the hearts of your subjects, and that descendants of your illustrious house, forming themselves upon your example, may sway the British sceptre with justice and renown to the latest posterity, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun., *Moderator*.

V.

*Sess. 7, May 29, 1806.—Overture anent Ordained Assistants and Successors.**

Whereas doubts have been entertained, and different practices have prevailed in the Church, respecting the situation of ordained assistants and successors, it is humbly overtured, that the General Assembly shall enact and ordain, that a person who has been ordained assistant and successor to the minister of a parish, cannot sit as an elder in the kirk-session of the parish, and that neither his character as assistant, nor the powers conveyed to him by ordination, do, of themselves, entitle him to summon meetings of session, or to preside there. That the right to sit and vote in the judicatories of the Church, which constitutionally belongs to the minister of the parish, remains entire in his person, it can neither be assumed by the assistant, nor communicated to him by the minister, without the authority of the Church. That when the minister of the parish is incapable of exercising this right, the Presbytery may grant authority to the ordained assistant and successor to summon meetings of session, to preside there, and may also, if they see cause, grant him authority to sit in the Presbytery and Synod, and a title to be elected a member of the General Assembly; but that the authority and title thus conferred on the assistant and successor shall cease whensoever the Presbytery find that the minister of the parish is restored to the capacity of exercising his constitutional right.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1806.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1806.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The terms of the Commission are the same as formerly, with the omission of these words, which occur about the middle of the Act:—“It being understood by this resolution, that the several stations, with regard to which such conditions were originally made by the committee, when no such declaration of the catechist, or attestation of the Presbytery, as is now proposed, is received by the cashier, shall be afterwards suppressed by the committee, though the catechist shall, notwithstanding, receive the salary for the time he is certified to have performed his duty.”—*Ed.* 1843.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1806.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

* This Overture does not appear to have passed.—*Ed.* 1843.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1806.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1807.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1807.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1807.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1807.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having had full and continued proof of the sufficiency and fidelity of our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier, that he is a person every way qualified for rightly managing and discharging the duties of our Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, we have thought fit again to nominate and appoint him to represent our royal person at the approaching meeting of your venerable body. We doubt not that this our choice will be acceptable to you, and that it will be considered by you as affording an undeniable proof of the sense which we entertain of that attachment to us which you have not ceased to manifest, and of the laudable exertions with which you have constantly promoted the accomplishment of those objects which, through a faithful and approved Commissioner, we have heretofore thought it our duty to recommend to your special care. We rest assured, that the same attachment and the same exertions will still prevail among you, and that the happiness which has been experienced by all ranks of people, under the blessings of an invaluable constitution, may still continue to be felt. We are confident you will inculcate among those committed to your care the indispensable necessity of a due submission to the laws, and a just veneration for all constituted establishments and authorities. And that we may not be wanting in that encouragement which we have not failed to afford to those who labour to establish, upon a firm and sure basis, those blessings which, under Divine Providence, we are now permitted to enjoy, we repeat to you our unalterable attachment to the Christian religion, and the unceasing regard which we entertain for the peculiar privileges of our Church of Scotland; and we are persuaded, that by the zealous endeavours of our representative to support its rights, and by the continual care and watchfulness of you its appointed pastors, those principles of true religion and piety will grow up and be established among you, upon which alone the welfare

and the happiness of them can be surely founded. If there be other principles, which some have not feared to trust to and to teach, be assured that such men have been blinded by the delusive novelties of false philosophy; and that although the enemies of God's Holy Word should increase your labours, and multiply the difficulties with which you have to contend, the doctrines of true religion, inculcated by your precepts, and sanctioned by your exemplary practice, will confound and put them to shame. To you we commit, with confidence, the great and sacred trust of watching over the morals of our people throughout an extensive and important part of our United Kingdom. To your guidance we still anxiously look to lead them in the paths of righteousness. We have seen, with increasing joy, the example afforded by your own wisdom and virtue, constantly teaching them to bear up against all the dangers and difficulties which have surrounded them; and we remain in the full persuasion, that the wholesome doctrines of the Gospel, which you will not fail to recommend, will again support them in the hour of trial. Well-beloved, we recommend you most earnestly to God's holy blessing and protection, and heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 14th day of May 1807, in the forty-seventh year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

HAWKESBURY.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1807.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter to this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland hath been received with the strongest feelings of respect and gratitude.

The renewed appointment of Francis Lord Napier to represent your royal person in this Assembly we regard as a most acceptable proof of your Majesty's approbation and favour. Our experience of the ability with which he executes the duties of his high trust, and of his zeal for maintaining the privileges of the Church of Scotland, have secured to him our respectful and cordial attachment.

The approbation which your Majesty is pleased to express of our exertions in promoting the objects which, on former occasions, your paternal wisdom has recommended to our care, while it excites our gratitude, and strengthens our affection towards your Majesty, will animate our endeavours to perpetuate the happiness which hath long been experienced by all ranks of people under the blessings of an invaluable constitution. We will inculcate among those committed to our care the indispensable necessity of a due submission to the laws, and a just veneration for all constituted establishments and authorities. We acknowledge, with thankfulness and joy, the encouragement afforded by your Majesty to all who labour to establish, upon a firm and sure basis, those blessings which, under Divine Providence, are enjoyed in this happy land. And we rely with the fullest confidence on the assurance which your Majesty is pleased to renew, of your unalterable attachment to the Christian religion, and of your unceasing regard for the peculiar privileges of the Church of Scotland. Under the sanction of your royal authority, and the blessing of that Divine Master whom we serve, we trust that success will crown our exertions to disseminate those principles of true religion and piety on which alone our national welfare can securely rest. If there be other principles which some have not feared to trust to and to teach, we are well assured that such men have been blinded by the delusive novel-

ties of a false philosophy; and although the enemies of God's Holy Word may increase our labour, and multiply the difficulties with which we have to contend, we trust that, through the influence of Divine grace, we shall be enabled to prevail against them, by showing, out of a good conversation, our works with meekness of wisdom.

We feel all the importance of the trust reposed in us by your Majesty, and all the value of that praise with which your Majesty is graciously pleased to honour us; and we pray earnestly to Almighty God, that he would fit us to lead our people in the ways of righteousness, and to support them by the wholesome doctrines of the Gospel in the hour of trial.

We entreat your Majesty to accept our humble acknowledgments for your continued attention to the religious interests of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It shall be our endeavour to apply your royal bounty, so as most effectually to promote the object for which it is bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, and prosper your government;—that He may bless abundantly our gracious Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of your Illustrious House;—that He may long continue to us the blessings which we enjoy under your Majesty's auspicious reign; and that He may bestow upon you hereafter a crown of glory, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES SHERIFFS, *Moderator.*

IV.

*Sess. 3, May 23, 1807.—Address to his Majesty on the present arduous Situation of Public Affairs.**

Most gracious Sovereign,

May it please your Majesty to accept the humble expression of the dutiful and loyal sentiments with which the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland presume to approach their gracious Sovereign.

It is the happiness of your people that, during an auspicious reign of forty-seven years, the conduct of your Majesty has been uniformly governed by the principles

* The following notice of this Address appears in the Abridgment of the Proceedings of 1807:—

"The draught of a loyal Address to his Majesty on the present situation of Public Affairs, being brought in and read, a motion was made and seconded, to approve of the Address. An objection was stated to the following clause standing part of the Address, viz.:—'We have lately seen the fences of that establishment upheld by the firm and dignified exercise of the constitutional prerogative of the Crown; and feeling the security which all our rights and privileges derive from the solicitude with which your Majesty discharges the duties of the Sovereign of a free people, we unite with our fellow-subjects in offering the affectionate tribute justly due to the royal cares for the public welfare.' And, after reasoning, it was moved, that the above clause remaining part of the Address, the following addition should be made to it, viz., 'We venerate the concern which his Majesty manifests in all his conduct, at all times, for the religious interests of his people; yet, consistently with our principles as Presbyterians, and as members of a National Church which has the same legal establishment with the Church of England, we cannot but contemplate with regret the continuance of those circumstances which exclude Presbyterians from civil and military offices, without a public profession of Episcopacy; and we trust that the time will soon come, when the members of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches will be placed on an equal footing in all parts of his Majesty's dominions.' After long reasoning, the vote was put, Approve or Amend; and the roll being called and votes marked, it carried, by a great majority, Approve; and, therefore, the Assembly approved of the first paragraph of the Address as it stands. Against which sentence Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood entered his dissent, and those who should adhere to him were allowed to dissent at any after diet. It was afterwards moved and agreed to, to insert an additional paragraph to the Address. And which Address his Grace the Lord High Commissioner, at the Assembly's desire, undertook to transmit to his Majesty, along with the Answer to his Majesty's Letter."—*Ed.* 1843.

which placed the House of Brunswick upon the throne of these realms; and the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, attached to those principles from conviction, as well as by their habits and institutions, recollect with peculiar satisfaction, that your Majesty has exhibited the brightest example of a sacred regard to the Protestant reformed religion. While, in the series of indulgences to Roman Catholic subjects, which have marked your Majesty's reign, we recognize the enlightened operation of a mild and tolerant spirit, we have always found your Majesty the faithful guardian of the Protestant establishment. We have lately seen the fences of that establishment upheld by the firm and dignified exercise of the constitutional prerogative of the crown, and feeling the security which all our rights and privileges derive from the solicitude with which your Majesty discharges the duties of the Sovereign of a free people, we unite with our fellow-subjects in offering the affectionate tribute justly due to the royal cares for the public welfare.

In recollecting your Majesty's uniform zeal for the interest of religion, justice, and humanity; the many public measures for the promotion of these great interests by which your Majesty's reign has been distinguished, and the exalted character which, under your Majesty's government, the British nation has acquired; it is with heartfelt satisfaction that we congratulate your Majesty on the final abolition of the African Slave Trade, which had so long polluted the commerce, and tarnished the honour of the British name. We feel, in common with the great body of our fellow-subjects, that the Act of the last Session of Parliament, which prohibited the further importation of slaves into the West India Colonies, will ever be regarded as one of the most splendid events of your Majesty's reign; and while it proclaims to the world the justice of the British character, will send the tidings of peace and benevolence to the injured natives of Africa.

We watch with anxiety, but without dismay, the progress of the interesting events that distinguish the times in which we live. We lament the calamities of war, but we have the consolation of thinking, that although the inordinate ambition of our enemy renders the prolongation of the arduous contest indispensably necessary for the security and honour of the British empire, the resources of the country are not exhausted, and the spirit of the people is unbroken. While we hear with admiration and gratitude of the gallant achievements of your Majesty's forces by sea and land, we behold all around us submitting patiently to the burdens and sacrifices to which the voice of their country calls them; and we account it our bounden duty to exert all our influence in cherishing that true patriotism which unites all orders of men in the national defence.

That the God of battles may bless your Majesty's arms;—that the wisdom and vigour of your Majesty's councils may continue to establish your throne in the hearts of your subjects; and that the British sceptre may, till the latest posterity, be swayed by Princes of your Illustrious House, formed by your example to maintain the liberties, and to possess the confidence of a grateful people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES SHERIFFS, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1807.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1807.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty for that end.

The General Assembly, &c.—(The Act is the same as that of last year.)

VII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1807.—Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.
(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1807.—Act anent Printing Commissions.

[The General Assembly, upon report of their Committee appointed to prepare an enactment for printing Commissions, approve of the following enactment for printing the Commissions from Presbyteries and Burghs. But in regard that the Forms of Commissions from the several Universities differ in some respects from one another, judged it best to continue them on their present footing.]

Whereas various inconveniences have been found to arise from the present usage of the Church, with respect to the mode of making out commissions to the members of Assembly;

The General Assembly enact and appoint, that in future all commissions from Presbyteries and Burghs shall be printed by the printer to the Church, under the superintendence of the clerks of Assembly, agreeably to the forms now authorised by the General Assembly, with necessary blanks for names, designations, dates, and qualifications—[Here must be narrated in a note the qualifications of Elders of Burghs;]—and the expense of the same defrayed out of the funds of the Church.

That a sufficient number of said blank commissions shall be forwarded by the clerks of Assembly to all clerks of Presbyteries and Burghs, as soon as said commissions can be printed; and that they shall be supplied by the clerks of Assembly with copies of the same from time to time, as occasion may require, upon making a demand to that effect.

That although every commission from a Presbytery must contain the names of all the persons chosen to represent that Presbytery, the Assembly nevertheless enact, that it shall be competent for each of said delegates to require from the Presbytery a regularly attested copy of the commission, which the said Presbytery must furnish, upon the same being demanded in due time. It being understood, that only one copy of the attested commission, from each Presbytery, shall be required by the Assembly in making up the roll of its members; provided always, that if a commission shall have been given in to the clerk for that purpose, in any respect defective or erroneous, it shall be competent for any other of the delegates from that Presbytery to give in another commission from his Presbytery, if he any has, which, if accurate, shall be sustained.

And as it may sometimes happen, that the clerks of Presbyteries, more especially of such Presbyteries as are situated in remote parts of the country, may not be in possession of such printed commissions as may be wanted, the Assembly appoint, that in all such cases the commission shall be written out according to the forms and usage of the Church previous to the date of this enactment.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1807.—Overture respecting the Ordination of Elders.

(See Act 10th, 1816.)

X.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1807.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1808.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1808.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1808.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1808.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. We are pleased again to appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier to be our Commissioner at the approaching General Assembly of your venerable body. We doubt not that this our choice will be acceptable to you, and that it will be an additional proof of our care and attention to the general interests of religion, and more particularly of our attachment and regard to the Church of Scotland, to whose care so considerable a portion of our subjects is entrusted, to be by them instructed in the great and awful truths of religion, and to learn from them those unerring rules of morality, which are in vain sought to be grounded on the speculative reasonings, or the unsatisfactory hypotheses of philosophy. Convinced, as we are, of the qualifications of your venerable body, to preserve, in their original purity, those doctrines which have so long flourished in your Church, we still think it more particularly our duty to call forth your zeal, at a time when menaced by so gigantic a power, and nearly surrounded by the instruments of his unprincipled devastation. We feel confident in the loyal endeavours and persevering efforts of our subjects, from a conviction of the justice with which these efforts have been directed uniformly in the cause of virtue and morality; and trusting, that however ill we may have deserved of that Almighty power, by whose command alone nations and empires rise and fall, flourish and decay, that still his

mercy is infinite, and that he will not rigorously visit the sins of his people, or send the avenging angel to destroy this country, where alone religion, virtue, morality, and honour, are still respected: But, that these our hopes and expectations may be realized, it behoves us more particularly to exhort you to activity in the duties imposed upon your offices, most carefully to repress every irregularity and abuse, which time, accident, or evil-designing persons may have introduced in the Church government; and, lastly, most earnestly do we entreat your spiritual aid and assistance, by your exhortations, to prepare the persons committed to your charge for the many hardships which this arduous contest may impose upon them. Convinced, therefore, well-beloved, of your attachment to us, we commend you most earnestly to God's holy keeping and protection, and heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 9th day of May 1808, in the forty-eighth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

HAWKESBURY.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1808.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty hath been pleased to honour this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland hath been received with equal respect and gratitude.

The renewed appointment of Francis Lord Napier to be your Majesty's High Commissioner in this Assembly is in the highest degree acceptable to the Church of Scotland. We regard it as a proof of your Majesty's care and attention to the general interests of religion, and more particularly of your gracious attachment and regard to our National Church, that your royal person is represented among us by one whom we so highly and so justly value.

We are deeply impressed with the importance of the trust committed to us, of instructing so considerable a portion of your Majesty's subjects in the great and awful truths of religion, and in those unerring rules of morality, of which the foundation is sought in vain in mere speculative reasoning, or in the unsatisfying hypotheses of philosophy.

It is our anxious wish and hope, that those doctrines which have so long flourished in our Church may still be preserved in their original purity. And we are most sincerely grateful for the paternal solicitude with which your Majesty calls forth our zeal in their defence, at a time when we are menaced by so gigantic a power, and nearly surrounded by the instruments of his unprincipled devastation. It shall be our earnest study that the loyal endeavours and persevering efforts of your Majesty's subjects may never be wanting in the cause of virtue and morality, that religion and honour may still be respected in our land; and we trust, in the infinite mercy of God, that however ill we have deserved of that Almighty power, by whose command alone empires rise or fall, he will not rigorously visit the sins of his people, nor send forth the avenging angel to destroy. We shall endeavour to guard, with the most vigilant care, against every irregularity or abuse, which time, accident, or the attempts of evil-designed persons, may have a tendency to introduce into our Church government. And we entreat your Majesty to believe, that every exhortation which it is in our

power to employ shall be used in preparing the people under our charge for the many hardships which they may be called to endure in the arduous contest in which we are at present involved.

We have received, with respectful gratitude, and shall endeavour faithfully and zealously to employ, your Majesty's royal donation of L.1000, for propagating the knowledge of the Gospel in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

We entreat your Majesty to be at all times assured of our affectionate attachment to your person and government; and that Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty and prosper your councils;—that He may bless abundantly our gracious Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of your Illustrious House;—that He may long continue to us the inestimable benefits which we enjoy under your Majesty's reign; and that He may bestow upon you hereafter a crown of glory, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

A. GRANT, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 4, May 21, 1808.—Address to his Majesty on the present Arduous Situation of Public Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in the General Assembly, embrace the earliest opportunity of approaching your throne at this interesting juncture, to express our sincere and inviolable attachment to your royal person and government.

We join most cordially with our fellow-subjects, in every affectionate testimony of loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign, and of zeal for the honour and happiness of our country.

As servants of the God of peace, we deplore the continuance of war, and its attendant miseries. We behold, with astonishment and concern, the alarming progress of the arms of France on the Continent of Europe; and while we see our implacable enemy overturning the thrones of princes, and trampling upon the rights of nations, we are sensible of the danger to which our dearest interests, as a nation, are exposed. But we derive much encouragement from reflecting, that the vigilance, wisdom, and vigour of your Majesty's councils, have hitherto, by the blessing of Heaven, frustrated the hostile designs of the unnatural combination formed against us; and we trust, that your Majesty, supported by the wise and generous patriotism of your faithful subjects, will be enabled, under God, to bring this arduous contest to an issue, successful and glorious for Britain.

We regard it as our immediate duty, in such a time of national exertion, to be indefatigably diligent in the functions of our sacred office, that we may lead those entrusted to our care to a due consideration of the awful judgments which are in the earth, impress them with a deep sense of their manifold transgressions, and incite them to such a reformation in their hearts and lives as may, through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, avert from our country the calamities which our iniquities justly deserve.

That the God of battles may crown with victory your Majesty's fleets and armies;—that the present war may speedily terminate in an honourable and lasting peace;—and that your Majesty may long reign the beloved Sovereign of a free and happy people, are the sincere and earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, most faithful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

A. GRANT, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1808.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1808.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1808.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1808.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1808.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters.

The General Assembly called for the report of the committee appointed to class returns respecting the regular examination of schools, which was given in and read. The Assembly enjoin Presbyteries to be careful to report their obedience to the Act of Assembly, 1799 and 1800, upon this important subject, and direct the clerks to see that this injunction be printed among the Acts of the Assembly.

Follows the Injunction of the General Assembly, 1799 and 1800.—(See Act 12th, 1799, and 11th, 1800.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1808.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May 1809.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1809.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1809.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1809.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1809.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1809.—Address to his Majesty on the present Arduous Situation of Public Affairs.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne with sentiments of the warmest attachment to your person, family, and government.

In the present alarming situation of the affairs of Europe we rejoice in the pledges of national safety which, under Heaven, we enjoy in your Majesty's paternal solicitude, and in the wisdom and vigour of your councils. From a view of the subversion of ancient governments, and the wreck of nations, we frequently turn our eyes, with heart-felt joy and exultation, to our unimpaired constitution in Church and State, the best which human wisdom ever devised, and administered by a Sovereign who is at once a pattern of religion, the guardian of liberty, and the father of his people.

While we have beheld your Majesty employed in promoting national happiness, and in extending equal protection to all your subjects, we have lately contemplated,

with the deepest interest and anxiety, your magnanimous and humane interposition in favour of the injured and oppressed nations of Spain and Portugal. To resist the shock of that power, before which almost all others have been swept away, as by a torrent, and to interpose between suffering nations and universal subjugation, was a measure worthy of a generous people, under the government of a wise and patriotic King. We observed, therefore, with delight, that your Majesty's liberal offers of assistance to these oppressed States were unanimously approved of, and warmly seconded by your people, and that admiration and affection mingled with their loyalty to the best of Sovereigns.

We beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on the various enterprises, both by sea and land, in which the admirable discipline and steady courage of the British forces have lately triumphed over superior numbers; achievements which reflect signal honour on those who were more immediately concerned, and glory on the British name. Whatever effect they may have on the fate of our allies, they give us ground to trust that, under the protection of Heaven, we shall be able to resist the fiercest attacks of our enemies, and to transmit unimpaired to posterity those invaluable blessings which, as a nation, we have so long enjoyed.

As subjects of the Prince of Peace, we pray for the termination of that destructive war in which we are involved; but, in the meantime, we submit, without murmur or complaint, to those burdens and privations which it necessarily imposes. Sensible that not only our safety, but our existence as a nation, depends on our firm and persevering exertions against the common enemy; and looking for success to the Ruler of nations, we will not cease to cherish in our people that unanimity and public spirit which become those who are contending for their most valuable and dearest rights. We will teach them to make a wise improvement of those judgments which are abroad in the earth, and to cultivate that righteousness which exalteth a nation, that God may avert from our country those calamities which our iniquities have deserved.

That the Lord of Hosts may crown the heads of our brave countrymen, by sea and land, with victory and honour;—that their success may be the means of securing to us a lasting and an honourable peace;—that your Majesty may long reign over a free, a loyal, and a happy people;—and that you may hereafter receive a heavenly crown, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

FRANCIS NICOL, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1809.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1809.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1809.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1809.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church, concerning Teachers and Schoolmasters.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to class returns respecting the regular Examination of Schools, which was given in and read. The Assembly enjoin Presbyteries to be more attentive and particular in reporting their obedience to the Act of Assembly, 1799 and 1800, upon this important subject, and direct the clerks to see that this injunction be printed along with the Acts of Assembly. And to secure attention to said injunction, the General Assembly recommend to Presbyteries to take it along with the above overtures under their consideration on the day they meet to elect their representatives to the General Assembly, and to send up their opinion anent the said overtures, whatever that opinion may be, and at the same time to report their obedience to this injunction.

(Follows the injunction of the General Assembly, 1799 and 1800.—See Act 12th, 1799, and 11th, 1800.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1809.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

X.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1809.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1810.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cls. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1810.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1810.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1810.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Being desirous, and deeming it good for the propagation of reformed religion, that the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland should hold their annual meeting at the appointed period, which is now at hand, we have sanctioned the same accordingly with our royal authority. And seeing that, by reason of other weighty affairs, we cannot ourselves be present, we have commissioned our right trusty and well-beloved Lord Napier to represent us on this solemn occasion.

We are confident in thus delegating our authority, that the zeal and fidelity which have heretofore marked the character of this our Commissioner, and secured to him the attention and approbation of the members of your venerable body, will again become conspicuous in him; and that the important and holy exhortations which, on this occasion, we find it more especially necessary to charge him with, will be received by you with all earnestness.

We confide to him, above all things, the renewed assurances which he has uniformly conveyed to you, of our firm and unalterable attachment to the doctrines of the Christian religion, and of our constant and tender regard for the peculiar privileges of the Church of Scotland; and we cherish the hope, that, seeing by past experience the beneficial influence of these doctrines, and the sincerity with which we protect you in the promulgation of them, you will still continue to prefer the precepts which they recommend, and to practise, with all constancy, the conduct which they approve.

To the neglect of these salutary principles and holy laws we attribute the adoption of wild and speculative notions, entertained by misguided men, and the manifold errors which prevail among us in these times. We have witnessed, with concern, their extending influence, and have marked, with regret, their baneful effects. To correct these errors, and to expose the fallacious prospects which are held out to captivate the weak, and seduce the unwary, we call upon you to lend yourselves with all assiduity and vigilance.

If the specious theories of modern philosophy, and the persevering energies of her advocates, are offered for their admiration, you will teach them to avoid the counsels of hypocrisy, and to follow rather the example of those that do well. You will guard them against the violent and intemperate followers of pretended patriotism, showing what manner of men they are; and you will set before them the sober demeanour and honest endeavours of the true disciples of the Gospel, labouring thereby to convince all men of the advantages which are derived from a due and proper obedience to the laws and ordinances which wisdom has established, and discouraging, by the sobriety of your own lives, the principles which tend only to the subversion of all good government and social order.

The great experience of our faithful representative, in these and other matters, which concern the grave deliberations of your solemn Assembly, will aid and assist you in the discharge of those difficult duties which we now impose upon you. He will satisfy you of our determination to support you under every discouraging embarrassment, and of our conviction, that, by timely caution, and the firm, but prudent conduct on your part, which we unceasingly recommend, the virtuous and upright will become more steadfast—and those who for a time have wandered in search of novelty will be reclaimed, and hereafter follow the paths of righteousness.

We further recommend that you admonish those whom we place under your pastoral care, of the intimate connection which never fails to subsist between their more sacred duties and their temporal welfare; and that as they value the immediate benefits of the latter, in the enjoyment of the privileges of an excellent and admired constitution, so they will be mindful to cultivate and extend the observance of those

spiritual obligations which alone can render their blessings permanent, or themselves happy.

Well-beloved! These are the sentiments by which we are animated at this momentous crisis. We feel that your duties as pastors of the Church of Scotland are multiplied, and that your responsibility is increased. But we know how much your tried wisdom has been able to accomplish, and how effectual is your approved virtue for the purposes of your delicate and important charge.

The good of our Church, and the welfare of our people, demand and receive our constant and most anxious care. And we rest satisfied, that the particular interests of the Church of Scotland, and the prosperity of that portion of our subjects who have been accustomed to receive from it, through you, the wholesome precepts of the Gospel, are objects which will be effectually promoted by your approaching deliberations.

Well-beloved! We earnestly recommend you to the care and protection of Divine Providence, and heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 10th day of May 1810, in the fiftieth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

R. RYDER.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1810.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour the present General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was received with the most lively sentiments of respect and gratitude.

We regard, with no common satisfaction, the assurance which your Majesty has thought fit to give us, that you deem it good for the propagation of reformed religion that the General Assembly of our National Church should hold their annual meeting at the appointed period; at the same time, we feel this high expression of your confidence, as a most powerful incitement to us to conduct our proceedings with that gravity and calmness which may best promote an object of such great importance. Considering the representation of your royal person in our General Assembly, as the symbol of that union between Church and State which tends to give vigour and stability to both, we receive, as a pleasing testimony of your paternal affection for the Church of Scotland, the appointment of Lord Napier to be your Majesty's Commissioner; and are prepared, by the experience of the zeal and fidelity which have heretofore marked his character, in the execution of his important trust, and secured to him the attention and approbation of the members of our body, to receive with all earnestness the important and holy exhortations with which, on this occasion, your Majesty has found it more especially necessary to charge him.

The renewed assurance which he has most impressively conveyed to us of your Majesty's firm and unalterable attachment to the doctrines of the Christian religion, and of your constant and tender regard for the peculiar privileges of the Church of Scotland, reminds us of the inestimable blessings which we enjoy under the just and beneficent administration of a King, who through a long reign has been the nursing father of the Church, and no less solicitous for the spiritual than the temporal interest of his people. We are anxious to justify the hope which your Majesty is pleased to entertain of this General Assembly, by continuing still to prefer, to all objects that can solicit our attention, the precepts which our holy faith recommends, and to practise, with unshaken constancy, the conduct which it approves, the bene-

ficial influence of which we have long seen, under the secure and effectual protection which your Majesty has afforded to us in the promulgation of them.

We are deeply convinced that the adoption of wild and speculative notions, entertained by misguided men, and the manifest errors which prevail among us in these times, are justly ascribed to the neglect of the salutary principles and holy laws of our Divine religion; and in obedience to your paternal call, and in fulfilment of the duties of our sacred office, we solemnly pledge ourselves to your Majesty, that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, we will lend ourselves, with all assiduity and vigilance, to correct those errors, and to expose the fallacious prospects which are held out to captivate the weak, and seduce the unwary.

It is our determined resolution, that if the specious theories of false philosophy, and the persevering efforts of her advocates, are offered to the admiration of the people entrusted to our charge, we will most affectionately teach them to avoid the counsels of hypocrisy, and to follow rather the example of those that do well. We shall not fail to guard them against the violent and intemperate followers of pretended patriotism, showing them what manner of men they are, and setting before them the sober demeanour and earnest endeavours of the true friends of the Gospel, striving, by sound principles and pure morals, to continue and increase that public happiness which we have derived from our envied constitution. By an appeal to the history of past ages, and the experience of the present times, we shall labour to convince all men of the advantages which result from a due and proper obedience to the laws and ordinances which wisdom has established; happy, if, by the sobriety of our lives, we shall be favoured, like the faithful men who have gone before us, as the instruments of Divine Providence, in discouraging the principles which tend only to the subversion of all good government and social order.

From the great experience of your Majesty's faithful representative in these and other matters which concern the interests of our Church, we confidently expect high encouragement in the discharge of the difficult duties recommended to us by your Majesty. He has fully satisfied us of your Majesty's determination to support us under every discouraging embarrassment, and of your royal conviction that, by timely caution, and the firm and prudent conduct recommended to us by your Majesty, our public ministrations may be blessed of God, to make the virtuous and upright more steadfast, and to reclaim those who may for a time have wandered in search of pernicious novelties.

Firmly convinced of the indissoluble connection which must ever subsist between the temporal welfare of a people and the faithful discharge of their more sacred duties, we shall exert our most strenuous endeavours to maintain and improve that happy union, by impressing a just sense of the blessed effects of it upon the minds of all those that are committed to our care; admonishing them, as they value the distinguished privileges of an excellent and admired constitution, to cultivate and extend the observance of those spiritual obligations which alone can render these blessings permanent, or themselves happy.

The condescending and indulgent communication of the pious and benevolent sentiments by which your Majesty is animated at this momentous crisis, has made a deep impression on our hearts; binding us by new ties of affection to your Majesty's person, and calling forth a more ardent zeal in behalf of your government. While we feel, that, from the general aspect of the times, our duties, as pastors of the Church of Scotland, are multiplied, and that our responsibility is increased, we feel also that our minds are invigorated by the firm reliance which your Majesty is pleased to repose in our wisdom and fidelity.

We rejoice in the renewed assurance, that the good of the Church and the welfare of your people are the objects of your Majesty's constant and most anxious care; and we have learned from long experience, that no services are more acceptable to your royal mind than those which are conducive to these great ends of your government. Under this impression, we shall labour with united effort to promote, by our deliberations, the particular interests of the Church of Scotland, and the prosperity and happiness of that portion of your subjects who have been accustomed to receive from it, through us, the wholesome precepts of the Gospel.

We receive your Majesty's royal donation for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and the principles of the Reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, as a pleasing expression of your Majesty's unremitted attention to the best interests of your people. It shall be our care to secure, by a faithful application of this bounty, the valuable objects for which it has been bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, and prosper the administration of your government;—that He may bless abundantly our gracious Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of your Illustrious House;—and that, after a long and happy reign over a loyal and affectionate people, you may at length be received to the glory of the heavenly kingdom, are the united and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

HUGH MEIKLEJOHN, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1810.—Address to his Majesty upon the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Majesty's Accession to the Throne.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly, embrace the first opportunity of approaching our gracious Sovereign, to join in those heartfelt congratulations which were lately so universally expressed by an attached and loyal people, on the fiftieth anniversary of your Majesty's accession to the throne of these kingdoms.

Satisfied that a virtuous and religious king is one of the greatest blessings which the Almighty can bestow upon a nation, we regard your Majesty's lengthened reign as a peculiar mark of the favour of Heaven, for which we are grateful to God, who has added this to the many distinguishing advantages conferred upon us as a people. During nearly half a century, your Majesty's subjects have had displayed to them from the throne an example of every public and private virtue; an example which has excited their respect and veneration, and by its powerful influence, has been of incalculable benefit in promoting their happiness.

Your Majesty has been called to discharge the duties of a highly important station, in one of the most eventful periods to be found in history; a period during which ancient institutions have been destroyed, thrones levelled with the ground, and all the relations which had for ages connected the great commonwealth of Europe torn asunder. In the midst of this general convulsion, Britain, under the auspicious rule of a wise and just monarch, has remained secure. Her unrivalled constitution has been preserved; her territory enlarged; her commerce, under the shelter of a triumphant navy, spread to the most distant regions; her agriculture and manufactures carried to an unexampled degree of perfection; whilst the peaceful pursuits of literature and science have been fostered, the pure administration of justice secured, and the temples of religion, where our fathers worshipped, untouched by the hand of sacrilege, have remained open to their posterity, to offer up their adorations to the Author of these varied gifts. This envied situation, Sire, in which Providence has been pleased to place our country, cannot fail of being truly gratifying to a Sovereign, who, as the father of his people, rejoices in their happiness; and this gratification must be greatly increased by the reflection, that your Majesty's conscientious and faithful discharge of your high duties has contributed so largely to preserve to your subjects the enjoyment of so many blessings.

Among the various circumstances which have marked an eventful reign, there is not one more honourable to your Majesty's feelings, or which reflects a brighter lustre on the British character, than the assistance which has been so liberally afforded to suffering nations, struggling to rescue themselves from the grasp of lawless ambition. The exertions made by your Majesty for this purpose have proved to the world that Britain is ready to expend her blood, as well as her treasure, in succouring her allies; whilst the successful valour of your troops, opposed to such superior numbers, has confirmed the expectations of the most sanguine—inspired the timid with confidence—and taught a vaunting foe how hopeless would be the attempt to combat freemen on their native soil. Whatever, under Divine Providence, may be the fate of the other nations of Europe, your subjects will have the consolation to think, that, following your Majesty's illustrious example, they acted the part which became a great and generous nation; and no page in history will be read by posterity with greater exultation, than that which records that Britons were the only people who dared, in defiance of a powerful usurper, to extend their arm for the protection of the oppressed; whilst their country remained the only asylum where the unfortunate exile found a refuge from the effects of his sanguinary vengeance.

Amidst the general benefits in which we participate with our fellow-subjects, we recollect, with the liveliest emotions, the peculiar marks of royal favour which this National Church has experienced during your Majesty's reign; and knowing that the faithful discharge of our sacred duties is the expression of gratitude most acceptable to your Majesty, we renew the pledge often given, to be zealous in our endeavours to cherish and strengthen those principles of loyalty to the King, and attachment to the constitution, by which the people under our care have long been animated; and to impress deeply upon their minds those sentiments of religion and virtue, which are the true source of private happiness and national greatness.

That Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may prolong your Majesty's life, and prosper your administration; that He may bless the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all your Royal Family; and that, after a prosperous reign upon earth, you may obtain a crown of glory, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

HUGH MEIKLEJOHN, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1810.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1810.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1810.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1810.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1810.—Injunction respecting the Visitation of Schools.

The Committee appointed to consider the Reports from Presbyteries concerning Schools beg leave to report respectfully to the General Assembly as follows:—

1. That reports from Presbyteries anent the schools within their respective bounds are required by an Act of the Assembly, passed in 1799.

2. That the words of this Act are,—“The General Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to report to the Assembly a list of all the schools within their bounds, specifying what is taught in each school;—whether the schools be held on the Lord’s Day, or on other days of the week;—in what way the schoolmasters are supported or maintained;—whether they act for themselves, or are employed by or under the direction of others;—what number of scholars attend each school at the time of making the report;—and, in general, whatever else shall appear to the Presbytery of importance respecting the schools within their bounds.”

3. That in consequence of this Act, (now recited,) there have been transmitted to the present Assembly reports from fifteen Presbyteries, viz.:—from Langholm, Annan, Chirnside, Jedburgh, Peebles, Lanark, Linlithgow, Dalkeith, Haddington, Dunbar, Dundee, Cupar, Aberdeen, Strathbogie, and Turriff.

4. That all these reports afford satisfactory evidence that the Presbyteries which have transmitted them have respectively either examined, or were in the course of examining, since the last meeting of the Assembly, the different schools under their superintendence.

But, lastly, in respect that so large a proportion of the Presbyteries of the Church have not transmitted reports concerning schools at all, and that some of those reports which have been transmitted do not contain informations as to several facts to which the Act of Assembly above mentioned directs attention to be paid, the committee humbly suggest that the Assembly should, on the present occasion, again enjoin, in terms of a similar resolution passed last year, “That Presbyteries be more attentive and particular in reporting their obedience to the Act of Assembly, 1799, respecting schools; that the clerks be instructed to see this injunction printed along with the Acts of Assembly; and that it be recommended to Presbyteries to take this injunction under consideration on the day they meet to elect their representatives to the General Assembly.”

Signed in name of the Committee, by

GEO. H. BAIRD, *Convener.*

The General Assembly unanimously approve of this report, and enjoin accordingly.

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1810.—Preamble to the Subscription Paper in Aid of the Funds of the Church.

Of the thousand pounds sterling allowed annually by government for defraying the expenses of the Church, it is specified in the warrant, that L.750 shall be applied in paying the salaries of the officers of the Church; L.100 for incidental expenses; and L.150 for law proceedings; and intimation has been given by government that no addition will be made to the allowance of L.150.

But the General Assembly have ascertained that the allowance of L.150 is wholly insufficient for defending the general rights of the Church in questions that often occur, where no individual has any patrimonial interest; and for assisting clergymen in defending their rights, in those cases where the Church has been in use to grant aid.

The General Assembly, therefore, judging it essential to the public interest of the Church, and the relief of individual clergymen, that there should be an increase of the fund for these purposes, and seeing no other method of obtaining such increase but by a voluntary subscription, do hereby earnestly recommend that a general contribution shall immediately be made in the several Presbyteries by the ministers and elders of the Church; and do hereby direct, that the sums received be remitted without delay by the Moderator or Clerks of Presbyteries to the Procurator for the Church, to be by him reported to the next General Assembly.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1810.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1811.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1811.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1811.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1811.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty.

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. The annual meeting of

your venerable Assembly being again at hand, we are anxious to remind you, as heretofore, of the interest which we feel in your deliberations, and to express to you our confident hope, that the satisfaction which we have hitherto derived from the happy result of your annual labours will, on the present occasion, remain undiminished.

We have witnessed, with peculiar approbation, the zeal and fidelity with which our right trusty and well-beloved Lord Napier has uniformly discharged the trust we have reposed in him, as our Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and having observed the salutary effects which have been produced among you, by the admonitions we have heretofore charged him with, and which he has so faithfully conveyed to you, we doubt not that he will again be acceptable to you, as our representative at your approaching meeting.

We have not failed to repeat to him, on this occasion, the sense which we entertain of the zeal which you have constantly manifested for our service; and we have commissioned him, on the opening of your Assembly, to satisfy you of the inflexible resolution which your steady attachment has created in us, to maintain inviolate the rights and privileges of our Church of Scotland; and that due and ample means may not be wanting for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and the principles of Reformed religion, you will learn from our faithful Representative, that we have thought fit to order our usual gift of one thousand pounds yearly to be continued; and have also granted you an addition thereto of one thousand pounds, to be applied to these holy and important ends.

We trust that the additional proof which we thus afford of our tender regard for your interests and welfare, will lead to new and vigorous exertions on your parts in the discharge of your sacred duties; and that being enabled to extend the beneficial influence which your labours have already created, you will the more effectually promote the happiness of all those whom we have placed under your special care. You will teach them to believe that our protection of them is inseparable from the attachment which they bear towards us and our establishments; and that the principles of the admirable constitution under which we live, if duly cherished, cannot fail to lead to our mutual and general welfare.

Well-beloved! By inculcating these precepts among our faithful subjects, by an uniform determination on your own parts to support our authority and maintain our prerogative, and by an unremitting attention to those matters, which more especially fall under the care of your ecclesiastical deliberations, you will contribute the most effectually to the accomplishment of those great and important objects for which you are about to be assembled. And we have no doubt but that this meeting will be concluded with that unanimity and harmony which have distinguished former Assemblies. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 10th day of May 1811, in the fifty-first year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name,
and on the behalf of his Majesty,

R. RYDER.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1811.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We have received, with the most profound respect and gratitude, the gracious let-

ter with which it has pleased your Royal Highness to honour this meeting of the Assembly of our National Church.

The approbation which your Royal Highness has condescended to bestow upon the former General Assemblies of this Church, we feel as a powerful motive, animating us so to persevere in the discharge of our duty, that the satisfaction which you have hitherto derived from the happy result of our annual labours may, on the present occasion, remain undiminished.

The renewed appointment of the Right Honourable Francis Lord Napier, to represent the royal person in this Assembly, we consider as a signal proof of your Royal Highness's favour. The zeal and fidelity with which he has uniformly discharged the trust reposed in him, the principles of piety and true patriotism which distinguish his character, and his affection for the Church of Scotland, render him peculiarly acceptable to this Assembly.

With gratitude and confidence we rely on the assurance which your Royal Highness has vouchsafed to give us of the interest which you take in us and our deliberations, of your attachment to the Church of Scotland, and of your inflexible resolution to maintain inviolate her rights and privileges, as by law established.

We have received, with due thankfulness, your Royal Highness's warrant, not only for the usual gift of L.1000, but also for the additional sum of L.1000, to be in like manner employed for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and the principles of Reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. This farther proof which your Royal Highness has afforded of your tender regard for the most valuable interests of your subjects in the remoter districts of this country, will lead us, on our part, to new and vigorous exertions in the discharge of our sacred duties, as well as enable us more extensively and more effectually to promote the improvement and happiness of all those committed to our special care. We will teach them to believe that their loyalty and attachment to the principles of the admirable constitution under which they live, if duly cherished, cannot fail to lead to the mutual welfare of the Sovereign and of the people.

With the most profound respect, we observe the solicitude with which your Royal Highness reminds us of our duty. We listen with cheerfulness to your paternal admonitions, and will earnestly apply ourselves to the functions of our ministry. We will instruct our people in the knowledge of those principles, and lead them to the practice of all those duties and virtues by which they may be rendered good men and good citizens; nor shall we fail to inculcate upon them submission to the lawful authority of the Sovereign, and zeal for the maintenance of his royal prerogative, which we regard as an essential part of our happy constitution; so that, by the blessing of God on our endeavours, we may see righteousness and order, union and energy, comfort and peace, prevail universally in this part of the kingdom. With unremitting attention to those matters which more immediately fall within the province of our ecclesiastical deliberations, we will study, as far as in us lies, to accomplish, with unanimity and harmony, those great and important ends for which we have assembled.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may direct and prosper the administration of the government which your Royal Highness exercises in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty;—that He may preserve your Royal Highness long for a blessing to this nation and to the world, and may finally bestow upon you a crown of unfading glory, is the sincere and fervent prayer of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ALEXANDER RANKINE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1811.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, eagerly embrace this opportunity of our having met in General Assembly to approach your Royal Highness with the warmest expressions of our dutiful and affectionate attachment.

We have felt the most anxious and painful interest in the affliction with which it hath pleased Divine Providence to visit the Illustrious House of our Sovereign.

We lament the loss of a Princess, whose virtues endeared her to her family, and whose fortitude and resignation in severe and protracted suffering, are a new proof of the value and efficacy of that religion by which she was sustained.

Revering the virtues of our most gracious Sovereign, and having long experienced the mildness and justice of his government, we deeply participate with your Royal Highness, and all his faithful subjects, in deploring the heavy calamity which has deprived us of his paternal care and direction. We have not ceased to present our fervent supplications, and those of the people entrusted to our care, before the throne of Divine grace; earnestly beseeching the Father of mercies to regard the affliction of our beloved King; and our souls are filled with joy and thankfulness, in the humble hope that our national prayers have been graciously heard, and that presages are afforded us of his restoration to health, to his family, and to the exercise of his royal functions.

We acknowledge with gratitude the mercy of the Almighty Disposer of events, who has alleviated the national calamity, by blessing us with a Prince eminently qualified, by his talents and virtues, and by his attachment to the principles of the constitution, for discharging the high duties committed to him as Regent of the United Kingdom. We have contemplated with delight the wisdom and prudence with which your Royal Highness has exerted the powers of government. These qualities, so eminently displayed by your Royal Highness, cannot fail to constitute a lasting claim on the gratitude and confidence of a loyal and affectionate people.

Grateful to the Almighty Ruler in the kingdoms of men, we congratulate your Royal Highness on the security of our native land, and on the distinguished blessings which its inhabitants have enjoyed, amidst all the dangers of that protracted war in which we are engaged with a malignant and inveterate foe. We rejoice that the new species of warfare with which the oppressor of the Continent hath assailed us, by the hostile measures in which he obstinately persists against the commerce of the world, have so little affected the revenue of the United Kingdom, and we trust that, under Divine Providence, our resources will prove equal to every public exigency, till the arduous contest in which we are engaged is brought to a happy termination.

We participate warmly in the national feeling, when we contemplate those recent events which inspire the heart of every patriotic Briton with exultation and triumph. The splendid achievements of our countrymen have, in various regions of the world, been crowned with the most brilliant success. We have seen them long opposed to the ablest generals and best disciplined troops of France. The eyes of the world have been anxiously directed to the field of conflict, and the result has fully displayed the skill of our commanders, and the invincible bravery of our countrymen; decisively proving, that a British army, like a British fleet, is the first in the world. These successful exertions in the cause of our suffering allies have increased our national glory, and exalted us among the kingdoms of the world. It shall be our anxious care to cherish in the people of Scotland patience under the pressure of those burdens which the circumstances of the times render it necessary to impose,—attachment to our unequalled constitution, and that high spirit of patriotism which, we trust, will ever rise superior to the dangers that may assail us.

As servants of the Prince of Peace, we deplore the lengthened calamities of war,

and most earnestly supplicate the Supreme Disposer of all events to make the successes which have crowned the arms of our country the means of restoring the blessings of a safe, an honourable, and a permanent peace.

That the Almighty, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may continue to guard the United Kingdom in all its interests; that He may abundantly bless and long preserve your Royal Highness; and that Princes of your august House may long reign in the hearts of an affectionate and loyal people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ALEXANDER RANKINE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1811.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1811.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1811.—Act anent the Meetings of the Synod of Glenelg.

The General Assembly, in compliance with a representation and petition from the Provincial Synod of Glenelg, did, and hereby do, appoint the said Synod of Glenelg to hold their first ordinary meeting at Broadford, on the third Wednesday of July; and their next ordinary meeting at Lochcarron, and so on in future years alternately, at the above mentioned places, upon the third Wednesday of July.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1811.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1811.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1811.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1812.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1812.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1812.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1812.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1812.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1812.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne with expressions of the most sincere affection and respect for your Royal Highness.

We sincerely sympathise with your Royal Highness on account of the continued and severe malady with which it has pleased God to visit your Royal Father, our most gracious Sovereign. We were justly attached to his person, revered his virtues, and were happy under his government. The more afflicting now is our grief for the severity of his indisposition, and the loss which we sustain. On this occasion, as in

other calamities, this is our consolation, that the Great Ruler of the world arranges and conducts all events with infinite wisdom, rectitude, and goodness.

It has been no small alleviation of this great calamity, that your Royal Highness came forward, at the desire of the nation, to preside in the empire, and administer its affairs. The promptitude and energy, the prudence and the mildness, with which you have hitherto acted, the warm interest which you have taken in the welfare of the State, and the uniform regard which you have shown to its admirable constitution and laws, all assure us of the continued maintenance of our invaluable rights and privileges, civil and sacred.

We deeply lament the calamities of war, and that inordinate and insatiable ambition of the enemy, which precludes the near prospect of a safe and honourable peace. Yet, amidst all the dangers which have threatened us, and the hardships under which we have laboured, we will remember with gratitude, that Providence has continued to protect and prosper us. Our resources for maintaining the arduous and protracted conflict have never failed. The arms of our country, by sea and land, have been so successful, as to deprive the enemy of all his colonies and foreign commerce. Brilliant achievements in the Peninsula have thrown an additional lustre on the British name. Neighbouring nations have already caught a portion of our spirit, and we trust that this may diffuse itself over other kingdoms, now unhappily subjected to the enemy. They may yet rally around us, assert their own independence, and aid us in humbling the common foe, and in securing for ourselves, and for the world, the invaluable blessings of peace.

We deplore those acts of insubordination and licentiousness, of riot and outrage, which have lately disgraced some parts of the United Kingdom; and we particularly lament the fall, by assassination, of a statesman, distinguished no less for his virtues than for his talents. We mourn the loss which his family and his country sustain by his untimely death; and deeply regret that a crime so atrocious could have been perpetrated by any individual in this favoured and enlightened country. Aggravated, however, as it is, we have some consolation in thinking, that the criminal was instigated, not by any connection with other men, but by personal malice only.

We beg leave to assure your Royal Highness, that no spirit of insubordination has appeared in this part of the empire; and that, as far as in us lies, we will exert ourselves in maintaining loyalty and subjection to the laws. For this purpose, we will employ all our personal influence, as well as the faithful and assiduous discharge of our ministerial duties. We will inculcate on our people, old and young, the doctrines of our holy religion, and endeavour, with the aid of Divine grace, to fix deeply in their hearts those principles of morality, derived from the Gospel, which are powerful to regulate the conduct of men, to bring them under due subjection, and to preserve order and peace.

That the God of all power and grace may bless your Royal Highness, and establish the dominion of his Majesty, under your direction, in the affection and loyalty of his subjects; that Princes of your illustrious house, to the latest posterity, may sway the British sceptre; and that, after a long and happy life on earth, you may obtain at last eternal salvation and happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. These are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

WILLIAM MACMORINE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1812.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1812.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1812.—Interim Act and Overture respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1812.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1812.—Recommendation anent the Public Reading of the Scriptures.

The General Assembly proceeded to consider the overture from the Presbytery of Aberdeen respecting the public reading of the Scriptures, and the General Assembly approving of the spirit of the overture, and learning from thence, with much satisfaction, that the practice of reading the Word in the congregation, which is recognised by the Directory as part of the public worship of God, was revived by the recommendation of the Synod of Aberdeen, and is now generally adopted within the bounds of that Synod, (being convinced that it would conduce to the edification of the people, and to their better acquaintance with the Scriptures, if this practice were more generally followed,) do hereby recommend to all the ministers of this Church, according to their discretion, to read at one of the meetings for public worship such portion of the Old or New Testament, or of both, as they may judge expedient. The Assembly at the same time declare, that they do not mean that this recommendation shall in any degree supersede the exercise of lecturing, which they enjoin to be observed throughout this Church, in conformity to the Acts of Assembly, 1694 and 1704, as a most important branch of the public ministrations of pastors and teachers.

The Assembly appoint this deliverance to be inserted amongst the printed Acts of the Assembly.

X.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1812.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1813.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1813.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1813.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1813.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty.

GEORGE, P. R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1813.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1813.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most faithful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly, gladly embrace this opportunity of approaching the throne with sentiments of sincere affection and attachment to your Royal Highness and his Majesty's government.

We deeply regret the continuance of that malady with which our venerable Sovereign has been visited, so painful to the feelings of your Royal Highness, and all those who recollect the wisdom, rectitude, and benignity of his Majesty's character and reign. It is, however, our consolation, under this afflicting dispensation of Providence, that the reins of empire are held by a Prince, whose matured wisdom and experience have prepared him for the duties of his high station, and that under the regency of your Royal Highness we continue to enjoy the same just, mild, and paternal rule.

We congratulate your Royal Highness on that success and glory which have been obtained by his Majesty's armies, and those of his allies, in the Peninsula. We hope the time is not far distant, when the brave and high-minded inhabitants of Spain, rescued from the tyrant's grasp, shall reap, in the establishment of their independence, the fruit of all their heroic sacrifices and exertions.

In those important and memorable events which have taken place in the north of Europe, in the defeat and destruction of the best appointed and most numerous armies which were ever led forth to overwhelm a nation, we recognise the hand of that good Providence which has interposed to disappoint the designs of cruel ambi-

tion, and "restrain the wrath of man." We rejoice to behold nations, who had been dazzled by the false glory, and dispirited by the great success of their presumptuous oppressor, roused and encouraged by his discomfiture and disgrace, and, having experienced his odious and intolerable despotism, that they have risen, with one heart, to shake off the galling yoke.

We trust that the great and generous efforts which are now making in behalf of suffering humanity will, by the blessing of Almighty God, be crowned with complete success, and that general liberty and national independence being secured, our country, and harassed Europe, shall at length be permitted to enjoy a safe, honourable, and lasting peace.

That Almighty God may protect and bless your Royal Highness; that He may direct and prosper his Majesty's government under your auspices; that the justice, wisdom, and moderation of your administration may secure to you the affection and loyalty of all the subjects of the British empire; that Princes of the same illustrious House, formed after the example of our Sovereign, may, to the latest posterity, sway the sceptre of the United Kingdom; and that, after a long and prosperous reign on earth, you may obtain a more glorious and permanent crown in Heaven, are the sincere and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANDREW BROWN, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 7, May 27, 1813.—Petition to both Houses of Parliament respecting the Political Privileges of the Roman Catholics.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, the humble Petition of the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly,

Sheweth,

That observing that there was lately under the revision of the legislature, and may again come under their revision, that part of the public law of the state which subjects Roman Catholics to certain disabilities; your petitioners are deeply impressed with the conviction, that they should be wanting in duty to that great and loyal body of his Majesty's subjects which compose the National Church of Scotland, of which they are the representatives, did they fail to express to your honourable House the deep interest and concern they must ever take in all discussions and measures which have for their object to innovate upon the laws which our forefathers in their time deemed necessary for securing to the people of these realms the blessings of civil liberty and of the Protestant religion.

That your petitioners have at all times felt the utmost anxiety that religious toleration should be preserved inviolate; and at a period so full of peril to the security and independence of the empire, are aware of the peculiar importance of removing every ground of disaffection, of diffusing universally sentiments of genuine patriotism, by opening to all classes of his Majesty's subjects the paths of honourable ambition, and affording them all the consequence which property, talent, or successful industry, bestow.

But your petitioners cannot be insensible to this peculiarity in the situation of the Roman Catholics, that they maintain a certain intercourse with a foreign hierarchy, and observe a certain submission to a foreign Pontiff, which may prove hostile to our ecclesiastical constitution, and is generally involved in political connections unfriendly

to British prosperity. They know also full well, how prone human nature is to corruption and superstition; and how powerfully the Roman Catholic creed, and the confidential intercourse with the priesthood by auricular confession, tend to subjugate the worthiest characters, and to discipline and mould them into instruments for promoting the purposes of their sect.

If, therefore, your honourable House, and the other branches of the legislature, deem, in your wisdom, that the exigency of the times is such, as to authorise any change in the system of securities adopted at the Revolution, that glorious era from which these nations date the blessings of freedom, order, religious toleration, and political prosperity; your petitioners trust and pray that the utmost caution and prudence will be exercised; that none of the bulwarks of the constitution, ecclesiastical or civil, be on any account exposed to hazard; and that effectual precautions be adopted, to exclude foreign influence from the councils of the state, and the administration of the government, and to maintain this happy land impregnable, as heretofore, to foreign innovation, foreign intrigue, and foreign corruption.

While your petitioners cordially express their reliance on the wisdom of Parliament, and their full conviction that the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland will continue to enjoy the protection of Parliament, they presume to annex to their petition a solemn declaration, in which they pledge themselves before God, to your honourable House and to their country, that they will discharge, with fidelity and vigilance, the duties incumbent upon them, as office-bearers in that Protestant Church which was established in Scotland at the blessed reformation from Popery; and will continue to cherish in the minds of the people committed to their care those principles of religious liberty which are incorporated with the British constitution, and which are the glory of this Protestant land.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANDREW BROWN, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1813.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1813.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1813.—Act respecting the Licensing of Probationers.

The General Assembly having taken under their serious consideration the great danger to which the interests of religion and of this Church may be exposed, by licensing any to preach the Gospel who are not duly qualified for that important trust, do hereby enact and ordain, that in all time coming the following regulations shall be strictly observed:—

I. It is hereby enacted, that no student shall be entered upon the roll of any Professor of Divinity, unless he shall produce to the said Professor a certificate from the

minister of the parish in which he has his usual residence; or, in his absence, or during a vacancy in said parish, from some neighbouring minister, bearing that his character is suitable to his views; together with a diploma of Master of Arts, or certificates from the several Professors of Philosophy under whom he had studied, from which it may be clearly ascertained, that in some University or Universities he had gone through a full course of philosophy, in some winter sessions of College preceding that in which the certificates are produced.

II. The General Assembly do likewise hereby ordain, that all students who have been enrolled by Professors of Divinity, in the manner prescribed by this Act, shall continue to prosecute the study of Divinity for the term of six sessions. Provided always, that if any student hath given regular attendance in the Divinity Hall during three sessions, his course shall be considered as completed in four sessions; and that if he hath given regular attendance in the Hall during two sessions, his course shall be considered as completed in five sessions. And the Assembly do further ordain, that in each of these cases students shall be enrolled by the Professors during the several sessions of their respective courses, and deliver in the Divinity Hall, in the manner herein afterwards provided, an exegesis in Latin on some controverted head in Divinity, a homily in English, an exercise and addition, a lecture on some large portion of Scripture, and a popular sermon, together with such other exercises as the Professors shall think proper to prescribe. And the Assembly further enact and declare, that a student is entitled to apply to the Professor for his certificates that he may be proposed for trials, and that the preliminary steps may be taken by the Presbytery, during the currency of the last session of his course, as above described; with this limitation, that if the said last session is to be claimed as a session of regular attendance, he shall, towards the conclusion thereof, obtain a new certificate of his attendance during its currency, and produce the same to the Presbytery or Synod.

III. Professors of Divinity are required to attend, as much as circumstances may permit, to the conduct of such students as are under their care; and, as far as they find it practicable, to insist that every student shall deliver his first discourse sometime during his second session at the latest, and the remainder of his discourses at such periods as may enable him to deliver the whole of them before the end of January of the last session of his course.

IV. When a student is proposed to any Presbytery, in order to be taken upon trials, the Presbytery shall be alone, and the motion for that purpose shall lie upon the table till their next ordinary meeting. In the meantime, the Presbytery shall appoint the member, by whom the student has been proposed, to lay before the said meeting the certificate or certificates in favour of the student that are specified in the third paragraph of the fifth section of this Act; to desire him to attend the same, and to inform him that, previously to the meeting, he ought, as far as circumstances may permit, to wait on such ministers of the Presbytery as have not formerly had an opportunity of conversing with him in private.

V. When the time appointed for considering the motion is arrived, the Presbytery shall strictly observe the following regulations:—

1st, The Presbytery shall be alone, while they are employed in discussing the several preliminaries respecting students who are proposed for trials.

2^d, They shall require satisfying evidence that every student who is proposed for that purpose has completed the twenty-first year of his age.

3^d, No student shall be admitted to trial, unless he produces to the Presbytery a certificate or certificates from the Professor or Professors of Divinity, under whose tuition he hath studied, bearing that he hath prosecuted his studies, and delivered his discourses in the manner prescribed by this Act; and that his conduct, as far as it consists with the knowledge of the said Professor or Professors, has been in every respect suitable to his views in life. And the General Assembly do likewise hereby enact, that the Presbytery shall record at full length the said certificate or certificates in their minutes. And it is hereby enacted and declared, that the student, having lodged such certificate or certificates, shall be entitled to obtain extracts of the same if demanded.

4th, No Presbytery shall receive any student upon trials, unless they are satisfied that he is of good report; sound in his principles: pious, sober, grave, and prudent in his behaviour; of a peaceable disposition; and well affected to the happy establishment in this kingdom both in Church and State. And that the Presbytery may proceed with all due caution, in a matter of such peculiar importance, they shall not agree to the motion in behalf of the student, unless his residence, during the year preceding, has been chiefly within their bounds, or he shall produce sufficient testimonials from the Presbytery, in whose bounds his residence has chiefly been during that term, bearing that his character is such as is described in the immediately preceding sentence of this paragraph, and recommending him in those respects to the Presbytery before whom the proposal is made, as a proper person to be entered upon trials.

5th, The Presbytery shall not agree to the motion in favour of the student, unless they are satisfied that he has made a competent degree of proficiency in those several branches of knowledge, which are necessary to enable him to be an useful preacher of the Gospel. And the General Assembly ordain, that the Presbytery, in order to procure full information in this respect, shall examine the student strictly and privately on his knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, and of philosophy and theology.

6th, If, after these preliminary steps have been taken, the Presbytery shall be of opinion that the student is duly qualified in these several particulars, they shall record this opinion in their minutes, and order their clerk to write letters to the several Presbyteries within the bounds of the Provincial Synod, two kalendar months at least before the meeting of the same, informing them of the Presbytery's intention to take the student upon public trials; and bearing that the certificate or certificates in his favour, which are required by this Act, have been regularly laid before them. But it is hereby provided, that within the bounds of such Synods as meet only once a year, a student may be entitled to have these circular letters written half a-year sooner than would be otherwise competent.

VI. The General Assembly do likewise hereby enact and declare, that at the request of the student, it shall be competent to any Presbytery to transfer the receiving of the public trials, or any parts thereof, certifying to the Presbytery to which the transference is to be made, that the various preliminary steps have been taken according to the directions of this Act; and that such parts of the public and private trials as have been already gone through have been received with approbation.

VII. If a student have studied, either in whole or in part, in Protestant Universities, which are not within the bounds of this Church, he shall, when he is proposed to any Presbytery for trials, be required to produce satisfying testimonials from the Professors of Divinity in said Universities; and the time which these Professors shall certify to have been employed by him in studying Divinity under their tuition, shall be computed in the same manner as if he had prosecuted his studies in any of the Universities within the bounds of this Church. But it is hereby provided, that no student, in such circumstances, shall be admitted even to those private trials, which are appointed to be taken before the writing of the circular letters, sooner than six kalendar months after his arrival in Scotland.

VIII. The General Assembly ordain, that if a Presbytery propose to take a student upon public trials, and have, with that view, written the circular letters, as is herein required, public intimation thereof shall be made at some diet of the next meeting of the Provincial Synod, which shall not be the last diet thereof. And the Presbytery-clerk is hereby required to transmit to the Synod-clerk an extract of the certificate or certificates laid before the Presbytery in favour of the student, in order that the same may be produced at this diet of the Synod. And it is likewise hereby ordained, that at some subsequent diet of the Synod, particular inquiry shall be made whether any of the members of the court has any objection to offer against the student being entered upon public trials; and that the Synod then, taking into consideration the extract produced, and the whole of the case, shall judge of the expediency of allowing the Presbytery to admit the student on trials; or if, in any case, the Presbytery-clerk

shall fail to transmit the extract of the certificates above mentioned, the student may produce to the Synod, by himself, or by any member of the court, the extract of the same, which by this Act he is entitled to obtain.

IX. If the Synod shall allow the student to be taken upon public trials, the Presbytery shall proceed therein with all convenient speed; and the Assembly appoint the following trials to be taken of the student, and in the order herein mentioned:—*1st*, Catechetic trials on Divinity, Chronology, and Church History; *2d*, A trial on the Hebrew and Greek languages; *3d*, An exegesis in Latin, on some controverted head in Divinity; *4th*, A Homily in English; *5th*, An exercise and addition; *6th*, A Lecture on some large portion of Scripture; *7th*, A popular Sermon; it being understood, that if the Presbytery see cause, they may examine the student upon the subject of these several discourses.

X. The student having gone through the several trials which are mentioned in the immediately preceding section of this Act, the Presbytery are ordained to proceed in the following order:—

1st, They shall deliberately and seriously take a conjunct view of the whole trials, and if they shall be of opinion that the student is not properly qualified to perform the duties incumbent upon a preacher of the Gospel, they shall by no means grant him a licence in his present circumstances.

2d, If, upon this review of the trials, the Presbytery are fully satisfied therewith, they shall record this opinion in their minutes.

3d, The Presbytery shall then propose to the student the questions that are appointed to be put to all who pass trials by Act 10th, Assembly, 1711, and require him to subscribe the Formula which is prescribed by the said Act. And the General Assembly strictly prohibit all Presbyteries from licensing any student to preach the Gospel who shall not give explicit and satisfying answers to these questions, and subscribe the said Formula.

4th, The Presbytery shall order the Act of Assembly, 1759, against Simoniacal Practices, to be read to the student in their presence.

Lastly, The Presbytery shall appoint their Moderator to license the student to preach the Gospel, and order their Clerk to furnish him with an extract of his licence.

XI For the better observance of this Act, the General Assembly ordain, *1st*, That it shall be printed among their other printed Acts; *2d*, That it shall be printed by itself in some convenient form; *3d*, That a copy of this separate edition shall be transmitted to each Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Scotland; and that the said Professors shall read the same in their respective Halls, once, at least, during every session, and at such times as they have reason to expect the attendance of the greatest number of students for that session; and, *lastly*, That a copy of the same edition shall likewise be transmitted to the Clerks of each Synod and Presbytery within the bounds of this Church; and that the said Clerks shall keep the same along with their minutes, and bring it up to each meeting of their respective courts for the use of their members.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1813.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1813.—Recommendation, Injunction, and Queries, respecting Schools.

The Report of the Committee, upon the returns from Presbyteries respecting the Examination of Schools within their bounds, was produced and read, as follows:—

"That only fourteen Presbyteries have sent up reports to this Assembly, viz. :—Aberdeen, Brechin, Chirnside, Dalkeith, Dunfermline, Garioch, Haddington, Lanark, Langholm, Linlithgow, Lochmaben, Peebles, Strathbogie, and Turriff.

"In some of these reports very particular information is given; but this is not their general character, as there are others which do nothing more than mention the names of the parishes, the schools of which have been examined since last Assembly. There are no facts stated in any of them which require to be brought under the particular consideration of the Assembly. The committee have only further to remark, that several Presbyteries state their experience of the great and increasing advantage which results from the regular examination of schools, according to the instructions of the General Assembly."

The General Assembly agree to renew and re-transmit the injunction of the General Assembly, 1799, to Presbyteries respecting this business, which is in the following words :—"The General Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to report to the Assembly a list of all the schools within their bounds, specifying what is taught in each school, whether the schools be held on the Lord's Day, or on other days of the week; in what way the schoolmasters are supported or maintained; whether they act for themselves, or are employed by or under the direction of others; what number of scholars attend each school at the time of making the report; and, in general, whatever else shall appear to the Presbytery of importance respecting the schools within their bounds." The Assembly request that Presbyteries will pay particular attention to the above injunction.

At the same time, the Assembly took up the consideration of the overture from the Synod of Aberdeen anent parochial and other schools, which was read. And the Assembly appointed the queries contained in the said overture to be transmitted to Presbyteries along with the above recommendation and injunction. The queries are as follow :—

"1st, Is there a parochial school established in your parish, with sufficient salary and accommodation for the schoolmaster, in terms of Act, 1803? and if not, what are the reasons which have prevented compliance with the enactments of that statute?"

"2d, Are there more than one parochial school established in your parish under the authority of the aforementioned Act? and if not, would it be eligible, and why, that there should be more schools in your parish?"

"3d, What schools, other than parochial, are there in your parish? Of what description, and by whom kept and supported?"

And the Assembly direct the Presbyteries of this Church to take the said queries into their consideration at their first meeting after they shall come to their hand, and send up answers to the same to next Assembly.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1813.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1814.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1814.

L

Sess. 1, May 19, 1814.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1814.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved,—It is with peculiar satisfaction that we look forward to the approaching Assembly of the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland.

Their deliberations have at all times been regarded by us with the deepest interest, and the support of the Establishment towards which their labours have been directed, has been the object of our unceasing care.

We have annually endeavoured to satisfy its members of our fixed determination to support it, and we have carefully admonished all its disciples, through you, to be steady in its defence. Happily, our admonitions have not been offered in vain—they were made in the spirit of benevolence and affection—they have been received with thankfulness, and regarded with sincerity.

You have united with our faithful subjects in working out the good work of peace, and the fruits of your labours have become apparent to all the world. A new era is arrived; our constitution and independence are no longer assailed by the domineering usurpation of tyrannical ambition; our Establishments are unimpaired; our laws remain entire; and our religion is preserved. These are the happy consequences, well-beloved, of our stedfastness in the cause of virtue and of truth. These are the welcome triumphs which the Wise Dispenser of human events has permitted us, in His good time, to enjoy.

We rejoice with you in these things; and that you may be assured of the particular interest which we have felt in the restoration of the establishment of your holy Church to its peaceful labours, we again charge our right trusty Commissioner, Francis Lord Napier, to convey to you our congratulations and our love. He has inculcated with assiduity the precepts we have constantly directed him to recommend in the hour of trial, and he will teach you to cherish, in the more auspicious moments of peace, the doctrines that have hitherto enabled you to withstand the enemies of those principles which are the foundation of the strength and true happiness of nations.

Persevere, well-beloved, in the discharge of your moral duties. Continue to teach our subjects the great and awful truths of religion. Encourage them in the conviction that your ecclesiastical establishment is an object of our esteem and favour. Endeavour to preserve among them a due obedience to our laws; and persuade them that they will thereby promote the cause of religious liberty and perfect freedom.

Recommending you, brethren, to strengthen yourselves in the principles of virtue, and to direct those whom we again commit to your care, so that they follow the paths of peace, we heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 13th day of May 1814, in the 54th year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

SIDMOUTH.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1814.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

The gracious letter with which, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, your Royal Highness has been pleased to honour this General Assembly, has been received by us with the greatest respect.

We acknowledge, with heartfelt gratitude, the interest which our Sovereign has at all times condescended to take in our deliberations, and the paternal care with which he has watched over the interests of our Establishment. The repeated expressions of his fixed determination to support our National Church, and his fatherly admonitions, given in the spirit of benevolence and affection, have animated our people in its defence.

We rejoice in having been permitted to unite our humble exertions with those of his Majesty's other faithful subjects in working out the good work of peace.

We rejoice in the arrival of a new era. Our constitution and independence are no longer assailed by the domineering usurpation of tyrannical ambition; our establishments are unimpaired; our laws remain entire; and our religion is preserved. We adore the Wise Dispenser of all human things, who, by his blessing upon the stedfastness of our national councils, hath given these welcome triumphs to the cause of virtue and of truth.

It is peculiarly gratifying to us that the congratulations with which your Royal Highness is pleased to honour us upon these great events, are conveyed to us by Francis Lord Napier; a nobleman, whom long experience of his virtues, and of his kindness, endears to us. As he inculcated on us with assiduity those precepts which the wisdom of our Sovereign recommended in the hour of trial, we are well assured that he will perform, with equal faithfulness, the pleasing task of cherishing in us those sentiments which become the more auspicious moments of peace.

It shall be our study, in conformity with the paternal admonitions of your Royal Highness, to maintain the doctrines of the Gospel; that as we have been protected from the enemies of our faith, we may cultivate unceasingly those principles which are the foundation of the true strength and happiness of nations.

It will be at once an incentive to exertions, and a powerful aid to us in the discharge of our pastoral duties, in teaching our people the great and awful truths of religion, that we are permitted by your Royal Highness to encourage in them a conviction that our ecclesiastical establishment is honoured with the royal favour. We will endeavour to preserve among them a due obedience to the laws, and to persuade them that they will thereby promote the cause of religious liberty and perfect freedom.

It shall be our earnest prayer, that, through the Divine blessing, we may be enabled to strengthen ourselves in the principles of virtue, and to direct those who are committed to our care, so that they may follow the paths of peace.

We have received with gratitude, and shall endeavour to apply with faithfulness, his Majesty's gracious donation of L.2000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may bless, console, and restore his Majesty the King; that He may bless abundantly the Queen, your Royal Highness, and all the members of the Royal Family; that He may direct and prosper the measures of his Majesty's government; and that He may maintain to the latest ages the national blessings which he hath bestowed upon our country, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DAVID RITCHIE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1814.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, eagerly embrace the opportunity of our meeting in this General Assembly to approach the throne, that we may express to your Royal Highness our sentiments on the events of a period, auspicious beyond our utmost hopes to the glory of Britain, and the general interests of the civilized world.

Amidst the variety, however, of the subjects of heartfelt congratulation which press upon our thoughts, we would pause till we offer to your Royal Highness the homage of our tenderest sympathy on the continuance of that malady, with which it has pleased the Almighty to afflict your Royal Father, our beloved and venerable Sovereign. We feel, that to your Royal Highness, to the United Kingdom, and to our illustrious Allies, the participation of his Majesty in the downfall of that "throne, which framed mischief by a law," in the re-establishment of the legitimate governments of those countries which had been overpowered by a military despotism, and in the return of all the friendly relations which formerly cemented the commonwealth of Europe, would have completed the happiness of this great jubilee of the human race. But, even in this case, it is both our consolation and our joy to remember, that your Royal Highness, consulting the true principles of the constitution, and accepting the direction of those arduous duties which the perplexity and distress of nations had devolved on the British Empire, has maintained the spirit of his Majesty's policy, increased the glory of his Majesty's reign, and purchased new titles to the confidence and the gratitude of his Majesty's subjects and allies.

When we look back to the magnitude and the duration of the exertions which our country has made in behalf of social order, national independence and public law, amidst the perpetual vicissitudes of a contest so bloody, portentous, and long protracted, our eyes are filled with the tears of exulting patriotism. We have seen the magnanimity and fortitude of a truly British King, supported by the wisdom and constancy of approved councillors, abundantly supplied with resources by the generosity of a people, who regarded no sacrifice as too costly to be offered on the altar of liberty, and rendered triumphant by the courage, science, and devotion of fleets and armies, which, in every quarter of the globe, sought only the presence of the enemy and the heat of the battle. We have beheld our beloved country thus girded about with might, and reposing her confidence in the Rock of Ages, undaunted when alone; staying by her single efforts the wasting progress of anarchy; opening her fostering bosom as a common asylum for the exiled worth of every shattered state; interposing the impenetrable shield of her protection between the honest struggles of reviving valour, and the wretchedness of universal subjugation; and everywhere palsying the

strength, rebuking the pride, and quelling the violence of the frenzied oppressor. As the recompence of such magnanimous perseverance, and of so many generous labours, we have had the satisfaction of seeing the energies and resources of our government, ultimately combined with the operations of a commander, unequalled in abilities for war; and have beheld with exultation the success of our firm battalions, and those of our imperial and royal Allies, in accomplishing the repose of Europe, by toils, and achievements, and triumphs, to which the admiration of the most distant times will not cease to pay a just tribute of applause.

Amidst the peace which we now enjoy, and the hopes by which we are animated, we desire to remember the days of darkness, so far only as may be necessary to perpetuate among men the lessons of instruction which they engraved on our hearts, in characters too deep to be erased. With great willingness we turn to the mild and dignified spirit of conciliation; seldom equalled, and never surpassed, even in the solitary exertions of human goodness, which has recently, on the broadest scale, rescued our nature from reproach, and shown that the legitimate rulers of the earth labour only for the benefit of the people. We rejoice that the genuine stamp of that government and magistracy, which are the ordinance of God, has been impressed on all the proceedings of the Allied Sovereigns, to bind more firmly the cords of loyalty among the subjects of every land, and to unite them in the vigorous support of those well-balanced constitutional powers which repay any surrender of personal right they require, by the permanent security which they impart to liberty and religion, to private and to public happiness. We rejoice not less, that in this better temper of mankind, Princes, consoled and supported, and aided by our country, remount the thrones of their ancestors, enlightened by the misfortunes of the nations which they are unanimously invited to govern; filled with sentiments of benignity and peace, corresponding to the happier condition of human affairs; and anxious to restore, through the wide extent of their influence, the ancient relations of national amity and useful commerce.

In the just attention paid by the Continental nations to the true principles of civil liberty and representative government, we find the strongest encouragement to hope, that, as the fathers have been summoned in a period of distress to contend with the powers of evil, so the children will be quickened, by the occupations of peace, to engage in a better emulation for the palm of industry and science, of political wisdom, and of moral worth. We hail with delight every public indication of so honourable a disposition, and cannot refrain, as an Assembly of Christian ministers and elders, from adverting to the anxious and unwearied labours of his Majesty's government, for the universal abolition of the African Slave-Trade. We rejoice in witnessing this disinterested employment of British counsel and British influence, in the promotion of a cause so deeply interesting to the human race.

Considering the shame and contempt which Divine Providence has openly poured on all visionary theories in religion and politics, the offspring of a false, hypocritical, and corrupting philosophy, we cannot suffer ourselves to entertain a doubt, that the pure and unsophisticated doctrines of our holy faith, and the great laws of piety and righteousness, delivered and taught by its Author, from which has visibly proceeded the main strength exerted in this arduous conflict, will henceforth command both increasing reverence and additional authority among the rulers and people of the earth. We know, that before the end come, this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached for a witness to every creature under Heaven. And it remains for us to assure your Royal Highness, that our ministry, unceasingly directed, as it has been, to the interest and advancement of this great cause when the times were troubled, will not be less steadily directed to its interest and advancement in the day of prosperity.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may direct and prosper the Government, which your Royal Highness administers in the name and on behalf of his Majesty;—that He may long preserve your Royal Highness as a blessing to the nation and to the world;—and that descendants of your illustrious house, steadily maintaining the civil and religious rights of a free people, may sway the British sceptre to the latest posterity, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DAVID RITCHIE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1814.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1814.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1814.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1814.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May 1815.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1815.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1815.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1815.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well. Having taken into our consideration that the annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was appointed to take place on the 18th day of this instant May, and deeming it advantageous to the interests of our said Church, that the ministers and elders thereof should again resume their deliberations, we have thought fit, in the exercise of his Majesty's paternal care, to sanction the approaching meeting of your venerable body. And seeing that, by reason of other weighty affairs, we cannot be present ourselves on this solemn occasion, we have thought fit again to appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Francis Lord Napier to represent us and hold our place amongst you, nominating him our Commissioner to your holy meeting, to do all things lawful and necessary in our royal name. We, accordingly, require that you, and all other his Majesty's good subjects, do honour and obey him as our Representative, and listen to those things which we have commanded him to declare to you. We have more especially charged him to make known to you our high sense of your steady and firm zeal for our service, and our determination to encourage the same, by maintaining the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland pure and unimpaired. We have, at the same time, cautioned him, that he suffer nothing to be done in your holy Assembly to the prejudice of our authority or our prerogative.

The repeated proofs which you have given us of your attachment have created in us the utmost confidence in this respect; and we are persuaded, that the same temperance and moderation, which have heretofore marked your counsels and proceedings, will prevent your treating of any matter which is not a fit object for the deliberations of an ecclesiastical meeting.

We are anxious that, in ecclesiastical affairs, your wisdom should be exercised without restraint, seeing that it has been invariably directed to the important purposes of religion and of virtue. The advantages which have resulted from a steady perseverance in the promotion of these great objects of our laws and all our establishments, will encourage you to keep them at all times in view; and for the advancement of true piety in that part of the kingdom committed to your pastoral care, we endeavour to animate your labours by our unceasing countenance and support.

Well-beloved, we have commanded our High Commissioner to assure you of our solicitude for your welfare in all matters respecting your peculiar establishment. And, recommending in the strongest manner, that you be not deterred from a firm perseverance in the important duties which you have undertaken, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 11th day of May 1815, in the fifty-fifth year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

SIDMOUTH.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1815.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, the members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, have received, with sentiments of the profoundest respect, the gracious letter with which your Royal Highness, in name and on behalf of his Majesty, has condescended to honour us on this occasion.

It is peculiarly gratifying to us to be assured, that while, in the exercise of our constitutional rights, we are again assembled to deliberate on the affairs submitted to our judgment and review, your Royal Highness has thought fit, in the exercise of his Majesty's paternal care, to sanction our meeting. And we esteem it a fresh token of royal favour that this assurance is communicated to us by a nobleman so eminently qualified to perform the duties of the royal representative, as Francis Lord Napier. The long experience which the General Assembly has had of his piety, virtue, and regard to the interests of true religion, disposes us to listen with the most respectful deference to his admonitions, in declaring to us what your Royal Highness has commanded; and will render his name not less distinguished in the records of our National Church, than that of his illustrious ancestor in the annals of science. We are satisfied that the same fidelity in the discharge of his important functions, which has already so often merited and obtained the royal approbation, will, on this occasion, be still evinced in a manner equally honourable to himself and beneficial to us.

We are grateful to your Royal Highness for the high sense you are pleased to express of our loyalty, and for the assurance which has been given at the same time, of your determination to maintain the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland pure and unimpaired. Your Royal Highness has also permitted us to believe that the proofs we have given of attachment to the supreme authority of the land, have inspired you with confidence that nothing will be done in our Ecclesiastical Assembly prejudicial to the royal authority or prerogative. These favourable sentiments it will ever be our study to confirm in the mind of your Royal Highness. And, strongly influenced by the gracious terms in which they are conveyed, we will anxiously endeavour to maintain, in all our proceedings and subjects of discussion, the temperance, moderation, and propriety, which have thus been honoured by your approbation, and which your Royal Highness has now so earnestly recommended.

While we conduct our deliberations in the spirit of freedom, under the protection of royal favour, our first object will be to promote the great interests of religion and virtue in the sphere of our influence. We shall also cherish among our people, by all the means we possess, the spirit of loyalty, of submission to the laws and establishments of our country, and of attachment to our happy constitution, under which we enjoy such invaluable blessings, civil and religious—blessings unparalleled in the history of man. In all our exertions for these highly important purposes, it will be a powerful encouragement, that our labours for the advancement of true piety, in that part of the United Kingdom which is committed to our pastoral care, are animated by the unceasing countenance and support of your Royal Highness. And assured of your solicitude for all that respects the welfare and prosperity of our Ecclesiastical Establishment, we shall firmly persevere in the discharge of the important duties which we have undertaken.

The royal donation of L.2000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we accept with the warmest gratitude, as a pledge of the anxiety of your Royal Highness to fulfil the pious and benevolent intentions of his Majesty, and we shall endeavour to apply it with all fidelity.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may bless, console, and restore our gracious Sovereign; that He may bless the Queen, your Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, and all the members of the Royal Family; that He may direct and prosper the measures of his Majesty's government, and maintain to the latest ages the national blessings we enjoy, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

LEWIS GORDON, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1815.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in our General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne, to present to your Royal Highness the respectful expression of our loyalty to our venerable Sovereign, and of our attachment to your Royal Highness, by whom the government is administered in his name, and on his behalf.

While we condole with your Royal Highness on the continued indisposition of your august Father, our most gracious Sovereign, and earnestly pray that the Father of Mercies would visit him with his tender mercy; we regard it as a mark of the goodness of Providence to this realm, that we have, in your Royal Highness, a Prince who, by the wisdom and firmness of his administration, so well sustains the honour, and promotes the interests of the United Kingdom.

Since we last had it in our power to lay the dutiful expression of our attachment before the throne, many events have occurred deeply interesting to this country, and to the civilized world. We have seen brought to a happy termination the war which had been declared against us by America, after the ostensible cause of it had been removed by your Royal Highness. It is gratifying to think, that, although this country has to deplore the loss of many gallant men who have fallen in the contest, yet the measures adopted by your Royal Highness, joined to the unrivalled skill and intrepidity of our soldiers and sailors, have effectually sustained the honour of the country, and enabled you to conclude peace without the smallest diminution of the territory, or the least infringement of the maritime rights of the empire.

To the great public events which have happened in Europe, we look back with feelings of satisfaction, though, unhappily, mingled of late with deep regret. After a war the most extensive, protracted, and calamitous, that ever afflicted the world, the man, whose arrogant ambition, checked by no principle of justice, or feeling of humanity, had so long oppressed and insulted the nations of Continental Europe, was driven from a throne supported by violence, and stained with blood. The ancient race of sovereigns was restored to France; and peace, in the spirit of peace, concluded with that nation.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we remark the honourable principles which have invariably guided the councils of your Royal Highness in the management of these great transactions. It is with high satisfaction we observe, not only that you have made no attempt to encroach on the rights of other nations, but that the interests of humanity in distant lands have not escaped your benevolent regard. By your active, unremitted, and judicious endeavours, so much in consonance with the declared sentiments of the British nation, to put a stop to the African Slave Trade, that stain on the civilized world, your Royal Highness has procured its condemnation as unjust, by the great Congress of European Sovereigns; and we doubt not, that, by a continuation of the same enlightened endeavours, you will, at no distant period, obtain its final suppression.

While the adjustment of the interests of the different nations of Europe was gra-

dually approaching to its completion, we beheld, with the deepest sorrow and indignation, that man whom the French nation had so lately abjured as their sovereign, return to France; and, supported by the soldiery, advance without opposition to the capital, and seize the reins of government. This event, by raising a military government in the heart of Europe, and throwing the whole power of the French empire into the hands of an individual, with whom (in as far as the future may be anticipated, from experience of the past) the relations of peace can be expected to subsist no longer than till he finds himself in a condition to declare war, threatens to frustrate the generous endeavours of your Royal Highness, and your august allies, for securing the future repose of Europe; and to bring back the calamities and the crimes which have so long afflicted and dishonoured the nations of the Continent.

But we trust, that by this unlooked for occurrence, Divine Providence is preparing the way for making the final overthrow of the tyrant more conspicuous and impressive. And while, as the servants of the Prince of Peace, we deplore any event which is likely to renew the calamities of war, and hope that means may still be found of preserving peace, yet we trust, that should war be inevitable, the wisdom, promptitude, and vigour of the councils of your Royal Highness, and your august allies—the pre-eminent skill of the great captains who lead the allied armies—and the intrepidity of the forces arrayed in defence of the independence of Europe, will, by the blessing of Heaven on a righteous cause, speedily bring the contest to a happy conclusion, and establish the peace of the civilized world on a secure basis.

Sensible that the singular and unexpected circumstances of the times require of this country to submit to many sacrifices for the common welfare, as well as for our own individual security, we shall not fail to promote, by our influence and example, a cheerful acquiescence in the exertions that may be necessary for bringing the great cause in which your Royal Highness is engaged to a fortunate termination; and we have peculiar satisfaction in being able to assure your Royal Highness, that the people of this part of the united empire, aware of the urgency of the case, and relying confidently on the protection of Heaven, and on the wisdom and integrity of your Royal Highness's government, are prepared cordially to concur in the measures which it may be deemed necessary to adopt for the general good.

That Almighty God, by whom kings reign, may console, support, and restore to health our venerable Sovereign; that He may bless her Majesty the Queen, protect and bless your Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, and all the members of the Royal Family; and that He may crown with success the measures of your administration, and render them the means of speedily conveying the blessings of peace and security to this nation and to Europe, is the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

LEWIS GORDON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1815.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1815.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1815.—Overture anent the Ordination of Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1815.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1816.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1816.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1816.—The King's Commission to Francis Lord Napier produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1816.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1816.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1816.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in our General Assembly, beg leave to approach the throne, to express our warm attachment to your Royal Highness's person and government, and our earnest desire to forward, by such means as lie within our sphere, the measures adopted by your Royal Highness for the public good.

While we feel the most sincere sorrow for the continued indisposition of our beloved and venerable Sovereign, and earnestly beseech the Almighty to look upon him in mercy, we are thankful to the Supreme Disposer of all events, that he has given us, in your Royal Highness, a Prince so well fitted to conduct the government with the prudence, equity, and firmness, which are necessary for maintaining the honour and the prosperity of the empire.

Since we last had an opportunity of laying the dutiful expression of our homage before the throne, we reflect, with profound gratitude to Him whose kingdom ruleth over all, on the signal favour which he hath manifested to our country and to Europe, in shortening the calamities of war. And we regard with admiration the vigour and promptitude with which your Royal Highness, in conjunction with the Allied Sovereigns, interposed to stop the career of the tyrant, who had again possessed himself of the government of France, and brought Europe into the hazard of encountering those difficulties a second time, which had already been so severely and extensively experienced. We offer our most respectful congratulations to your Royal Highness, on the pre-eminent skill and bravery displayed by his Majesty's troops in the late short war, and on the fortunate and brilliant results in which it has terminated. In the sanguinary conflict which closed the contest, the high talents of the British general, and the invincible courage and perseverance of the army under his command, by one vast effort, have raised the character of British soldiers to the highest pre-eminence, crushed the power of the tyrant, annihilated his hopes, obliged him to abdicate the throne, and, finally, compelled him to an unconditional surrender. We trust that the situation in which he is now placed will render it impossible for him again to disturb the repose of the world.

As servants of the Prince of Peace, we gladly indulge the hope that the pacification which has been concluded will secure to the exhausted nations of Europe a long respite from the horrors and burdens of war; and that that people, whose turbulence has so long proved the scourge of the civilized world, experiencing the advantages of order and tranquillity, will acquire a desire of cultivating the habits and virtues of peace, and of promoting that general improvement of human society, which peace and industry, and regular government, are calculated to advance.

We humbly beg leave to lay before your Royal Highness the dutiful expression of our high satisfaction, on account of that domestic event which has proved so gratifying to the British nation, the marriage of your august daughter, the Princess Charlotte Augusta, with his Serene Highness Leopold George Frederick Duke of Saxe, and Prince of Cobourg of Saalfeld. We congratulate your Royal Highness on this auspicious union; and we trust that it will prove a public blessing, by increasing the prospect which, in the good Providence of God, we enjoy, of having transmitted to latest times the advantages which this favoured nation has derived from the mild and paternal government of the illustrious House of Brunswick.

That Almighty God, by whom kings reign, may support, console, and relieve our venerable Sovereign, and bless her Majesty the Queen;—that He may pour down his choicest blessings on your Royal Highness, and prosper your government;—that He may bless the Princess of Wales, and all the Royal Family; and that Princes of your

Royal Highness's House may, to latest posterity, sway the sceptre over this realm, are the fervent prayers f,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN COOK, *Moderator.*

V.

*Sess. 9, May 25, 1816.—Overture and Interim Act anent the Union of Offices.**

(See Act 6th, 1817.)

VL

Sess. 9, May 25, 1816.—Resolution of the General Assembly respecting the Gaelic Translation of the Scriptures.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland called for the report of the Committee upon the Gaelic Translation of the Scriptures, which was produced, and read as follows:—"Your Committee beg leave to report, that after considering the Memorial and Petition from the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, with all the attention due to the important object to which it relates, they find cause to approve of the diligence and zeal of the Society in furnishing, by a Translation of the Holy Scriptures into Gaelic, which has already passed through different impressions, the best means of religious instruction to our countrymen in those districts where the Gaelic language is spoken.

"Your Committee particularly approve of the present communication, as manifesting, on the part of the Society, a becoming respect for the General Assembly, to whom it properly belongs to judge of and to sanction such versions of the Sacred Scriptures as shall be used within the bounds of this Church.

* The following notice of the discussion on this subject appears in the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings:—

"The Assembly proceeded to consider the Overtures respecting the enactment of the Assembly, 1814, anent the Residence of Ministers, and the Union of Offices in the person of Ministers. After long reasoning, it was moved and seconded, That the new enactments contained in the Declaration of Assembly, 1814, not having been transmitted to Presbyteries in the manner prescribed by Act 9, 1697, are not to be regarded as Standing Laws, and are not binding upon this Church; and the General Assembly remit to the Committee of Overtures to prepare an Overture for preventing the improper Union of Offices, to be reported to this Assembly to-morrow; and if the said Overture shall be approved, it shall be transmitted to Presbyteries, and, in the meantime, it shall be passed into an Interim Act. Another motion was moved and seconded, That the Assembly declare, that the Act of Assembly, commonly called the Barrier Act, is a law of essential importance to the general interests of the Church, and ought at all times to be acknowledged as of indispensable and permanent authority. But the General Assembly, considering that the enactment of Assembly, 1814, complained of in the Overtures, does merely declare and enforce that which has been the established law of the Church ever since the Reformation, that the said enactment, as declaratory of the existing laws, is strictly constitutional, and in precise conformity to the principle and letter of the Barrier Act; and, farther, considering that the enactment of 1814 was not merely sanctioned by the Assembly of that year, but was thereafter, on a discussion of the precise question of power alone, solemnly adjudged by the Assembly, 1815, to be within the powers and jurisdiction of the Assembly; and, therefore, dismiss all the Overtures. And the vote being called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote shall be, Approve or Dismiss; it being understood, that if it carry Approve, the first motion shall become the judgment of the Assembly; and if it carry Dismiss, the second motion shall be their judgment; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a considerable majority, Approve; therefore, the Assembly find and remit in terms of the first motion; and appoint the Committee of Overtures to meet at twelve o'clock to-morrow, to prepare an Overture for preventing the improper Union of Offices, to be reported to the Assembly."—*Ed. 1843.*

"Your Committee are further of opinion, that a final revision of the translation now in use, by means of the acknowledged skill and matured experience of the Rev. Dr Stuart of Luss, and the Rev. Mr Stewart of Dingwall, in order to improve the translation, and render it as complete as possible, and the publication of a new edition thereof in quarto, the work in which the Society are now engaged, is of great importance, and should receive the countenance, support, and encouragement of the General Assembly.

"Your Committee, therefore, beg leave to propose, that a Standing Committee be appointed, whose duty it shall be to consider the means which have been employed for procuring the best version which could be obtained of the Sacred Scriptures in Gaelic, and whether any further means can be used for rendering it more perfect; to receive communications on the subject from such respectable persons as may be willing to offer them; and, particularly, to attend to the progress of the new edition at present projected, with the alterations of the version that may be therein made; to signify to the Society their opinion of it as it comes from the press; and that the said Committee shall report their proceedings on this business to the next General Assembly.

"Your Committee beg leave also to suggest, that it may be proper that the General Assembly prohibit the use of any other Gaelic version of the Scriptures in the churches, chapels, missions, and schools, within the Established Church, other than any of the editions now in use published by the Society, until the work be completed.

"And, lastly, that extracts of the Assembly's resolution on this business be sent to every Presbytery within whose bounds parishes are situated in which the Gaelic language is spoken."

The General Assembly approve of this report, and enjoin and ordain, in terms thereof; and they appoint the committee upon this business a standing committee, to carry the orders of the Assembly into execution. The names of the committee are, the Moderator, Dr Gordon, Sir Henry Moncreiff, Dr Hill, Dr Inglis, Dr Macdougall, Dr Fleming, Mr Macdonnell of Forres, Mr Macgibbon of Inverary, Mr Campbell of Dunoon, Dr Macleod, Dr Maclea, Mr Dougal Campbell of Kilmichael, Mr Hugh Fraser of Kilmoran, Dr Irvine, Little Dunkeld, Dr Robert Anderson, Edinburgh, Dr Stewart, Strachur, Mr Fraser, Boleskine, Mr Ross, Kilmanivaig, Mr Macleod, Morven, Mr Mackay, Reay, Mr Mackinnon, Slate, Mr Munro, Uig, Mr Dougal Campbell, Kilfinichan, and Dr Campbell, Edinburgh; Dr Campbell to be convener, and any three to be a quorum.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1816.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1816.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1816.—Deliverance of the General Assembly on the Communication from the Synod of Ulster in Ireland.

The Report of the Committee upon the Communication from Ulster was called

for, and being produced was read, of the following tenor:—"The Committee on the Communication from the Moderator of the Synod of Ulster, having deliberately considered said communication, report to the Venerable Assembly the following opinion:—That from the respectable situation in which the Synod of Ulster is now placed by its connection with the civil government, it may be expedient to declare, that notwithstanding what is contained in the Act of Assembly, 1799, ministerial communion might be allowed between the ministers and licentiates of that Synod and those of the Church of Scotland. But as information respecting the education of their candidates for licence and other particulars must be obtained, before any resolution on this subject be finally adopted, that, therefore, the matter should be delayed; and, in the meantime, a committee be appointed to make the proper inquiries, to correspond with the Moderator of the Synod of Ulster, and to report to next Assembly. In testimony of the respect which this Church entertains for the Established Presbyterian Church of Ireland, the Assembly should request of their Moderator, that he, in their name, would convey, by letter, notice of their present resolution to the Moderator of the Synod of Ulster." The General Assembly unanimously approve of said report, and appoint the committee to draw up the letter therein proposed. The committee are,—the Moderator, Dr Gordon, Dr Hill, Dr Brown, Dr Taylor, Dr Ritchie, Professor Jardine, Professor Young, and Dr Stevenson Macgill; Dr Taylor to be convener.

X.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1816.—Act anent the Ordination of Elders.

Whereas irregularities have crept into the Church with respect to the ordination of elders, the General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, did, and hereby do, enact and ordain,—

That, hereafter, no person shall be set apart to the office of an elder, unless he hath attained the age of twenty-one years complete, and produce a certificate to that effect, to remain *in retentis*; and unless he is a communicant.

That no person be ordained an elder who is not an inhabitant of the parish, or who does not reside therein at least six weeks annually, or who is not an heritor in that parish, liable to pay stipend and other parochial burdens, or who is not the apparent heir of an heritor of that description in the parish.

That when any person who does not generally reside, but only occasionally, as aforesaid, shall be proposed to the kirk-session to be ordained an elder, there shall be produced a certificate, under the hands of the minister and kirk-session of the parish where he generally resides, that he is of unblemished character, and regular in giving attendance on the public ordinances of religion.

And further, it is enacted, That if any elder be ordained in future, without being qualified as above, he shall not be held as entitled to any of the privileges of that office.

But in any city or town where there are more congregations than one, that they shall be held as one parish, in as far as this Act is concerned.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1816.—Recommendation by the General Assembly to Presbyteries in Aid of the Funds of the Church.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to draw up a Recommendation to Presbyteries anent the Funds of the Church, which was produced and read, the tenor whereof follows:—"In 1810, the General Assembly submitted to the consideration of the Church the Proposal of a subscription in aid of the fund for defending the rights of the Church. It was stated in this Proposal, that of the L.1000 allowed annually by government for defraying the expenses of the

Church, only L.150 is left by the grant to be applied for law proceedings; and intimation has been given by government that no addition will be made to this allowance of L.150. The General Assembly further stated in 1810, that they had ascertained that this allowance was wholly insufficient for defending the general rights of the Church, in questions that often occur where no individual has any patrimonial interest, and for assisting clergymen in defending their right, in those cases where the Church has been in use to grant aid. And, therefore, the General Assembly, judging it essential to the public interest of the Church, and the relief of individual clergymen, that there should be an increase of the fund for these purposes, earnestly recommended a general contribution by the ministers and elders of the Church in the several Presbyteries, to be remitted to the Procurator for the Church, and by him reported to the General Assembly. The General Assembly, upon the report of the Procurator, have now to state to the Church, that although this recommendation has been frequently repeated, contributions have been received from very few Presbyteries, in consequence of which both the evils which were apprehended have arrived. A large debt has been contracted to support those cases which were already upon the funds, and it has become necessary to refuse all new applications for aid, however urgent the cases may be.

"The present debt to the Agents of the Church appears, upon the report of the Procurator, to be L.593, 3s. 4d., and the total sum contributed, with the interest arising thereon, amounts only to the sum of L.276.

"Although it is both unreasonable and inexpedient that the Church should continue indebted in so large a sum as L.593, 3s. 4d. to their Agents the General Assembly have refrained from applying any part of the sum of L.276, already contributed, in extinction of that debt; because the contributions were made in the faith that the total sum subscribed was to be accumulated into a capital, and the interest only to be applied to the purposes in view; and also, because the General Assembly does not despair, that, when the circumstances of the case are placed fully in the view of the Church, this sum may receive an annual increase.

"They have, therefore, directed Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, and the Procurator, to invest the sum of L.276 contributed, in the most advantageous manner possible; and they do again earnestly recommend to the ministers of all the Presbyteries of this Church the annual contribution of 5s., suggested as the only remedy which occurs for relieving the funds of the Church from their present difficulties. They believe that, by small subscriptions, the deficiency in each contribution will be compensated by the number of contributors; and they remind their brethren, that if every clergyman were to contribute 5s., it would raise in a twelvemonth the sum of L.225, and in five years L.1125." The General Assembly approve of this recommendation; and enjoin the clerks to transmit printed copies thereof to the moderators of all the Presbyteries of this Church, (along with the Overture anent the Union of Offices,) accompanied with a letter from the Moderator of this Assembly, enforcing the said recommendation; and the Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to take up the consideration of this subject, not later than the day on which they meet to elect their members to the Assembly.

REVEREND SIR,—Agreeably to the resolution of the General Assembly, I hereby transmit to the Presbyteries of the Church of Scotland the above recommendation of annual contributions, in aid of the funds of the Church; the importance of observing which, I am confident, that no words of mine can enforce. I am, Reverend Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN COOK, *Moderator.*

To be communicated.

XII

Sess. ult., May 27, 1816.—Recommendation by the General Assembly concerning Parochial Registers.

The General Assembly having taken the overture anent parochial registers under

their serious consideration, unanimously approve of the same; and therefore earnestly recommend to all the Presbyteries and Kirk-Sessions within the bounds of the Church, "That whereas great inconveniency and loss has been experienced in many parts of the country, either from no parochial registers being kept, or from the inaccuracy with which it is done, the Assembly enjoins the several Presbyteries of this Church to take the steps necessary to secure the keeping of three separate registers in every parish: In one of which, the names of all children and of their parents shall be recorded, with the dates of their birth, whether their parents belong to the Church, or are Dissenters: In another, the names of all persons married, with the dates of their marriages, whether legally solemnized or not, with the specialties of any particular cases which may occur: And, in the third, the names of all persons who have died, with the particular dates of their deaths, whether they have been buried in the parish burying-ground, or elsewhere; and that these three registers shall be brought up to the Presbytery of the bounds at the first meeting after the conclusion of each year respectively, in each of which the Presbytery shall enter their remarks on the manner in which it is kept, signed by the moderator for the time."

The General Assembly farther appoint the following committee, viz., Principal Baird, Dr William Ritchie, Dr Fleming, Dr Inglis, Dr Meiklejohn, Mr Watson, and the Procurator,—Dr Meiklejohn to be convener; to communicate with the Officers of the Crown, in the view of obtaining the authority of the legislature to secure the faithful observance of this arrangement.

The General Assembly enjoin their clerks to send printed copies of this recommendation to all the Presbyteries of this Church, who are hereby required to communicate the same to all the Kirk-Sessions within their bounds,

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1816.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1817.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1817.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1817.—The King's Commission to William Earl of Errol produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1817.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—Impressed with the same

lively interest which we have at all times felt for the prosperity of the Church of Scotland, and sensible of the advantages which so large a portion of our subjects has derived from the counsels of the General Assembly of that Church, we always contemplate with satisfaction the period appointed for the renewal of your deliberations; and we rest assured that your proceedings upon the present occasion will entitle you to a continuance of our countenance and protection.

We have thought fit to constitute and appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, William Earl of Errol, to be our Commissioner in the present Assembly. The experience we have had of his loyalty and attachment to us, and the conviction which we feel that he is in every respect eminently qualified to discharge this great trust, are considerations which have recommended him to our choice, as a fit person to be our representative amongst you; and, we doubt not, these reasons will render him acceptable to you, and will ensure to him that respect and reverence which, in his high and important office, he is entitled to receive. We feel confident that you may rely upon his cordial support and co-operation in all your efforts to promote the cause of true religion and piety, and therein the welfare and happiness of our people.

Although the wisdom and discretion which, upon former occasions, have characterised your proceedings, entitle you to our confidence and affection, yet we feel ourselves called upon at this time, in a particular manner, to impress upon you the necessity of redoubling your zeal in the administering of useful instruction, and in the due discharge of every public and private duty.

At a time when a spirit inimical to the established constitution, and the existing form of government of these realms, unhappily prevails amongst certain descriptions of our people, too much pains cannot be taken to counteract the efforts of those wicked and designing persons who labour to increase so mischievous a spirit, and to promote general discontent.

We exhort you, therefore, in the strongest manner, at this moment, to be vigilant, and to expose the designs of those who, under the specious semblance of Reform, inculcate doctrines the most extravagant and dangerous; and who, by constant misrepresentations and wicked means, endeavour to bring into contempt all the civil and religious establishments and institutions of the United Kingdom.

Well-beloved, nothing can be more effectual to repress these evils, than a thorough and sincere belief in the doctrines of Christianity; we charge you, therefore, to use your unremitting exertions to establish the salutary influence of the Gospel in the minds of those committed to your charge, and to enforce a due obedience to the laws, upon Christian principles, and from Christian motives. We depend upon your zealous endeavours to promote the growth of true piety, and a due reverence for the sacred Word of Almighty God; and trust you will not fail to impress upon the minds of our subjects, that a strict and conscientious discharge of their duties, both civil and religious, affords the only sure means by which individual happiness and national prosperity can be secured. Thus will you execute worthily the sacred duties which are assigned to you; for thus your exertions will promote the glory of God and the happiness of your fellow-creatures. On our part, be assured that we are always anxious to secure and continue to all our subjects the invaluable possession of their laws, their liberties, and their excellent constitution; and we repeat to you our full determination to maintain and support the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all her rights and privileges. Commending you, therefore, in all your counsels and deliberations, to the Divine guidance and protection, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 15th day of May 1817, in the fifty-seventh year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty,

SIDMOUTH.

*Addressed thus—*To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III

Sess. 3, May 24, 1817.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

The gracious letter with which your Royal Highness, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, has condescended to honour this General Assembly, has been received with the most profound respect and gratitude.

We are peculiarly gratified by the lively interest which your Royal Highness continues to feel in the prosperity of the Church of Scotland, and by the notice taken of the advantages which a large portion of his Majesty's subjects have derived from the counsels of her General Assemblies. It is a pledge of the happy union which subsists between our religious and civil establishments, that the annual meetings of the General Assembly of our National Church take place under royal countenance and protection; and we trust that our proceedings, upon the present occasion, will secure to us a continuance of that favour which we have experienced through so long and uninterrupted a series of years.

The appointment of William Earl of Errol to represent the sacred person of our beloved Sovereign among us, we regard as an additional pledge of the royal favour. The eminent qualifications which he possesses for discharging the duties of this great trust cannot fail to render him acceptable to us, and command the respect and reverence which, in his high and important office, he is entitled to receive. We rely with full assurance on his countenance and cordial support in all our efforts to promote the cause of true religion and piety, and thus secure the welfare and happiness of the people committed to our care.

The confidence and affection, inspired by the wisdom and discretion of former Assemblies, with which your Royal Highness is graciously pleased to regard us, fill our minds with sentiments of the warmest gratitude, and encourage us to redouble our zeal in administering useful instruction, and in the discharge of every public and private duty.

We lament, with unfeigned sorrow, that a spirit inimical to the established constitution and the existing form of government of these realms, exists in any description of his Majesty's subjects. Though well assured that the principles of unshaken loyalty, and a just sense of the blessings of our inestimable constitution, generally prevail in this part of the United Kingdom, we shall guard, with anxious solicitude, against the beginnings of evil, and employ our most strenuous exertions to counteract the efforts of any wicked and designing persons, who may labour to increase so mischievous a spirit, and to promote general discontent.

Receiving with all respect the intimations of danger, we shall exert the vigilance which the pressure of the time demands, and be diligent in exposing the designs of those who, under the specious semblance of Reform, inculcate doctrines the most extravagant and dangerous, and who, by constant misrepresentations and wicked means, endeavour to bring into contempt all the civil and religious establishments and institutions of the United Kingdom.

Fully satisfied of the powerful efficacy of religious principle, and that nothing can be more effectual to repress those evils than a thorough and sincere belief in the doctrines of Christianity, we listen with reverence to the call upon us, and will not fail to use our unremitting exertions to establish the salutary influence of the Gospel in the minds of those committed to our charge, and to enforce a due obedience to the laws upon Christian principles, and from Christian motives.

Contemplating steadily the great objects of our holy vocation, we humbly trust, that entire dependence may be placed on our zealous endeavours to promote the growth of true piety and a due reverence for the sacred Word of Almighty God; and we are convinced, that while we impress upon the minds of our people a strict and conscientious discharge of their duties, both civil and religious, we are directing them to the only means by which individual happiness and national prosperity can

be secured. We feel the unspeakably strong obligations which we are under, to perform worthily the sacred duties assigned to us; for it is only by so doing that we can promote the glory of God, and the happiness of our fellow-creatures.

We rejoice in the assurance, that it is the great object of your Royal Highness to secure and continue to all his Majesty's subjects the invaluable possession of their laws, their liberties, and their excellent constitution; and we receive, with the most sincere gratitude, the renewed expression of your full determination to maintain and support the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all her rights and privileges, as by law established.

We receive, with all thankfulness, the royal donation of L.2000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and the principles of the Reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. We shall be anxiously studious, by a faithful application of this bounty, to accomplish the pious and benevolent purposes for which it has been bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may bless, sustain, and console his Majesty the King;—that He may bless abundantly the Queen, your Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, and all the members of the Royal Family;—that He may direct and prosper the measures of his Majesty's government;—and that princes of your Illustrious House may be the guardians of our national blessings, and reign over a free and a happy people to the latest posterity, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GAVIN GIBB, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1817.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to lay before the throne this humble expression of our dutiful and affectionate respect for his Majesty's person and family, and of devoted attachment to that constitution of government under which the goodness of Divine Providence has placed us.

We offer to your Royal Highness, during the continuance of our beloved Sovereign's lamented indisposition, the sympathy which we feel in common with a people to whom, from his paternal reign and private virtues, he has been so long and so deservedly endeared.

We shared the general horror of the nation, at the recent atrocious assault upon your Royal Highness' sacred person, returning from Parliament in the exercise of a solemn function of the British Sovereign; and the general joy and gratitude for the Divine protection which rendered that nefarious attempt abortive; and we devoutly implore the Everlasting King to encompass your Royal Highness with his omnipotent shield, and to defend from every open and secret enemy a life so precious to the State.

With sentiments becoming Britons, we contemplate the happy effects of that splendidly-conceived, and brilliantly-executed, enterprise against the city of Algiers, which, in adding a new wreath to our crown of naval glory, broke down, we trust for ever, a system of piracy, at war with the rights of human nature, and formed a becoming sequel to the arduous struggle strenuously maintained, and triumphantly terminated by Great Britain, for the independence of Europe.

The exultation with which we reflect on these exertions of our country in the great

cause of legitimate government and of real liberty, and the hopes with which we anticipate the long continuance of that peace which they have brought to the world, have not made us insensible to the severe sufferings now widely diffused among our countrymen, partly by the necessary expenditure in a war of unexampled difficulties, partly by the consequent sudden change and diminution in the demands of commerce, and partly by the scarcity of food with which it has pleased the Great Disposer of all to visit us, as if to remind us amidst human triumphs, that we ought to rejoice with trembling. While we sincerely sympathise in their sufferings, and deeply deplore the attempts of unprincipled men, during this season of general distress, to incite the unhappy sufferers to rebellious deeds, and to propagate the licentious opinions which prepare for the subversion alike of the altar and the throne, we are cheered by the admirable display which has thus been called forth throughout our country, on the one hand, of patience, and fortitude, and resignation to the will of Heaven, under inevitable privations, and on the other, of generous self-denial and active beneficence, bringing alleviations to the pressure. Knowing that reverence for his righteous law is the foundation on which the Moral Governor of the universe has determined that the strength of empires shall repose, we congratulate your Royal Highness that the British Sovereign rules in the hearts of a people who have shown so general a sense of their sacred obligations, whom neither the sacrifices of a long and arduous war, nor the sufferings of unexpected want, nor the corrupting inflammatory language of impiety and sedition, have as yet been able, nor will they, we hope in God, be ever able, to seduce from their allegiance.

We are happy to embrace this opportunity of informing your Royal Highness, that we believe the people of Scotland to have had a conspicuous share in this interesting display of national worth; and in whatever degree this may be ascribed to the services of the Established Church, and to the co-operation of the justly valued institution of parochial schools, we hesitate not to assure your Royal Highness, that we shall give all the encouragement in our power, to every prudent measure for disseminating throughout the community a spirit of consideration and economy favourable at once to the interest of religion and of civil government. In these, and in all our ministerial labours, we will continue to imitate the example left to us by our venerable fathers, grateful for the distinguished advantage which the Church of Scotland derives from its connection with the British constitution, and under the serious conviction that the religious and moral effect of a Gospel ministry is essential to human happiness, in all the various conditions and relations of the present life, as well as throughout the endless progress of man's immortal destiny.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may shower down His consolations upon our beloved Sovereign, bless the Queen and Royal Family, and continue to prosper the Government which your Royal Highness exercises in his Majesty's name and behalf; and that descendants of your illustrious House may, to the latest posterity, sway the British sceptre over a free, great, loyal, and virtuous people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presenee, and at our appointment, by

GAVIN GIBB, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 4. May 26, 1817.—Judgment of the General Assembly on the reference from the Presbytery of Brechin, respecting the Examination of the Schools of Montrose.

The General Assembly, after due deliberation, approve of the firmness and propriety with which the Presbytery of Brechin have asserted their undubitable right to

examine schools of every description within their bounds; but, in respect it has been stated by the elder from the burgh of Montrose, in name of the magistrates and council, that they were sensible of their past error, and will give no opposition in future to the exercise of this right, the Assembly judge it unnecessary to take any farther steps in this matter; at the same time, they recommend it to the members of that, and of all the other Presbyteries of this Church, to continue their vigilance in attending to the different schools within their bounds. The Assembly enjoin their clerks to see that this judgment be inserted among the printed Acts of the Assembly.

VI.

Sess. 6, May 28, 1817.—Act anent the Union of Offices.

Whereas apprehensions have been generally entertained, that the permission given in a few recent instances to clergymen holding a Professorship in an University, to hold at the same time a parochial charge in the country, may introduce abuses hurtful to the interests of religion and literature: The General Assembly, conceiving that it is their duty to watch over both those interests, and feeling a becoming solicitude to maintain inviolate the residence of ministers in their respective parishes, which the fundamental laws of this Church require, and by which the people of Scotland enjoy in full measure the comfort and edification of a Gospel ministry, direct all the Presbyteries of this Church to employ the means competent for them, in order to prevent the same person from holding at the same time a Professorship in an University and a parochial charge, which is not situated in the city which is the seat of that University, or in the suburbs thereof; and, that this direction may be uniformly carried into effect, the General Assembly do, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, enact and ordain, that if a Professor in an University be hereafter presented to a parochial charge, which is not situated in the city that is the seat of that University, or in the suburbs thereof, he shall, within nine months after his being admitted to the said charge, resign his Professorship, and at the next ordinary meeting of Presbytery thereafter shall produce to the Presbytery a certificate that his resignation has been accepted. And that if the minister of a parish, which is not situated in the city that is the seat of a University, or the suburbs thereof, be hereafter presented or elected to a Professorship in any University, he shall, at the first ordinary meeting of Presbytery which shall take place after the lapse of six months from the date of his induction into the Professorship, resign into the hands of the Presbytery his parochial charge. And in the event of this injunction not being complied with by the persons holding such offices, the General Assembly, with the like consent of the Presbyteries of this Church, ordain the Presbytery of the bounds to serve him in his character of parish minister with a libel for the breach of this statute, and to proceed therein according to the rules of the Church. And it is provided, that ministers of Chapels of Ease shall, in all respects, be subject to the provisions of this Act, in the same manner as parochial ministers. And it is further provided, that the Old and New Towns of Aberdeen shall be held as forming one city, so far as respects the provisions of this overture.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1817.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1817.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1817.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1818.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1818.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1818.—The King's Commission to William Earl of Errol produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1818.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—We embrace with satisfaction the opportunity afforded us by the present meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to renew the assurance of our regard and paternal affection, and to encourage you, by the declaration of our countenance and support, in the diligent discharge of the high and important duties committed to your trust. The wisdom of your counsels and measures has, at all times, ensured to you our unbounded confidence, and we are fully satisfied that your proceedings will continue to be characterised by temper and calmness; that you will be actuated, in all your deliberations, by a feeling of steady loyalty and attachment to ourself, and by an earnest desire of promoting, to the utmost of your power, the happiness and best interests of our people. In repeating to you the assurance of our full determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, we cannot omit to announce to you our resolution to evince more strongly our fatherly solicitude for the prosperity of that Church, by extending, at no distant day, pecuniary succour to those parishes which, either from their redundant population, or from their expanded dimensions, are at present incapable of supplying adequate places of worship for their religiously-disposed inhabitants.

We have thought fit again to appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, William Earl of Errol, to be our Commissioner, and to represent our royal person in the present Assembly, well knowing the lively interest he will take in all your deliberations, and how ready he will be to co-operate with you in your endeavours for the advancement of the cause of true religion and of virtue, and for the furtherance of the spiritual benefit and advantage of the people entrusted to your care.

Since the last meeting of your venerable body, it has pleased Almighty God, in the inscrutable wisdom of his counsels, to visit our Royal House and this nation with one of the heaviest and most afflicting dispensations of his Divine Providence.

In the general sorrow upon this melancholy occasion, we are fully assured that you participate, and that you, and the rest of our faithful and loving subjects, will join with us in imploring the Great Disposer of events, that it may please Him to administer to all our minds the consolation of which we stand so greatly in need, and which He alone can impart. Nor will you neglect, under this severe national calamity, to remind those whom it is your office to instruct, that it is their duty to receive, with implicit submission, the present visitation, and to place their reliance upon that Being who has given us the consoling assurance, that all, even His most afflictive dispensations, work together for the general good.

Well-beloved, we exhort you to reflect how materially the welfare and prosperity of a nation are affected by the conduct of the ministers of its religion. It is in their power, by the due and assiduous discharge of their pastoral duties, by the soundness of their precepts, and the blameless purity of their lives, to produce the most salutary effects upon the general feelings and character of the people. And they must remember, that in proportion as their opportunities of usefulness are extensive, so will they be responsible for the neglect or abuse of them. It is the great object of all human law and government, by regulating and adjusting the various rights and interests of individuals, to promote the well-being, and constitute the stability and good order of society. But vain and insufficient must ever be the most enlightened institutions, unless regarded as deriving their weight and authority from the precepts of the Divine Law; and the wisest human ordinances will be found ineffectual for the maintenance of peace and social order when the restraints of the Gospel are disregarded. The experience of modern times has shown that no light of science—no progress in the arts—no advantages of commerce—no success in arms, can secure the internal quiet and prosperity of a nation which throws off the authority of Divine Revelation, the rejection of which infallibly leads to all the mischiefs of private injustice and public anarchy. And even in these days, and in this island, attempts have not been wanting to bring into ridicule and disrespect the most sacred commandments of God, and the Prayer which was taught to his Apostles by Our Blessed Saviour himself.

It is your province, as the guardians of religion, and the expounders of the Divine Law, to warn the people against falling into any of these most dangerous errors; and, by impressing upon all ranks of our subjects their solemn obligation to observe the precepts and fulfil the duties inculcated by the Gospel, to give effect to our endeavours for the promotion of their moral happiness and improvement. With this view, we most earnestly repeat to you our recommendation to pay continued and increased attention to the advancement of godliness, and the discouragement of all loose notions, whether in faith or morality. Such notions, unless timely counteracted, must tend to the destruction of all good principles in the hearts of men, and the provoking of the displeasure of Almighty God. Be diligent, be circumspect. More encouraging dispositions will arise: profit by them; and your labour shall not be in vain.

We have beheld with the highest satisfaction the gradual restoration of tranquillity and good order in those parts of Great Britain where the efforts of wicked and designing men were, for a time, but too successful in deluding some of our subjects, and in disseminating doctrines which aimed at the subversion of the existing form of government established in this realm.

And we look with confidence to the loyalty of the great body of our people, and their firm attachment to the constitution, as the surest means of maintaining the

peace and quiet of our kingdom, and eradicating what may still remain of that spirit of disaffection which unhappily existed in the minds of some of our deluded subjects.

Be assured that no exertion shall be wanting on our part to further this great object, by a firm, temperate, and impartial administration of the laws, intended alike for the protection of the innocent, and for the dread and punishment of the wicked.

Fully assured that your attachment to our royal person, your love for your country, and zeal for the glory of Almighty God, will prompt you to the due and faithful discharge of all your duties, we commend your deliberations to the Divine guidance; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 9th day of May 1818, in the 58th year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

SIDMOUTH.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1818.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

The gracious letter with which your Royal Highness, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty, has been pleased to honour this meeting of the General Assembly of our National Church, has been received with every sentiment of loyalty and respect.

It is with unfeigned gratitude that we have received the renewed assurance of your Royal Highness's regard and paternal affection; and we are encouraged, by the declaration of your countenance and support, to persevere in the diligent discharge of the high and important duties with which we are entrusted.

The approbation which your Royal Highness has been pleased to express of our past councils and measures, and the unbounded confidence which you have condescended to repose in us, have afforded us the most lively and heartfelt satisfaction; and we trust that we shall be enabled to show ourselves worthy of these distinguished marks of your Royal Highness's regard, by conducting our deliberations at this time with becoming temper and calmness, by cherishing a steady loyalty and attachment to our beloved Sovereign and your Royal Highness, and by doing every thing in our power for promoting the happiness and best interests of his Majesty's subjects in this part of the United Kingdom.

We feel that well grounded confidence, which long experience has taught us to cherish, in the repeated assurance of your Royal Highness's full determination to maintain the Church of Scotland in the complete enjoyment of all its rights and privileges.

We learn with peculiar thankfulness and joy the resolution of your Royal Highness to extend, at no distant day, pecuniary succour for increasing the number of our places of worship in those parishes of Scotland which, either from their redundant population or great extent, stand in need of such an addition. This wise and pious measure we consider as a fresh proof of your Royal Highness's fatherly solicitude for the prosperity of our National Church. And we confidently anticipate from it the most salutary effects, both in a religious and moral view, to a large pro-

portion of our population that are at present destitute, in a great measure, of the means and opportunities of spiritual instruction.

We are gratified by the appointment of the Earl of Errol to represent his Majesty's person in this General Assembly, because he possesses our sincere and affectionate respect, and because we are assured of the lively interest which he will take in all our deliberations, and of his readiness to co-operate with us in our endeavours for the advancement of the cause of true religion and virtue.

In the feelings expressed by your Royal Highness respecting that awful and unexpected dispensation with which it has pleased Almighty God to afflict your Royal House and this nation, we most cordially and deeply participate. In common with all our fellow-subjects, we shared in unfeigned sympathy with the royal persons more immediately affected by the event which we deplore. It becomes us to bow with reverence before the Sovereign of the universe, who, in His unsearchable wisdom, has removed from our eye and our expectation one who was so justly dear to our hearts. Our most sincere and fervent prayers have often ascended to His Throne, for that strong consolation to your Royal Highness and your afflicted House, which even the sympathies of a loyal and affectionate people are unable to yield. Nor have we failed to remind those whom it is our office to instruct, that it is their duty to receive with implicit submission the present visitation, and to place their reliance on that Being who rules in the exercise of infinite perfection, and has promised to make all things work together for good to them that love Him.

We receive your Royal Highness's paternal counsels with becoming thankfulness. And, aware of the vast importance of pastoral diligence, and fidelity to the welfare and prosperity of the nation, it shall be our unceasing concern, depending upon the Divine aid, to teach sound doctrine and pure morality to the people committed to our care—to inculcate upon them that practical regard to the Gospel, without which the wisest human institutions are of no avail, and to employ every means in our power to make them good and loyal subjects, by making them true and zealous Christians. While we learn with profound regret, that there are persons in these days, and in this island, who have attempted to bring into ridicule and disrespect some of the commandments and institutions of religion, we trust that a better spirit will soon become universal, and that all ranks of our fellow-subjects will be persuaded to fear God, and to work righteousness. We beg leave to assure your Royal Highness that no efforts shall be wanting on our part to discourage any symptoms of profaneness which may appear among the people of Scotland, and to cherish in them that reverence for every thing sacred, without which they can neither be virtuous nor happy.

We participate in the high satisfaction expressed by your Royal Highness at the restoration of tranquillity and good order in those parts of the Island where wicked and designing men had succeeded in seducing some of his Majesty's subjects from their allegiance and duty. We pray to God that the inhabitants of every part of this highly favoured empire may be duly sensible of the blessings they enjoy under our happy constitution, and be ready at all times to guard it from internal disaffection, as well as from foreign aggression. And it is with no ordinary feelings of gratitude and joy that we communicate to your Royal Highness our full conviction, that the people with whom we are more immediately connected are sensible of their privileges, sacred and civil, as a nation, and most cordial in their attachment to the government of their country, and to your Illustrious House.

We receive, with all thankfulness, the royal donation of L.2000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge, and the principles of the Reformed religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. We shall be anxiously studious, by a faithful application of this bounty, to accomplish the pious and benevolent purposes for which it has been bestowed.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may impart to his Majesty the King all that support and consolation which his case requires;—that He may bless the Queen, your Royal Highness, the Princess of Wales, and all the members of the Royal Family;—that He may direct the councils, and prosper the measures of his Majesty's government;—and that princes of your Illustrious House may

reign, to the latest posterity, over a free, loyal, and happy people, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN CAMPBELL, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1818.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave humbly to approach your Royal Highness with the sincere expression of our affection and respect for his Majesty's person and family; of the satisfaction and happiness which we experience under the administration of your Royal Highness, and of our devoted attachment to the happy constitution of government under which Divine Providence has placed us.

We deeply lament his Majesty's indisposition. Under the continuance of it we offer your Royal Highness the tribute of our sympathy. We pray that Almighty God may impart to his Majesty all the consolation of which his condition is susceptible, and speedily restore him to the conscious enjoyment of every blessing which may crown the evening of his days with felicity.

It is with heartfelt sorrow we turn our thoughts, on this occasion, to the severe calamity with which the United Kingdom has been visited, by the death of your amiable and beloved daughter, her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte Augusta. We take a tender interest in the paternal feelings of your Royal Highness, which have been so deeply wounded by this mournful event. We commiserate the agonizing sufferings of a widowed husband, thus bereaved of all that was most dear to him in life; and we sympathize with the whole Royal Family, under a stroke which has deprived them of so bright an ornament.

The reverence for religion with which the mind of her Royal Highness was impressed, her attentive observance of its ordinances, and her many eminent virtues, both princely and domestic, render her memory peculiarly venerable in our estimation, and have embalmed it in the affections of a disconsolate people.

The fair promise of future blessings to the United Kingdom, which the early life of her Royal Highness held forth, and the interesting circumstances in which her precious life was cut off, render our grief for the event doubly poignant. When the hopes of the nation had been wound up to the highest pitch, when we already anticipated that pledge which would have transmitted to posterity, in the line of your Royal Highness, a succession of princes to the throne, she in whom these hopes were centered was suddenly snatched from the world, and our fond expectations humbled in the dust.

Under this dire calamity we bow in pious submission to the will of God. We pray that His divine consolations may abound to your Royal Highness, and we trust that your heavy affliction may find some alleviation in the universal tribute of condolence voluntarily poured forth throughout the wide extent of the British Empire.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may shed Divine consolations upon our beloved Sovereign, bless the Queen and Royal Family, and continue to prosper the government which your Royal Highness exercises with so much success and glory, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty, and that descendants of the Illustrious House of Brunswick may, to the latest posterity, sway

the British sceptre over a free, great, loyal, and virtuous people, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JOHN CAMPBELL, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1818.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1818.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

*Sess. 9, May 30, 1818.—Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony.**

That upon a presentation being lodged with any Presbytery of this Church, before the Presbytery shall take any steps towards the settlement of the presentee, the Moderator shall read to him Act 5th, Assembly, 1753, and Act 8th, Assembly, 1759, and thereafter the presentee shall subscribe *coram* the following solemn declaration; which declaration, as engrossed in the Presbytery record, shall be authenticated by the signature of the Moderator, in name and by appointment of the Presbytery:—"I, A. B., presentee to the vacant parish and church of D., or appointed to be assistant and successor to E. F., minister of the parish of H., hereby solemnly declare, as I shall answer to God at the great day of judgment, that I have come under no engagement, expressed or understood, with the patron or heritors of the parish of D., nor with any person or persons in their name, or on their account; that neither by myself nor by any person with my knowledge, has any thing been given or promised, to procure me a presentation to the vacant parish of D.; and if, at any time hereafter, it shall come to my knowledge that any thing has been given, or has been promised to be given to the patron, or to any other person, for procuring the presentation now laid on the Presbytery's table to the vacant parish and church of D., I will immediately reveal it to the Presbytery. (Signed) A. B., presentee to the parish of D.—I. H., Moderator, in name and by appointment of the Presbytery;" and that till such declaration is subscribed as above, the Presbyteries of this Church be prohibited from proceeding to the settlement of presentees; and that a copy of this Act be given to each candidate for the ministry at the time he is licensed: All which procedure shall be without prejudice to the Presbytery's right of putting such questions to the presentee, as they shall deem necessary on the circumstances of the case; and that, in the meantime, this overture be converted into an interim Act.

* This Overture was transmitted for four years, but not passed.—*Ed.* 1843.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1818.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1819.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1819.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1819.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1819.—The Prince Regent's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

In the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty,

GEORGE, P. R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—We have always contemplated with the most lively interest the return of the period appointed for the meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; and it is with sentiments of peculiar satisfaction that we now hasten to renew to you the assurance of our paternal regard, and of our disposition to co-operate with you in all such measures as may tend to the moral and religious improvement of our people. When we call to mind the constant and laudable zeal which you have ever shown for the promotion of learning and true religion, we cannot doubt that the same advantages which have heretofore resulted from your deliberations will continue to flow from them. Your venerable body will sympathise with us in the severe affliction with which, since we last addressed you, it has pleased the Divine Providence to visit the members of the Royal Family, and the whole British nation, in the death of her Most Excellent Majesty. You will feel with us, that in the discharge of the duties, whether public or private, of her high station, she displayed a brilliant example of all those qualities which, while they dignify and add lustre to a throne, constitute the most becoming ornament of the female character in domestic life.

We have thought fit to appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, George Earl of Morton, to be the representative of our royal person upon the present occasion, well assured that your counsels will derive every advantage from his wisdom and sound judgment, and that he will faithfully and zealously discharge the weighty and important trust confided to his care. We cannot doubt that he will experience at your hands all the respect and consideration due to the high office with which we have judged it proper to invest him, and that you will manifest, in the reception which you give to the bearer of our delegated authority, your dutiful submission to ourself.

We assure you that we have not abandoned the intention which we expressed to you at your last Assembly, of affording aid for the supply of adequate places of worship for the religiously-disposed inhabitants of those parishes which, from their extent or population, stand in need of such assistance. Temporary circumstances have impeded the fulfilment of our intention ; but we trust that every impediment will be speedily surmounted. It is with deep-felt grief that we call your attention to the increase which has recently taken place in the number of crimes. This increase, we trust, as in former instances of the otherwise happy transition from war to peace, will be but temporary. We purpose (assisted by the wisdom of our Parliament) to direct proper measurers to be taken for ameliorating the discipline of our prisons. At the same time, we exhort you to charge those ministers of the Church of Scotland whose peculiar province it is to watch over the religious instruction of the unhappy persons confined in the gaols of that part of our United Kingdom, to be vigilant and unremitting in the performance of their sacred functions. The mischief we deplore may be materially abated by the judicious and zealous exertions of those ministers of the Gospel, to whom it more particularly belongs, in these receptacles of crime, to awaken the consciences of the obdurate, to enlighten the understandings of the ignorant, and to bring back the lost sheep into the fold of the True Shepherd. You will not fail to instruct your hearers in general how much their temporal, as well as their eternal welfare, will be promoted by a strict adherence to the precepts of the religion which you preach, and that even human institutions are to be respected as conducing to the same end. You will teach them, that by maintaining a vigilant control over all their selfish passions, which seek their gratification at the expense and to the injury of their neighbours ; and by being always in strict and peaceable obedience to the laws and ordinances of the community of which they are members, they will best consult not only the happiness of their fellow-creatures, but their own.

As a powerful means of procuring the ready dissemination of these sentiments, we recommend to you a watchful superintendence over the education of the rising generation. It has been found (and no where more than in Scotland) that the general instruction of the children of the poorer classes has been attended with the happiest effects. A visible improvement has taken place in the morals of the people, and those who might otherwise have passed their days in ignorance and vice have been qualified to become useful members of society.

It only remains for us to renew to you the assurance of our steadfast purpose and determination to maintain inviolate the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as by law established ; and, commending your deliberations to the guidance of the Almighty, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 7th day of May 1819, in the fifty-ninth year of our reign.

By the Command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name,
and on the behalf of his Majesty,

SIDMOUTH.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1819.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Prince Regent's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Royal Highness,

The very gracious letter with which your Royal Highness, in the name, and on the behalf of his Majesty, has been pleased to honour this meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, has been received with the respect and gratitude due to such a renewed proof of your royal favour.

The assurance of your Royal Highness's paternal regard, and disposition to support us in those measures by which we strive to promote the religious and moral improvement of the people under our charge, is a most powerful encouragement to persevere in the faithful discharge of our duty. We receive your gracious approbation of our zeal for the advancement of religion and literature, as a gratifying recompence of our past labours, and feel your confidence in the success of our future exertions a motive for redoubling our diligence in time to come.

Bending in profound veneration to the will of that Great Being whose counsels are unsearchable, we sympathise deeply in the successive afflictions of your Royal House. In tendering the expression of our unfeigned condolence to your Royal Highness on the lamented death of her Majesty, the late Queen, we desire to remember, with gratitude to Heaven, how long she was spared for a blessing to these lands; and earnestly pray that the excellent example which she set of genuine piety, domestic virtue, and enlightened zeal for the moral interests of the community, may never be forgotten.

The appointment of the Earl of Morton to represent his Majesty's person in this Assembly, is to us a fresh token of your fatherly care and regard. The attachment of his noble ancestors to the liberties of their country and principles of the Church of Scotland, his own high and exemplary character, the dignified situations which he has filled, and his well-known zeal for the maintenance of the British constitution, render the choice which your Royal Highness has made most acceptable to us, and induce us, from esteem, as well as a sense of duty, to receive him with all the respect and consideration due to the important office with which he is invested.

The assurance that your Royal Highness has not abandoned your wise and benevolent intention of affording aid for the supply of adequate places of worship for the religiously-disposed inhabitants of those parishes which, from their extent and population, stand in need of such assistance, confirms our reliance on the affectionate interest which your Royal Highness takes in the prosperity of our Church; and from the fulfilment of that intention (which we trust will not be long delayed) we anticipate the happiest consequences to a large proportion of our fellow-subjects.

The increase in the number of crimes, to which your Royal Highness calls our attention, has not by any means escaped our notice. We trust and pray that the prevalence of this evil may be of short duration, and that the measures which your Royal Highness proposes to take for arresting its progress may be crowned, by Divine Providence, with complete success. And we pledge ourselves to your Royal Highness, that before we separate we shall adopt every means in our power to co-operate with these measures.

We thankfully acknowledge the wisdom and watchful care of your Royal Highness, in exhorting us to that most sacred and important branch of our duty, which consists in instructing the ignorant, and reclaiming the obdurate, especially when suffering under the consequences of their crimes. Permit us to assure your Royal Highness, that our best exertions as a body, and as individuals, shall not be wanting to impress on every mind to which our influence extends the necessity of religious principle as the foundation, and of respectful submission to the laws and institutions of their country as the means, of personal and social happiness.

It affords us the most lively pleasure that your Royal Highness has been pleased to recommend our continuing the watchful superintendence which we have been accustomed to exercise over the education of youth. The general diffusion of useful knowledge among the inferior orders of society has been long the pride and honour of Scotland, and our experience of its beneficial effects determines us to employ every means in our power to extend the benefits of instruction to all classes of persons under our care; and we rejoice in the prospect of these benefits being more generally extended, not only throughout the British Empire, but over the whole world.

We are animated in the discharge of these and all our other duties, by the repeated assurance which your Royal Highness has condescended to give of your steadfast purpose and determination to maintain inviolate the rights and privileges of our Established Church. Attached by every principle of loyalty and feeling of gratitude to the Royal House of Brunswick, we rely, in perfect security, on the protection and

countenance of a Prince of that illustrious line, who, in exciting us to our duty, shows that the faithful discharge of it is the surest recommendation to his favour.

That the Father of Mercies may vouchsafe to bless his Majesty the King with that Heavenly support and consolation which He alone can bestow ;—that He may watch over the person, prolong the days, and bless the administration of your Royal Highness ;—that you may behold the increasing prosperity of a loyal and affectionate people, and be honoured as the instrument of Divine Providence for their good ;—and that, after long ruling in righteousness and judgment, you may receive the recompence of a heavenly crown, are the prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DUNCAN MACFARLANE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1819.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Royal Highness George Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders, met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, embrace the opportunity, afforded by the return of our annual meeting, of conveying to your Royal Highness the renewed assurances of our respect and affection to his Majesty's person and family.

While we deeply deplore his Majesty's long seclusion, by a severe and protracted malady, from the personal exercise of the functions appropriate to that high station which he constitutionally holds in the government of these realms, we offer to your Royal Highness the expressions of our respectful condolence on the great loss which your Royal Highness, the Royal Family, and the empire at large, have sustained in the lamented death of her late Majesty the Queen, who continued to share the affections of our beloved Sovereign, and to form the principal solace of his life for a long series of years. The amiable manner in which she discharged the various conjugal and maternal duties rendered her Majesty's character a shining example to her sex throughout the empire ; while her diffusive but unostentatious beneficence—a beneficence discovered to its full extent, chiefly by the regrets and tears of those who had been accustomed to partake of it, cannot fail to give to the memory of our late excellent Queen an endearing interest. That decided and conspicuous regard to the interests of religion and virtue, manifested both by her example and support, not only gave to the British Court a peculiar and dignified pre-eminence, but diffused its salutary influence in a widely extended sphere. These recollections must render it difficult to appreciate the full extent of the loss sustained by her Majesty's death, and will dispose the wise and good long to cherish her memory with affectionate veneration. We are called, by this dispensation of Providence, to bow with submission before the throne of the Almighty. It is our sincere and earnest prayer, that, in the recollection and imitation of the various excellencies that adorned the character of the late Queen, her illustrious descendants, and all ranks in the community, may express their respect for her memory, and find consolation under the irreparable loss occasioned by her death.

That it may please Almighty God, the Father of Mercies, to bless his Majesty, and impart to him all that consolation and relief of which his condition is susceptible ;—that the King of Kings may vouchsafe to your Royal Highness every blessing, temporal and spiritual, and render your administration effectual, according to your Royal Highness's benevolent wishes, for promoting the virtue and happiness of your people,

and the general prosperity of the empire;—that He may distinguish, by his favour, all the members of the Royal Family;—and that the Crown of these realms may be transmitted in a succession of Princes of your royal house to latest generations, are the sincere and earnest prayers of,

May it please your Royal Highness, his Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DUNCAN MACFARLANE, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 4, May 24, 1819.—Act for the better Dispatching the Business of Assemblies reprinted.

May 26, 1718.

The General Assembly, finding that their business is much retarded by parties having references, appeals, and complaints, to lay before the Assembly, their not giving them timeously into the Committee for Bills, and that, by such delays, the Assembly is often necessarily obliged to commit several of their weighty affairs to their Commission, which were more proper to be judged by themselves: Therefore, they do hereby appoint and ordain all references, appeals, and complaints, that shall be made in time coming to the General Assemblies of this Church, to be lodged in the clerk's hands on or before the second or third days of the Assembly's meetings; that thereby they may timeously have a full view of all their work, and may be able to judge what things are of the greatest weight, and are necessary to be dispatched by themselves, if they cannot overtake the whole: With certification, that all appeals or complaints, not lodged in the clerk's hands within the time foresaid, shall be held as deserted and fallen from, and shall not thereafter be received; unless, upon the first opportunity, the parties concerned make it appear to the Assembly that insuperable difficulties did withhold them from lodging the same in manner above set down. And the General Assembly enjoins the clerks of the several judicatures to transmit to the clerk of Assembly, within the time foresaid, all references made by the respective judicatures to the General Assembly.

Additional Act for the Dispatch of Business of Assemblies.

May 24, 1819.

The General Assembly, considering that parties are often negligent in bringing their causes in due time before the Assembly, by which the business of the Assembly is unnecessarily delayed, appointed a committee to take under their consideration the Act, 1718, respecting the dispatch of business before the Assembly; and to consider what additional orders and regulations may be necessary to be made in order to bring before the Assembly, on the first Saturday of their meeting, a view of all the business which may afterwards come under their consideration, and to report. The committee accordingly made the following report:—"The committee report as their opinion, that the Assembly ought to make such an order, for the dispatch of their business, as will ensure to them the advantage of having the papers connected with every private cause, on their table, at their meeting on the first Saturday of the Assembly; and that, with a view to the accomplishment of this object, in the way least inconvenient for all parties concerned, the first meeting of the Committee of Bills ought to be held on the evening of the preceding Thursday; a second meeting of the same committee on the evening of Friday; and a third on the morning of Saturday before the meeting of Assembly: And, farther, that all appeals, complaints, or references, not presented to the Committee of Bills at or before their third meeting on the morning of the first Saturday of the Assembly, shall be held as deserted and

fallen from." The General Assembly having considered the above report, unanimously approve thereof, and enact and enjoin in terms thereof. And the Assembly direct their clerks to send printed copies of this enactment to all the Presbyteries of the Church. And the Assembly farther direct and appoint, that this enactment shall, in time coming, be read on the first day of the meeting of every future Assembly, together with the Act, 1718, anent the dispatch of business, which they appoint to be printed in the Acts of this Assembly, along with this present Act, for the greater conveniency.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1819.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1819.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1819.—Order and Injunction of the General Assembly to the Presbyteries of the Church concerning the Examination of Schools.

The General Assembly called for the report of the Committee upon the Examination of Schools, which was produced and read as follows:—"The Committee upon the Returns from Presbyteries respecting the Examination of Schools report, that only twenty-nine Presbyteries have sent up returns to the Assembly, viz., Paisley, Dalkeith, Irvine, Cupar, Forfar, Turriff, Biggar, Jedburgh, Chirnside, Peebles, Ellon, Aberdeen, Penpont, Dunbar, Annan, Perth, Brechin, Haddington, Dunfermline, Alford, Aberlour, Strathbogie, Lanark, St Andrews, Aberbrothock, Kirkaldy, Linnlithgow, Lochmaben, and Langholm.

"Most of these returns are in very general terms, and in several of them no other information is given than that the schools of certain parishes, named in the return, have been examined since last Assembly, or that reports have been given in to the Presbytery by committees appointed to visit schools; which reports have been sustained. The returns made by certain Presbyteries, among which the committee think it proper to particularise those of Irvine, Cupar, Forfar, Dalkeith, and Paisley, are very full and minute, and exhibit a laudable attention on the part of those Presbyteries to the important duties belonging to them as superintendents of public education within their bounds. Several Presbyteries state their experience of the great and increasing advantages which result from the regular examination of schools, according to the instructions of the General Assembly.—The committee would recommend the renewal and re-transmission of the injunction of Assembly, 1799, to Presbyteries regarding the state of schools.

"The committee further suggest, that it might tend to draw the attention of Presbyteries more particularly to this important subject, and also to facilitate the making up of Presbyterial reports upon the points contained in the injunction above mentioned, were printed schedules, corresponding to the several subjects of inquiry, to be prepared by a committee of Assembly, and transmitted to Presbyteries, to be filled up by them in their future reports." The General Assembly approve of this report, and enjoin the clerks to see that the recommendation of the Assembly upon this

subject be inserted in the printed Acts of this Assembly. The schedule proposed in the above report having been prepared by the committee, the Assembly direct the clerks to get printed a sufficient number of copies of the schedule, and transmitted to the different Presbyteries of the Church. The Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries to make their reports of the examination of the schools within their bounds, conformably to the said schedule.

Follows the Injunction of the General Assembly, 1799.

The General Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of this Church to report to the Assembly a list of all the schools within their bounds, specifying what is taught in each school; whether the schools be held on the Lord's Day, or on other days of the week; in what way the schoolmasters are supported or maintained; whether they act for themselves, or are employed by or under the direction of others; what number of scholars attend each school at the time of making the report; and, in general, whatever else shall appear to the Presbytery of importance respecting the schools within their bounds.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

IX.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1819.—Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual preventing Simony.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1819.—Recommendation of the General Assembly to all the Ministers of this Church to promote Subscriptions and Contributions for the Monumental Church.

The General Assembly considering, that at a numerous meeting of noblemen and gentlemen in this city, in the month of February last, it had been proposed, and unanimously agreed to, that a general subscription should be opened for erecting a monumental edifice, comprehending a church destined for the purposes of Divine worship, in commemoration of the unparalleled victories with which the Great Disposer of events had been pleased to crown the British arms, by sea and land, in the late glorious and eventful war, in which the valour of Scotsmen was so conspicuously displayed in every quarter of the globe; and considering that this measure appears to the General Assembly to be a most suitable and appropriate expression of national gratitude to the Lord of Hosts, and, under Him, to our brethren in arms, who had been the instruments in His hands of our national deliverance from impending dangers of incalculable extent: The General Assembly earnestly recommend to all the parish ministers of this Church to give their countenance and aid to the measure, by promoting subscriptions and contributions for its accomplishment, within their respective parishes; and the General Assembly appoint and ordain that this deliverance of the Assembly be printed, and copies thereof transmitted, without delay, to every parish minister of the Church of Scotland.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1819.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May 1820.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1820.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1820.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1820.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—The numerous proofs which your former meetings have afforded of their constant and unshaken adherence to the succession of the crown of this realm in our family, and to the general interests of the Protestant faith, and of the wisdom, prudence, and moderation which characterize your National Church, have induced us most cheerfully to countenance with our royal authority your approaching Assembly. And it is with the utmost sincerity and good-will that we take this first opportunity of renewing to you, in our own person, the assurance which we have heretofore given to you, in our vicarious character, of our fixed purpose and unalterable resolution to continue to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the same countenance and support which it has received from our royal ancestors, and to maintain it in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges as by law established. Not only the general tenor of the councils of your Church, but the recent address of the Commission of the last General Assembly, inspire us with the most entire confidence in your loyalty, and in your attachment to our person and government; and we enjoy the most firm belief that you meet together with the best disposition to co-operate, with all the means you can command, for the happiness of our reign, and to further the true interests of the Church whose ministers you are. In whatever may tend to those important and laudable ends, you may be assured of our free and ready concurrence. On your part we are well persuaded that no pains have been or will be spared to inculcate on your respective flocks the duty of subordination to their temporal rulers, and the necessity of obedience to the lawful magistrates. Equally contrary to the ordinances of God, and to the laws of man, are the treasonable attempts to subvert the happy constitution of our kingdom, by which some parts of this favoured Island have been recently disgraced; and we are convinced,

that while we, through our civil magistrates, administer justice in mercy for the suppression of these disorders, you will no less strive to counteract them, by enforcing their utter inconsistency with the precepts of the Gospel. Being well satisfied of the loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service of our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, George Earl of Morton, we have appointed him to represent our royal person in this Assembly. You have already had experience of his ability for the discharge of this important trust, and we are persuaded that the affection and concern for the Church of Scotland which you have observed in him, cannot fail to render our choice of him most acceptable to you. Not doubting that charity, brotherly love, and unanimity, will characterize your resolves, and will bring your proceedings to as happy a conclusion as those of any former Assembly, we commend your deliberation to the guidance of Almighty God, and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 29th day of April 1820, in the first year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

SIDMOUTH.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved, the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1820.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter which your Majesty has been pleased to address to this Assembly has been received by us with all due honour and respect.

Maintaining that unshaken adherence to the succession of the British Crown in your Majesty's Illustrious House, and that regard to the interests of the Protestant faith, which your Majesty vouchsafes to approve in former Assemblies, we rejoice that our meeting is countenanced by your royal authority. We receive, with entire confidence and gratitude, the renewed assurance of your Majesty's fixed purpose and unalterable resolution to continue to our National Church the same support with which it hath been honoured by your royal ancestors, and to maintain it in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, as by law established. The paternal kindness which our Church has already experienced from your Majesty, while administering the government, in the name and on the behalf of your revered and beloved father, is the surest pledge to us of the advantages which we hope to enjoy under your Majesty's reign.

For securing the happiness of that reign, and for furthering the true interests of the Church whose ministers we are, we shall eagerly avail ourselves of all the means which we can command; we shall inculcate on our flocks the duty of subordination, and of obedience to lawful magistrates, and shall anxiously and affectionately warn them, how contrary alike to the laws of God and of man are those treasonable attempts against our happy constitution, by which some parts of this favoured Island have been recently disgraced. While your Majesty, through the civil magistrates, administers justice in mercy for the suppression of these disorders, it shall be our earnest endeavour to counteract them, by enforcing their utter inconsistency with the precepts of the Gospel.

The re-appointment of the Earl of Morton to represent your royal person in this Assembly is rendered most acceptable to us, by the experience which we have had of his ability for the discharge of that important trust, and of his affectionate concern for the welfare of our Church. We humbly hope that the Lord High Commissioner

will be able to make a favourable report to your Majesty of the spirit by which our deliberations are guided.

We receive with gratitude, and shall employ with fidelity and zeal, your Majesty's royal donation of L.2000, for the promotion of religious knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

That Almighty God, by whom kings reign, may abundantly bless your Majesty, that He may make your reign long and prosperous, and may, at the last, bestow upon your Majesty a crown of glory, are the prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

THOMAS MACKNIGHT, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1820.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Majesty.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most faithful and affectionate subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, while we participate cordially in the expressions of duty and respect which have been tendered to your Majesty by the Commission of last Assembly, are eager to embrace this opportunity of our first meeting, to offer our condolence to your Majesty on the lamented death of our late beloved Monarch,—to congratulate your Majesty on your auspicious accession to the throne of your ancestors, and to express our attachment and loyalty to your Majesty's person and government.

In reviewing the reign of our late venerable Sovereign, we delight to dwell on the pre-eminent excellence of his character. We offer our fervent thanks to Heaven for the manifold blessings which we enjoyed under his beneficent sway, and feel the remembrance of his virtues an additional tie of affection and duty to the Prince who now inherits his throne.

In the solemn constitutional pledge which your Majesty has so early given of maintaining our rights and privileges, and the assurance of your royal countenance and protection to our Church, which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to renew repeatedly to its representatives, we recognise the kind and paternal spirit of that Illustrious House which has been so long the ornament and safeguard of our country, and find encouragement to anticipate confidently every benefit which our National Establishment can derive from the reign of a patriotic Monarch.

We sympathize deeply in the universal grief which has been excited by the death of his Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent, immediately preceding the demise of his revered father; and we beg leave to offer to your Majesty the tribute of our heartfelt condolence on that mournful event. Our prayer is, that, under every deprivation, your Majesty and all the Royal Family may be visited with the consolations of Heaven, and supported by the assured hope of that blessed immortality, in which separation and sorrow shall be unknown.

The scenes of tumult, disorder, and outrage, by which the commencement of your Majesty's reign has been disturbed, have afflicted us with deep mortification and regret. Those insidious arts which, by disseminating impiety, discontent, and treason, have undermined the faith of the ignorant, aggravated the sufferings of the poor, and disturbed the peace of society in various parts of the kingdom, are regarded by us with unmixed abhorrence. We trust in the blessing of the Most High, on your Majesty's wise and vigorous counsels for repressing every instance of conspiracy, rebellion, and blasphemy, and guarding against their recurrence. We observe with awe and affliction the working of that spirit of impiety and unbelief, which, spurning

the authority of the Almighty, and denying the truths of the Gospel, has led to insubordination, to the deliberate contrivance and perpetration of most atrocious crimes, and to appalling obduracy of heart, even in the last moments of life. It is our consolation to be assured, that the spirit which we deplore is confined to a small portion of the people of Scotland, and that the great body of those under our charge have continued stedfast in their faith and loyalty; and we pledge ourselves to your Majesty, that no exertion shall be wanting on our part to preserve and cherish in their hearts piety towards God, submission to the laws, and attachment to the unrivalled constitution under which they have the happiness to live.

That the God by whom kings reign, and in whose hand is the breath of all mankind, may confirm your Majesty's health and preserve your life;—that He may establish your throne, and crown your measures with success;—that He may scatter all your foes, and baffle every attempt to disturb your government;—and that, after long blessing a free and happy people in your reign, He may at last exalt your Majesty to an incorruptible crown, are the sincere and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most loyal, most dutiful, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

THOMAS MACKNIGHT, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1820.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1820.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1820.—Report of the Committee appointed to class the Returns from Presbyteries of the Examination of Schools.

The Report of the Committee to class the Returns from Presbyteries of the Examination of Schools was called for, and being produced, was read as follows:—

“The Committee appointed to consider the Returns of Presbyteries, relative to the Schools within their respective bounds, have to report to the General Assembly,

“1st, That the following Presbyteries have transmitted reports from the schedules prepared by order of the last Assembly, viz., Aberbrothock, Aberdeen, Dunbar, Dunfermline, Fordoun, Jedburgh, Kirkaldy, Lanark, Langholm, Lauder, Meigle, Paisley, St Andrews. And that the uniformity and fulness of the returns from these thirteen Presbyteries is highly satisfactory.

“2d, That returns in the same, or in some similar form, have been transmitted from the following Presbyteries, viz., Biggar, Dalkeith, Dundee, Dunoon, Dumbarton, Ellon, Garioch, Forfar, Haddington, Irvine, Lorn, Penpont, Perth, Selkirk, Strathbogie. And that these fifteen reports being drawn up on the same or a similar plan

with that of the printed schedule of last Assembly, are satisfactory, in respect of the information which they present, though less uniform in size, and less easy for the purpose of reference.

“3d, That short reports, or notices of examination, have been transmitted from the following Presbyteries, viz., Aberlour, Ayr, Brechin, Fordyce, Lochmaben, Peebles, Turriff, stating generally on the backs of the commissions that the schools within these Presbyteries were examined. These reports are, indeed, more or less satisfactory, and some of them detail the names of the schools, the number of scholars, and the branches taught; others give only the names of the schools. One Presbytery merely sends a note, stating that several of the schools have been visited.

“4th, That the separate reports of the parishes have been transmitted by the Presbyteries of Abertarff and Stranraer, in place of the respective abstracts which ought to have been prepared and sent up from these two Presbyteries; but that, as parish reports, most of these are carefully drawn up according to or near the general plan; though it is obvious that a committee of Assembly could not examine and do justice to so many, if all the separate parishes were to report; and also, that it is of importance for Presbyteries to examine them, and to make up their own returns to the Assembly.

“5th, That except the above thirty-seven Presbyteries, all the others have omitted to send up reports, or, if sent, they have not been delivered to the Assembly and their committee, which, after all the orders on that subject sent out from year to year by the Assembly, after the preparing of regular schedules for this purpose, and while the great importance of regular examinations and returns is apparent to, and confessed by every one in any degree acquainted with the subject, appears to furnish matter equally of regret and surprise.

“6th, That an extra column on the left of the printed schedules, to contain the population of the respective parish, and the insertion of the Presbytery's designation at the top, would be of use in case of any new impression of the schedules; and that for the purposes of uniformity and facility of reference, they should all be of the same dimensions, or nearly so.

“*Lastly*, The committee are perfectly satisfied, that not only will there be more attention given to the important duties of examination of schools, in order to the construction of the Assembly reports now required, from one meeting of this Supreme Court to another, but that, by means of these uniform returns, as soon as they are generally made up and received, the most satisfactory means will be at the command of the Assembly for constructing a national report on a subject of the highest interest and consequence.

“The committee beg leave to report further, that as the continuance of the high superintendence of this Court appears to have already produced very happy effects, and the faithful attention of Presbyteries and ministers is essential to their continuance; and as it seems to be necessary for the success of these measures that a strict inquiry be made into the nature and extent of the returns, it may contribute to ensure correct returns, if the General Assembly shall be pleased to recommend and enjoin:—

“1st, That every Presbytery of this Church give precise instructions to the respective ministers to have schedules prepared for these returns, according to the form approved and transmitted by the General Assembly, inserting the name of the parish at the top, and the population, according to the last return thereof, in a column at the left hand of the schedule: And that returns be made from every parish to the respective Presbytery, on or before the day of election of their representatives to the Assembly.

“2d, That from these parish returns the Presbytery shall cause to be duly made up and revised by themselves, a general return from the Presbytery, to comprehend the substance of what is contained in the reports from parishes.

“3d, That every Presbytery of this Church take care to have such returns made up and transmitted to the Agents for the Church on or before the first week of the sitting of the General Assembly, to whom they will be answerable.

“4th, That these recommendations and injunctions be inserted in the printed Acts of Assembly for this year, or communicated in any other way the Assembly may be pleased to order; and that authority be given for the purpose of transmitting a suf-

ficient supply of printed schedules for the respective Presbyteries, on which, or according to the forms of which, these returns may be made.

(Signed) " WILLIAM SINGER.
" GEORGE COOK.
" JAMES HARE."

The Assembly approve of this report, and of the additional recommendations which the committee propose to be given by the Assembly upon this subject; and, in pursuance thereof, the Assembly enjoin their clerks to see that the said recommendations be inserted in the printed Acts of this Assembly; together with a recommendation that the Presbyteries be particularly careful to see that in all the schools within their bounds the children be duly instructed in the principles of religion; and that in the schedule there be an additional column, to certify whether or not the teachers have qualified to government.

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1820.—Report of the Committee on the Reference from the Presbytery of Fordoun.

The committee of the General Assembly appointed to consider the reference from the Presbytery of Fordoun, and the case of the vacant parish of Arbuthnot, humbly report to this Assembly:

That many highly important interests are involved in this reference, and that it well deserves the most serious consideration, that while the patronage of Arbuthnot, or any other parish, continues during a vacancy to be the subject of litigation in civil courts, and the parish remains without a settled minister, there must be many difficulties and interruptions in the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the management and support of the poor, the inspection of schools, the visiting and examining the parishioners in general, and the administering of consolation to the afflicted and the dying; besides the general neglect of the civil interests connected with the parish and the cure of it, especially those which relate to the church, the manse and offices, the school-houses, and the glebe: And as other cases of the same description with that of the parish of Arbuthnot are known to exist, and some have already been of long continuance, it appears the more necessary to submit some general and effective measures.

The committee, therefore, beg leave to suggest,

1st, That the General Assembly authorise the Procurator and Agents for the Church to look into the case of this parish of Arbuthnot, and into such other cases as may exist at present, or occur hereafter, involving circumstances of protracted vacancy, occasioned by litigation betwixt contending patrons; that they watch over the progress of the respective processes, and endeavour to prevent improper or unnecessary delays.

2dly, That the Assembly recommend to the several Presbyteries within whose bounds there is or may be a long vacancy in any parish, occasioned by contested claims of patronage, to endeavour, as far as possible, to furnish regular supplies of preaching at suitable intervals; and for this purpose, to employ licentiates of this Church, according as these Presbyteries may see proper and find convenient; to authorise the several ministers in their bounds to administer the ordinance of baptism within the vacant parish respectively, and to perform the other functions of an ordained minister therein, as the circumstances of the parish may require; and in case the heritors, elders, or parishioners, apply to the Presbytery for this purpose, that the Assembly recommend to them to exercise their constitutional power in dispensing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper within such vacant parish, at such times, and under such arrangements, as the Presbytery shall find most proper.

3dly, That the Assembly authorise and recommend to the respective Presbytery, in which any case of long vacancy of the above, or any other description may occur, to take proper measures, as far as they can, for securing and preserving the civil

interests of the vacant cure, especially in respect of the church, the manse and offices, and the glebe, and for attending to the poor, and to the schools of the vacant parish.

4thly, That if this report meet the approbation of the General Assembly, it be inserted in the printed Acts, or communicated in such a manner as may appear most proper for the information and satisfaction of all concerned.

WILLIAM SINGER, *Convener*.

(The Assembly approved of the above Report, and of the Suggestions subjoined to it; and they authorised and enjoined in terms of the said Report and Suggestions.)—
Ed. 1843.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1820.—Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1820.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1821.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly,

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

Note.—In the Abridgment of the Assembly's Proceedings of this year, the following notice appears of a discussion which took place on the production of an Order of his Majesty in Council, respecting the public offering of Prayers for the King and Royal Family :—

“ Upon a motion made and seconded, the Assembly called for the Order of his Majesty in Council, transmitted by Government to the Moderator of the last General Assembly, and communicated by the said Moderator to the members of the Church of Scotland, through the medium of the newspapers, respecting the prayers to be publicly offered up for the King and Royal Family. Dr Macfarlane accordingly laid before the Assembly the said Order in Council, together with a letter which accompanied the said Order from the Clerk of Council, which Order was read, together with the said letter. The deliberations of the Assembly upon this subject were opened by the following motion, viz. :—‘ That it be declared by the General Assembly, that no civil authority can constitutionally prescribe either forms or heads of prayer to the ministers and preachers of this Church; and that the Orders in Council, which have been issued from time to time, respecting prayers for the Royal Family, are inconsistent with the rights and privileges secured by law to our Ecclesiastical Establishment; but that as these Orders appear to have originated in mistake or inadvertence, and not in any intention to interfere with our modes of worship, the General Assembly do not consider it to be necessary to proceed farther in this matter at present. And the General Assembly embrace this opportunity of declaring the cordial and steady attachment of the Church of Scotland to their most gracious Sovereign, and to all the Royal Family; and of farther expressing their unqualified confidence, that, actuated by the same principles of loyalty and religion which have hitherto guided them, her ministers and preachers will never cease to offer up, along with their people, their fervent supplications to Almighty God, in behalf of a family to whom, under Providence, we are indebted for so many distinguished blessings, both sacred and civil.’ In the course of the debate, another motion was made and seconded, ‘ That whereas the independence of the Church of Scotland, in all matters of faith, worship, and discipline, is fully established by law, the General Assembly finds it unnecessary and inexpedient to adopt any declaration, with regard to the late or any former Orders in Council, relative to prayers for his Majesty and the Royal Family.’ And the vote being called for, it was agreed the state of the vote should be First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a great majority, Second Motion. And, therefore, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, adopt the said second motion as the judgment of the House. Against which judgment several members dissented.”—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1821.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1821.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1821.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1821.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1821.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Majesty.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and affectionate subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, eagerly embrace this opportunity of approaching the throne, to renew the assurance of our cordial attachment and unshaken fidelity to your Majesty's person and government.

In common with all the well-disposed and loyal parts of your Majesty's subjects throughout the realm, we have beheld with sentiments of the deepest concern and unfeigned abhorrence, the criminal attempts to undermine the religious principles of the people, and to create a spirit of disaffection and hostility to our invaluable institutions, sacred and civil, so frequently made by unprincipled men, taking advantage of the temporary distresses of the public, and abusing the liberty of the press, by the circulation of the most pernicious writings; but we rejoice in the mercy of Providence, that indications everywhere appear of returning prosperity in the manufactures and commerce of the country; and it affords us no ordinary degree of satisfaction, that the restless spirit to which we allude, so eager to catch at every passing event, as the means of exciting agitation, has already received what, we earnestly hope, will prove an effectual and lasting check.

With reference to this, we are happy again to bear our testimony to the steady faith and unshaken loyalty of the great body of your Majesty's subjects in this part of the United Kingdom. Even in districts where the worst symptoms of disaffection and disorder had been manifested, so great is the change which has taken place, that it is with the most heartfelt satisfaction we can now congratulate your Majesty on the evident return, in the minds of the people, to sounder principle and better

feeling, and even a sense of the grievous delusions under which they had laboured. And, deploring the infatuation of those who have endeavoured so nefariously to create disrespect for the constituted authorities of the land, we solemnly pledge ourselves to your Majesty, that we will exert, with zeal and diligence, all the means in our power to counteract the progress of those principles of infidelity and irreligion, which tend to incite to the perpetration of the most atrocious crimes, amidst confusion and every evil work, and which, indeed, are so intimately connected with disloyalty, insubordination, and licentiousness, in all their forms. We will earnestly strive to cherish and maintain among the people under our pastoral charge a due spirit of veneration and love for that system of religion and government, of whose inestimable advantages we have had so long, not only the personal, but the recorded experience, which has been matured by the wisdom of ages, and which challenges the admiration of the world.

We could not fail to contemplate with much interest those occurrences on the Continent, which lately threatened the peace of Europe. It is fortunate for this island, that no intention exists on the part of its Sovereign to interpose in the dissensions of Foreign States, except in cases of urgent necessity. As servants of the Prince of Peace, we trust that the same pacific maxims will ever actuate the executive councils of the nation.

Remembering, with the liveliest sentiments of gratitude, the paternal regard to the National Establishment of which we are members, uniformly evinced by your Majesty's Illustrious Predecessor, who, during a long and eventful life, approved himself a patriot King and a true Christian, the Father of his people, and the great pillar of the Constitution in Church and State, we feel it truly gratifying to see your Majesty, in the exercise of your high constitutional functions, following the example of a Sovereign, whose memory will never be recalled without admiration and delight, while the noblest qualities of human nature are esteemed and respected amongst men. Under the government of a Monarch animated by the same paternal feelings, and ruling by principles so truly laudable and patriotic as those of your Majesty, we fondly anticipate the perpetuity of the honour, the glory, and the prosperity of the British empire. We are inspired with the firmest confidence in the permanent security of our rights and liberties, sacred and civil. We trust in the strength of the Most High, that no event will occur to endanger the existence or privileges of that Church which was established by the zeal, energy, and blood of our fathers, and which, we hope, will, under God, continue to form the consolation and blessing of future generations in this land, through many succeeding ages.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may bless your Majesty, direct your councils, and establish your throne in righteousness and peace; that your Majesty may be the instrument of Divine Providence to maintain inviolate our glorious and happy constitution of government; that, after a long and prosperous reign over a free, a loyal, and a happy people, your Majesty may be exalted to a crown that endureth for ever; and that the descendants of your Illustrious House, which has so long been the ornament and blessing of these kingdoms, may continue to sway the British sceptre till the latest posterity, are the sincere and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

DUNCAN MEARN, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1821.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1821.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1821.—Overture and Interim Act for the more effectual Preventing Simony.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1821.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1822.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly,

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1822.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1822.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1822.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—The great advantages which the Church of Scotland has derived from the wisdom of your annual deliberations, cannot but render the period of your meeting one of peculiar interest and satisfaction to us; and we are convinced that the result of your approaching labours will not be less conducive to the maintenance and extension of the pure principles of the Gospel, and consequently to the real happiness of our people, than upon any former occasion.

We have again thought fit to appoint our right trusty and right well-beloved cousin, George Earl of Morton, to be our Commissioner, and the Representative of our Royal

Person in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, being well assured that his merits will continue to recommend him to your confidence, and that you will pay him ~~that~~ reverence and respectful attention which are due to his high office. We ~~have charged~~ him to assure you of the continuance of that favour and protection which you have ever received from us, and of our stedfast purpose and resolution to preserve inviolably the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as well as the religious and civil liberties of all classes and descriptions of our subjects.

Well-beloved, you cannot fail to have witnessed, with deep concern, the wicked and persevering efforts which have recently been made to subvert the religious faith of our people, especially in the humbler and more numerous classes of society, by means of publications replete with scepticism and blasphemy. It will require the most active exertions of every friend of religion, of every lover of his country, and, above all, of the ministers of the Gospel, to combat and counteract so great and alarming an evil. We are assured that you will spare neither pains nor diligence in the religious instruction of that portion of our subjects, whose spiritual welfare is committed to your charge, by enforcing upon them the full extent of their duty, both to God and man. You will teach them the true value of the blessings they enjoy under our happy and envied constitution, and that these blessings can only be preserved by a firm and zealous attachment to that constitution, and a ready obedience to, and support of, the laws and ordinances of the State.

In all your exertions to promote the great cause of religion, you may rely on our zealous co-operation and support, and we are satisfied that your proceedings will now, as upon all former occasions, be characterized by temper and calmness, and that you will be actuated by a spirit of loyalty and attachment to us, of love for your country, and zeal for the service of Almighty God; and so, commending your deliberations to His Divine guidance, we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 8th day of May 1822, in the third year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

ROB. PEEL.

III.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1822.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The very gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour this General Assembly of our National Church has been received by us with the most profound respect and gratitude.

We receive, with heartfelt satisfaction, the assurance which your Majesty has been pleased to express, that the great advantages which the Church of Scotland has derived from the wisdom of our annual deliberations, renders the period of our meeting one of peculiar interest and satisfaction to your Majesty; and it shall be our study that the result of our approaching labours may not prove less conducive to the maintenance and extension of the pure principles of the Gospel, and consequently to the real happiness of your Majesty's people, than upon any former occasion.

The appointment of the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton to be your Majesty's Commissioner, and the Representative of your royal person in our General Assembly, we regard as a new proof of your Majesty's favour, the experience we have had on former occasions of his meritorious services having secured to him our fullest confidence; and your Majesty may be assured, that we shall gratefully pay to him that reverence and respectful attention which are due to his high office. We have received from him, with the highest satisfaction and gratitude, the assurance of your Majesty's favour and protection, and of your stedfast purpose and resolution to preserve in-

violably the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, as well as the religious and civil liberties of all classes and descriptions of your Majesty's subjects.

We have witnessed, with deep concern, the wicked and persevering efforts which, in certain parts of the kingdom, have recently been made to subvert the religious faith of your Majesty's people, especially in the humbler and more numerous classes of society, by means of publications replete with scepticism and blasphemy. We are sensible that it will require the most active exertions of every friend of religion, of every lover of his country, and, above all, of the ministers of the Gospel, who are specially called upon to exert themselves in such a cause, to combat and counteract so great and alarming an evil. Your Majesty may be assured that we will spare neither pains nor diligence in the religious instructions of that portion of our fellow-subjects, whose spiritual welfare is committed to our charge, by enforcing upon them the full extent of their duty, both to God and man. We will not fail to teach them the true value of the blessings they enjoy under our happy and envied constitution, and that these blessings can only be preserved by a firm and zealous attachment to that constitution, and a ready obedience to, and support of, the laws and ordinances of the State.

While it is our earnest desire that our proceedings may now, as on former occasions, be found characterized by temper and calmness, and dictated by a spirit of loyalty and attachment to your Majesty's person, of love for our country, and zeal for the service of Almighty God; we rejoice in the assurance communicated to us, that we may rely on your Majesty's zealous co-operation and support in all our exertions to promote the great cause of religion.

We receive, with sincere gratitude, your Majesty's donation of L.2000, for promoting religious knowledge in the Highlands and Island of Scotland; and we shall endeavour to apply this mark of your royal munificence in the manner best calculated for promoting the pious purpose for which it is bestowed.

That Almighty God may bless your Majesty, and all the members of the Royal Family; that He may guide and prosper all the measures of your Majesty's government; and that He may maintain, to latest ages, the national blessings we enjoy, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

D. LAMONT, *Moderator*.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1822.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 25, 1822.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VL

Sess. ult., May 27, 1822.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1823.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1823.

I.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1823.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1823.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1823.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 24, 1823.—Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to his Majesty.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in the General Assembly, beg leave to approach your Majesty with the strongest assurances of loyalty and attachment to your Majesty's person and government.

We regard, with sentiments of peculiar joy, that paternal affection which induced your Majesty, in the course of the last year, to visit your Scottish dominions; and we cordially unite in expressing our warmest gratitude for the very gracious and auspicious countenance which your Majesty was then pleased to give to both the civil and religious institutions in this part of the United Kingdom.

We have been highly gratified with the gracious and condescending terms in which

your Majesty, at the opening of Parliament, was pleased to express the satisfaction which your Majesty had derived from your visit to Scotland.

We gladly avail ourselves of this opportunity to assure your Majesty, that that visit has, in a high degree, strengthened and confirmed the principles of loyalty and attachment to your Majesty; and we are confident that, by the blessing of God, it will have a happy and permanent effect on all classes of your Majesty's subjects in this part of the British empire.

That your Majesty may long reign over a pious, free, loyal, and happy people, and may at length wear a crown of glory that fadeth not away, are the sincere and fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most loyal, dutiful, and devoted subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ALEXANDER BRUNTON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 4, May 26, 1823.—Address of the General Assembly to his Majesty, on the Abolition of Negro Slavery in the West Indies.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to embrace the opportunity which our meeting in the General Assembly affords us, of approaching your Majesty's throne, for the purpose of expressing the lively satisfaction with which we have observed the recent resolutions on the subject of Negro Slavery in the West Indies, unanimously adopted by the Honourable the Commons House of Parliament, upon the proposition of a member of your Majesty's government; and the pledge which has been publicly given, that decisive measures shall be taken for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in the colonies, so as to prepare them, at as early a period as is consistent with the interests of all parties, for a full participation in those civil rights and religious privileges which are enjoyed by every other class of British subjects.

As an Assembly of Christian ministers and elders, we cannot but lament the unfavourable circumstances in which this large and interesting portion of our fellow-subjects has so long been placed, in regard to the means of that moral and religious instruction, which we consider as the most effectual instrument, under the countenance of an Almighty and overruling Providence, for qualifying them to participate in the inestimable blessings of freedom.

But we contemplate with delight the prospect which has now arisen, that these disadvantages shall, with the least possible delay, be removed. And we would humbly express to your Majesty the confidence with which we look forward through a determined and vigorous, but, at the same time, temperate and judicious execution of the measures of your Majesty's government, to the final fulfilment of our hopes upon a subject which we must always regard with the greatest interest.

We cannot refrain from availing ourselves of the present occasion of renewing to your Majesty the expressions of our heartfelt gratitude for the continued exertions which have been made by your Majesty's government to accomplish the universal extinction of the African Slave Trade.

That your Majesty's disinterested efforts may speedily be crowned with success, in wiping out for ever this deepest stain on European humanity, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the National Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment, by

ALEXANDER BRUNTON, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1823.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 31, 1823.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1823.—Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee upon the course of study to be pursued by Students in Divinity, which was produced and read. The Assembly, without a vote, agree to transmit the Overtures contained in said report to the different Presbyteries of the Church.*

IX.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1823.—Abstract Report of the Committee on the Examination of Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee upon the Examination of Schools, which was made by Dr Singer, convener of the committee. The Assembly approve of this report, and appoint an abstract thereof to be inserted in the printed Acts of Assembly.

ABSTRACT.

I. Full and satisfactory reports in the tabular form prescribed by the Assembly have been received from the following twenty-eight Presbyteries:—Aberbrothock, Aberdeen, Abernethy, Aberdour, Alford, Brechin, Cupar, Dalkeith, Dunfermline, Dumbarton, Dundee, Elgin, Fordyce, Garioch, Haddington, Irvine, Kincardine-O'Neil, Kirkaldy, Kirkcudbright, Lanark, Lewis, Linlithgow, Lochmaben, Penpont, Selkirk, Stranraer, St Andrews, and Uist.

II. Short and imperfect notifications, not according to form, have been received from the seven Presbyteries of Chirnside, Hamilton, Jedburgh, Peebles, Strathbogie, Turriff, and Paisley.

* The first of these Overtures was enacted in 1826, and the second in 1827. See Act 8th, 1826, and Act 7th, 1827.—Ed. 1843.

III. All the other Presbyteries have omitted to send reports; and though the committee do not suppose that these Presbyteries have neglected the visiting and examining the schools, the committee are of opinion that they ought to be reminded of the duty of making up and sending in their annual reports, according to the established form.

The result of the returns of this year shows, that the increasing number of scholars in the several Presbyteries of this Church appear to derive more and more benefit from the regular superintendence of the General Assemblies.

The committee observe with regret, in returns of several Presbyteries, some particular schools are less efficient than others; that various teachers have not qualified, by taking the Oaths of Allegiance, and signing the Formula; that in the parishes of Paisley, Greenock, Port-Glasgow, and Renfrew, there are no parochial schools, though all these are landward parishes, Port-Glasgow excepted.

The attention of Presbyteries ought to be directed to these points:—To the improvement of those schools which are not so efficient as they ought to be; to obliging all the teachers to qualify, by taking the Oath of Allegiance before a magistrate, and all who belong to this Church, by signing the proper Formula; and in those parishes where schools are still wanting, to make application for their establishment under the Act, 1803, in so far as these parishes are landward, and come under the provisions of that statute.

The committee are particularly sorry to learn, that in the school of New Lanark maintained by Mr Owen, the reading of the Scriptures was prohibited by that gentleman, and also the use of the Catechisms of the Church; that although the Scriptures are now allowed to be read there, it is under the restriction of this being done only two hours a-week; and that the prohibition remains as to the Catechisms. On this subject, the committee beg leave to submit two minutes of the Presbytery of Lanark, from which it appears that the very commendable and constitutional exertions of that Presbytery to introduce the Scriptures without restriction, and the Catechisms of this Church, for the moral and religious improvement of the children at that school, have not yet been attended with the desired success.

The committee have only to submit farther on this important subject, that the prudent and constitutional exertions of the Presbytery of Lanark ought to be highly approved of; and that it be recommended to continue their exertions, and to report to next Assembly.

X.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1823.—Opinion of the late Lord President Blair, as to the Profanation of the Sabbath.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee upon the Profanation of the Lord's Day, which was made by Mr Dickson, convener of the committee. The Assembly approve of this report, and appoint the opinion of the late President Blair upon this subject to be inserted in the printed Acts of Assembly.*

XI.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1823.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1824.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

* The opinion of President Blair, with the Acts of Parliament to which he refers, will be found in the "Admonition and Information respecting the Profanation of the Lord's Day," issued in 1794, and which is printed in the Appendix to the present edition.—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1824.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 20, 1824.—The King's Commission to George Earl of Morton produced,
and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 20, 1824.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 22, 1824.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 9, May 29, 1824.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and
Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.*

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

*Sess. 9, May 29, 1824.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Re-
formation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's
Royal Bounty to that end.*

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

*Sess. 7, May 27, 1824.—Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by
Students of Divinity.**

(Re-transmitted.)

* It is noticed in the Proceedings that there was much reasoning on the re-transmission of this Overture, but eventually the motion was carried by a great majority.—Ed. 1843.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1824.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1825.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly.

DAVID RITCHIE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1825.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1825.—The King's Commission to James Ochoncar Lord Forbes produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1825.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R.

Right Reverend and well-beloved, we greet you well.—The constant proofs we have annually received of your affectionate loyalty to our person and government, and of your unremitting zeal in the great cause of religion, produce in our mind the most entire confidence that you will persevere in the same cause of piety and loyalty; and it is, therefore, with unqualified satisfaction, that we now renew to you the assurances of our unalterable determination to uphold the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges, and to countenance the General

Note.—The following is the notice in the Abridgment of this year's Proceedings of the Overtures respecting the Propagation of the Gospel Abroad, and relative to the State of Religious Instruction and Education in Scotland, and in the adoption of which the India Mission and Education Schemes originated:—

"*Sess. 7, Thursday, May 27, 1824.*

"The Assembly proceeded to take up the Overtures relative to the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen, and also the memorial and petition of the Rev. Dr Bryce, first minister of the Presbyterian Church in Calcutta, on the same subject. After mature deliberation, the following motion was made, seconded, and unanimously and cordially agreed to: 'That the Assembly approve of the general purpose and object of these overtures; appoint a committee to devise and report to the next Assembly a specific plan for the accomplishment of that object, and reserve for the consideration of the next Assembly the means of providing the requisite funds, by appointing an extraordinary collection at all the Parish Churches and Chapels of Ease throughout Scotland, as well as by opening a general subscription for the accomplishing this pious and benevolent object.'

"The Assembly then proceeded to take up the Overture relative to the State of Religious Instruction, and of Education in the Highlands and Islands, and in the great towns in Scotland. After hearing the wants of the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands, and their claims upon the public most ably and feelingly stated, the General Assembly most cordially gave their approbation to the object proposed in these overtures, and unanimously agreed that a committee be appointed to inquire, and to report to next Assembly, as to an advisable plan for the Church to adopt for increasing the means of education and of religious instruction throughout Scotland in general, where it may be needed, but particularly in the Highlands and Islands, and in large and populous cities and towns; and that the committee be instructed, after collecting and digesting the relative facts, to take what proper and prudent measures may be in their power to learn, for the information and direction of the ensuing Assembly, what degree of co-operation may reasonably be expected from heritors and others in the different districts of the country: and whether, also, and in what manner, Government may be disposed to give public aid for carrying into effect the important measure in contemplation."—*Ed. 1843.*

Assemblies of that Church with the same favour and authority which they have enjoyed from us and our royal ancestors. We are convinced that you will bring with you to this present Assembly an ardent and sincere desire for the advancement of true religion and pure morality, and will direct all your counsels to the general good of that part of our empire which is committed to your pastoral care; and we are satisfied that your zeal for these laudable purposes will be tempered with the candour and moderation calculated to ensure the success of your endeavours, towards which end you may rely on our firm and hearty co-operation.

Having understood that in some parts of Scotland there is great deficiency of accommodation for our good and religiously-disposed subjects, we shall recommend that subject to the early attention of our Parliament, nothing doubting that, by their deliberative wisdom, a remedy will be provided for so serious an evil.

Having experienced in other branches of our service the fidelity, firmness, and prudence of our right trusty and well-beloved James Ochoincar Lord Forbes, and being well assured of his zealous attachment to the Church of Scotland, we have selected him to be our Commissioner, and to represent our Royal Person in this Assembly; and we are persuaded that this choice will be acceptable to you.

We earnestly recommend you, well-beloved, to the care of Divine Providence, and heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at Carlton House, the 2d day of May 1825, in the sixth year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

ROB. PHEL.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1825.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty;

The letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour us we have received as a mark of royal condescension and good-will, which demands the strongest expressions of respectful and grateful attachment from this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

We are deeply sensible of the invaluable advantages which we enjoy under your Majesty's government, and we earnestly pray that our future conduct may be so directed by the wisdom which is from above, as to justify the entire confidence which your Majesty has hitherto reposed in our affectionate loyalty to your person and government, and our unremitting zeal in the great cause of religion, as the tie which connects the interests of time with the hopes of eternity, and as yielding at once the best security for the honour and stability of the throne, and the good order and happiness of the people.

We return our warmest thanks for the renewed assurances of your Majesty's unalterable determination to uphold the Church of Scotland in the full enjoyment of all its rights and privileges; and we venture to hope that we shall never forfeit the claims which our predecessors have established to the favour and authority with which the General Assemblies of this Church have been countenanced by your Majesty and your Royal Ancestors.

In humble dependence on the aid of Divine grace to guide us in judgment, and to bestow on us the spirit of meekness and brotherly love, we are fully resolved to avail ourselves of your Majesty's paternal admonition, conveyed in terms so encouraging, by bringing with us to this present Assembly an ardent and sincere desire for the advancement of true religion and pure morality, and by tempering our zeal with candour and moderation; thus feeling ourselves warranted to rely on your Majesty's firm and hearty co-operation, in promoting the success of the counsels and endeavours which it shall be our invariable object to direct to the general good of that portion of the empire which is committed to our pastoral care.

We rejoice in the intelligence of your Majesty's pious resolution to recommend to

the early attention of Parliament the great deficiency of accommodation felt by your Majesty's religiously disposed subjects in some parts of Scotland; and it is our fervent prayer, that the deliberative wisdom of the legislature may speedily provide an effectual remedy for so serious an evil, which, in common with your Majesty, we have long deplored.

The appointment of the Right Honourable Lord Forbes to represent your Royal Person in this General Assembly is received by us as a distinguished proof of your Majesty's regard for the honour and interest of this National Church. The fidelity, firmness, and prudence which he has displayed in other parts of your Majesty's service, as well as the private worth and amiable qualities which endear him to his countrymen, well entitle him to a most cordial and respectful welcome from us.

We receive with much gratitude the royal donation of L.2000, for propagating the Christian religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and we shall study to apply with strict fidelity the sum which has thus been confided to our management.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person and guide your counsels, and that, after a long and happy reign on earth, you may inherit a kingdom which cannot be moved, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

GEORGE COOK, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1825.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1825.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1825.—Overtures as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1825.—Report as to Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee anent the Returns upon the subject of the Examination of Schools, which was made by Dr Singer, the convener.

The Assembly direct their clerks to have this report inserted in the printed Acts of the Assembly.

At Edinburgh, 28th May 1825.

The Committee of the General Assembly, on the Returns of Presbyteries relative to the regular Examination and State of the Schools, have to report,—

That regular printed or written forms, duly filled up in the prescribed order, have been sent in from the following Presbyteries, viz.—

Aberdeen,	Dunfermline,	Lochmaben,
Aberbrothock,	Elgin,	Meikle,
Abernethy,	Forfar,	25 Paisley,
Alford,	15 Haddington,	Peebles,
5 Aberlour,	Jedburgh,	Penpont,
Annan,	Irvine,	Perth,
Ayr,	• Kincardine-O'Neil,	St Andrews,
Brechin,	Kirkcaldy,	30 Selkirk,
Cupar,	20 Lanark,	Stranraer,
10 Dumbarton,	Lauder,	Tongue.
Dundee,	Lewis,	

These returns being only 32, in due order and regular form.

But that parochial, in place of Presbyterial statements, have been sent in as follows, viz., from 11 parishes in the Presbytery of Dumfries; from the several parishes in the Presbytery of Dalkeith; from 11 parishes in the Presbytery of Edinburgh; and from 6 parishes of the Presbytery of Chirnside; and that short notifications of examinations of the schools, and of the satisfaction which was derived from the performance of this duty, have been put in from the Presbyteries of Hamilton, Fordoun, Linlithgow, and Strathbogie; the returns in all being sent in from 40 Presbyteries.

That no report whatever appears for last year from any of the remaining 38 Presbyteries of this Church; and that several of these have neglected to make returns in the prescribed form for more than one year, and some of them for many years; so that a full view of the schools in their respective bounds cannot be obtained until the orders of the Assembly be more generally observed, or more effectually enforced, according to the prescribed form; and returns made from every Presbytery, embracing all the parishes in one view.

That, besides the stimulus which the regular annual reports must give to the several Presbyteries in the discharge of a most important duty, it must be useful also as a stimulus to the several teachers, to know that such reports are made, and satisfactory to the Assembly and to the public, that they are obtained and preserved.

The committee feel it their duty to report, that some of the teachers have not yet qualified, by taking the Oath of Allegiance, and subscribing the proper Formula of the Church, dated in 1694; and that it may be proper to ordain a greater and more exact attention to the orders of the Assembly, that the teachers may qualify, and may be so reported.

Also, that no parish school appears to have been established in the parish of Lochs and Presbytery of Lewis, and that an explanation of the reason of this ought to be required, and measures taken for erecting one in that parish, and in every other where a parish school is wanting.

That some of the returns from Presbyteries contain very full and satisfactory statements, not only of the schools and number of scholars, but that a column has been added for the population, as formerly recommended by the Assembly; which it is evidently proper to possess, in order to an easy comparison, and which has been done in the very perfect reports from Aberdeen and Aberbrothock; and that the numbers of schools, of the scholars attending them, and of the population, should be in separate columns, each to be summed up; the designation of the Presbytery to be at the top of the return, and the attestation not to be omitted.

That full and accurate returns from Presbyteries, relative to schools, are now more than ever important, with a view to facilitate the great objects of the Assembly's Standing Committee for increasing the means of education; and that, in so far as the reports of last year extend, they furnish continued evidence of the incalculable value of the regular and accurate inspection of Presbyteries, under the high authority of the General Assembly of this Church.

WM. SINGER, *Convener*.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1825.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th day of May 1826.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1826.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1826.—The King's Commission to James Ochoincar Lord Forbes produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

Note.—There were laid on the table of the Assembly of 1825 numerous Overtures respecting the Union of Offices. The following is the notice of this subject given in the Abridgment :—

" Sess. 6, May 25, 1825.

" The Assembly called for the Overtures respecting the Union of Offices in the Church, which were produced and laid on the table. The Overtures from the Synods of Glasgow and Ayr, the Synod of Angus and Mearns, the Synod of Fife, and the Presbytery of Glasgow, were read. The Assembly dispensed with the reading of the other Overtures upon this subject. After long reasoning, it was moved and seconded, That a committee be appointed to prepare an Overture, to be converted into an Interim Act, anent the Union of Offices, which shall be transmitted to Presbyteries, and by which the holding of a Principality or a Professorship in a University, now incompatible, by the Act of Assembly, 1817, with the holding of a parochial charge in the country, shall be farther declared incompatible with the holding of a parochial charge, or the charge of a Chapel of Ease, in the city that is the seat of that University, or in the suburbs thereof; but, in respect that it appears that certain of the offices of Principals and Professors of Divinity, Church History, and Oriental Languages, are not at present adequately provided, it is hereby declared, that until it shall appear to the General Assembly that such adequate provision has been secured, the operation of the said Act and Overture shall be suspended in regard to the offices of Principals and Professors of Divinity, Church History, and Oriental Languages, in any of the said Universities. Another motion was made and seconded, That the Assembly, considering that the Overtures recommend, in every case, the exclusion of a minister holding a parochial charge from a Principality or Professorship in a University, judge it inexpedient to transmit them to Presbyteries of the Church. A third motion was made and seconded, That the House do now adjourn till to-morrow; and the vote being called for upon this motion, it was agreed the state of the vote should be, Adjourn or Not. The roll being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a considerable majority, Not; and, therefore, the General Assembly agreed to proceed in the debate upon the two other motions which had been made and seconded; but his Grace the Lord High Commissioner having expressed a wish to retire, the Assembly agreed to resolve themselves into a committee of the whole House.

" Sess. 7, May 26, 1825.

" The Assembly called for the report of the Committee of the whole House, which was produced and read, the tenor whereof follows: '*Edinburgh, 25th May 1825.*—The Committee of the whole House being met and constituted, they resumed the consideration of the subject which had been before the Assembly. After farther reasoning, the committee agree, on account of the lateness of the hour, to adjourn the debate. The committee closed with prayer.'

" The Assembly resumed the consideration of the Overtures anent the Union of Offices in the Church. After farther reasoning, the vote was called for upon the two motions submitted to the House at yesterday's diet; and it was agreed that the state of the vote should be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a considerable majority, Second Motion; and, therefore, the General Assembly determined in terms of said second motion. Which judgment being intimated, Dr Andrew Thomson, in his own name, and that of all who should adhere to him, entered his dissent from the same, and asked and took instruments in the clerk's hands."—*Ed. 1843.*

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1826.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1826.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 8, May 26, 1826.—Act authorising the use of the Quarto Edition of the Gaelic Bible.

Which day the General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee* on the Quarto edition of the Gaelic Bible, which, with the Report of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge upon this subject, was produced and read; and, at the same time, two copies of the Quarto Bible, and two copies of the New Testament in Gaelic, having bound up with them a revised and improved version of the Psalms and Paraphrases, were laid upon the Assembly's table. The General Assembly receiving, with the warmest satisfaction, the intelligence that the Quarto edition of the Gaelic Bible is at last completed, unanimously approve of the Report; authorise and ordain this version of the Scriptures in Gaelic, with the version of the Psalms and Paraphrases now attached to it, and no other version, to be used in the churches and chapels within the bounds of this Church where public worship is conducted in the Gaelic language, and appoint this enactment to be inserted in their printed Acts.

V.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1826.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1826.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1826.—Report as to Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to class the Returns upon the subject of the Examination of Schools, which was produced by

* For Report of this Committee, see Appendix.—*Ed. 1843.*

Dr Brunton, the convener. The Assembly approved of said Report, and directed their clerks to have the same inserted in the printed Acts of this Assembly.

REPORT.

Assembly House, 26th May 1826.

The Committee of the General Assembly appointed for Classing the Returns in regard to Schools beg leave to report—

1. That regular printed or written schedules of the prescribed form have been received from the following Presbyteries, viz. :—

Aberbrothock,	Dundee,	Lewis,
Aberdeen,	Dunfermline,	25 Linlithgow,
Aberlour,	15 Fordoun,	Lochmaben,
Abernethy,	Fordyce,	Penpont,
5 Alford,	Forfar,	Perth,
Annan,	Irvine,	Selkirk,
Ayr,	Kelso,	30 St Andrews,
Brechin,	20 Kincardine-O'Neil,	Stranraer,
Cupar,	Kirkcaldy,	Tongue,
10 Dalkeith,	Lanark,	Elgin, and
Dumbarton,	Lauder,	34 Meikle.
Dunbar,		

2. That reports, either less complete or less regular than the above, have been made by the following Presbyteries, viz.—

Chirnside,	Haddington,	Strathbogie,
Edinburgh,	Paisley,	42 Turriff.
Garioch,	40 Peebles,	

3. That no return whatever has been received from the remaining thirty-six Presbyteries of this Church; and that thus the important purposes for which the General Assembly requires such returns are, in a great measure, defeated.

4. That, in the case of the Parish of Lochs, in the Presbytery of Lewis, mentioned in the report made upon this subject to the last General Assembly, the reason now assigned why there is no parochial school there is, that there "is not a school-house;" but that no assurance is given that the proper means are employed for the remedy of this evil.

5. That the suggestions made in the report upon this subject, laid before the last General Assembly, have not been sufficiently attended to in the preparation of the printed schedules transmitted to Presbyteries; and,

6. That all the returns received this year continue to bear testimony to the great and growing benefits which arise from habitual inspection, exercised by Presbyteries over the schools within their respective bounds.

Respectfully reported, in name, and by appointment, of the committee, by

ALEX. BRUNTON, *Convener.*

VIII.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1826.—Act as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly, having called for the Report of the Committee for Classing Returns to Overtures, and having learned from the said report, that a majority

of Presbyteries had now given their consent to the first overture, respecting the course of study to be pursued by students of divinity, did, and hereby do, convert the said overture into a Standing Law of the Church, and enact and ordain, that, in all time coming, it shall be held and acted upon as such by all the Presbyteries of this Church, with respect to all students of divinity entering upon the said study, from and after this date.

It is therefore enacted, that, in future, all students of divinity shall give at least one year of regular attendance at the Divinity Hall; and that such year of regular attendance shall be the first, the second, or the third year of the course; the present law regulating the attendance remaining in other respects without alteration.

IX.

Sess. 9, May 27, 1826.—Overture as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted. See Act 7th, 1827.)

X.

Edinburgh, 29th May 1826. Sess. ult.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed by last General Assembly upon the Constitution of Chapels of Ease, which was produced and read. The Assembly approve of and adopt this report; direct in terms thereof, and earnestly recommend to all concerned compliance with the articles specified therein, and enjoin their clerks to see that the said articles be printed along with the printed Acts of this Assembly, as follows, viz.:—

Regulations to be observed in Framing Constitutions for Chapels of Ease.

The committee appointed last year to revise the Constitution which have been given to different Chapels of Ease, and prepare a form, &c., report unto the Venerable the General Assembly as follows:—

That the committee have examined the constitution given to twenty-two Chapels of Ease in the course of the last twenty-seven years, and respectfully suggest, that, after having observed the provisions of the 5th Act of Assembly, 1798, the articles in the constitution of any proposed chapel shall, in time coming, be introduced in the following order:—

1. The property of the chapel to be invested in whom.
2. To be exclusively for the use of a minister of the Church of Scotland.
3. Management and application of the seat-rents.
4. If debt incurred in erecting the chapel, how to be liquidated.
5. Managers and administration to be under the inspection of the Presbytery.
6. Manner of electing managers, and supply of vacancies, when they occur.
7. If a treasurer and clerk, how appointed and paid.
8. Amount of stipend.
9. What security for the same, and time of payment.
10. Plan of augmenting the stipend when necessary.
11. Collections, and application of the money collected.
12. Who are to choose the first minister, and how long to have this power.
13. The manner of supplying vacancies after the chapel is permanently established.
14. Supply of the pulpit during vacancies.
15. Names of candidates to be laid before the Presbytery.
16. Certificates of candidates to be laid before the Presbytery, and judged of.
17. Day of election, how to be appointed, and mode of calling meetings for this and other purposes.

18. Election, letter of acceptance, certificate of having taken the usual oaths, and renewed bond of security, to be laid before the Presbytery.
19. Duty to be performed by the minister when inducted.
20. If a Gaelic chapel, what portion of the service to be performed in that language, and what in English.
21. Bounds within which he is to labour, if any are fixed.
22. When the sacrament is to be dispensed.
23. How persons are to be admitted to partake of the same.
24. Allowance for communion elements, and to the minister, when the sacrament is dispensed.
25. Mode of letting the seats, and time when to be done.
26. Persons to be proposed, if any preference is to be given.
27. Precentor, by whom appointed, and with what salary.
28. Officer, by whom appointed, and with what allowance.

The committee have only farther to remark, that, when circumstances occur not requiring some of the particulars mentioned to be specified, they may be omitted, while the above order is observed in specifying those which are introduced. When, on the other hand, it is found necessary to introduce other particulars, they may be added after those which occur in the above enumeration.

HUGH MEIKLEJOHN, *Convener*.
ANDREW THOMSON.

XL

Sess. ult., May 29, 1826.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1827.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly.

ANDREW DUNCAN, *CL. Eccl. Scot.*

Note.—The Union of Offices was this year again discussed. The following notice of the subject appears in the Abridgment:—"The Assembly called for the Overtures respecting the Union of Offices in the Church, which were produced and read. After long reasoning, it was moved and seconded, 'That the General Assembly, being deeply convinced that the Union of the Office of a Parochial Minister with that of Principal or Professor in any of the Universities of Scotland, is injurious to the interests of religion and learning, and contrary to the spirit of our ecclesiastical constitution, resolve, that a Committee be appointed to prepare an Overture, to be transmitted to the Presbyteries of this Church, for preventing such Union of these Offices in future, in all cases not already provided for by the Act of Assembly, 1817, and to report to this Assembly; and, farther, that, in respect some of the Theological Professors are not at present sufficiently provided for, the General Assembly agree to appoint a Committee to take all such cases into consideration, with instructions to make all necessary inquiries, and to adopt all measures that may be deemed expedient, with the view of obtaining some means or security for the adequate endowment of these offices, and to report to next General Assembly.' Another motion was made and seconded, 'That the General Assembly, having maturely deliberated on the subject of these Overtures, judge it inexpedient to transmit any Overture upon the subject to the several Presbyteries of this Church.' And the vote being called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote should be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried, by a great majority, Second Motion; and, therefore, the General Assembly 'did, and hereby do, judge it inexpedient to transmit any Overture to the Presbyteries of this Church anent the Union of Offices in the Church.' Which judgment being intimated, Mr Marshall, in his own name, and that of all who should adhere to him, entered his dissent."—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1827.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 17, 1827.—The King's Commission to James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 17, 1827.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 19, 1827.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1827.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The dutiful and loyal Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, embrace the opportunity of this our first meeting, since the lamented death of his Royal Highness the Duke of York and Albany, to approach the throne with the expression of our heartfelt sympathy and condolence on account of that afflicting dispensation of Providence.

We take a deep interest in whatever affects the happiness of a King so endeared to us, and we contemplate the death of your Majesty's illustrious Brother as a great calamity, both to your Majesty's Royal House and to the nation at large.

To affections and manners which gave a charm to the intercourse of social life, there was added, in the Duke of York, the nobler adorning of the most eminent official merit, the merit of an enlightened, and benevolent, and indefatigable zeal, in the discharge of the duties of his high appointment—the merit of having thus improved the condition, and exalted the character of the British army, to a degree of excellence which had never before been realized. If, in the late eventful contest, our countrymen achieved the most splendid victories which our history records,—if, when the mighty strife was over, the men, who had been accustomed to scenes of devastation and blood, returned readily, and at once, to all the quiet and orderly habits of civil life,—if, while thus triumphant in war, they have also shown themselves exemplary in peace,—to the Duke of York's military administration, and to his solicitude for their religious instruction, it is owing, under Providence, that Britain has to boast of an army deserving such a praise.

While, in common with your Majesty, we mourn over the death of a Prince thus privately amiable, and thus publicly useful, we trust that it may be some consolation

to your Majesty to know, that the sorrow with which your Majesty has been visited is participated unaffectedly by the whole empire.

That your Majesty may long reign over a loyal and affectionate people, and may at length exchange an earthly crown for one more glorious in the heavens, is the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

ROBERT HALDANE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1827.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1827.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1827.—Act as to the Course of Study to be pursued by Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for Classing Returns to Overtures, which was produced and read, as follows :

“Returns have been received from four Presbyteries, as to the overture respecting the course of study to be pursued by students of divinity, re-transmitted by last Assembly, viz. from the Presbyteries of Caithness, Kirkeudbright, and Dumfries, approving *simpliciter* of the same ; and from the Presbytery of Kintyre, approving of the general principle and spirit of the overture, but objecting to it, ‘in respect that it does not give Presbyteries any powers in connection with the examinations proposed therein.’

“As it appears from the Report given in by the committee of Assembly last year, that, exclusively of the returns from the Presbytery of Wigton, the import of which was ambiguous, thirty-eight Presbyteries had then approved of this overture, there are now forty-one Presbyteries who have sent up returns in favour of it, constituting a decided majority of Presbyteries approving of its being enacted into a Standing Law of the Church.

“GEORGE COOK.

“DAVID DICKSON.”

Whereas it appears from the above report, that a majority of Presbyteries have now given their consent to the second overture, respecting the course of study to be pursued by students of divinity, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, convert the said overture into a Standing Law of the Church, and enact and ordain, that, in all time coming, it shall be held and acted upon as such by all the Presbyteries of this

Church, with respect to all students of divinity entering upon the said study from and after this date.

It is therefore enacted, that, previously to the enrolment of any student as a student of divinity, he shall be examined by the Presbytery within the bounds of which he resides, upon literature, science, and philosophy, particularly upon Greek and Latin; that when students shall not give regular attendance at the Divinity Hall, excepting for one year of their course, they shall, during the currency of the fourth year of that course, be examined by their respective Presbyteries upon their attainments in Divinity, Church History, Greek, and Hebrew; and that, in both cases, they shall present to the Professors of Divinity under whom their studies are conducted, the certificates of examination granted by Presbyteries.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1827.—Report concerning Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to Class the Returns upon the subject of the Examination of Schools, which was produced by Dr Dickson, the convener. The Assembly approved of said Report, and directed their clerks to have the same inserted in the printed Acts of this Assembly.

REPORT.

Edinburgh, 28th May 1827.

The Committee of the General Assembly for Classing Returns from Presbyteries, in regard to the Examination and State of Schools, beg leave to report :—

1. That regular printed or written schedules of the prescribed form, containing reports as to almost every parish within their respective bounds, have been received from the following Presbyteries, viz. :—

Aberbrothock,	10 Dalkeith,	Jedburgh,
Aberdeen,	Dumbarton,	20 Lanark,
Aberlour,	Dumfries,	Lauder,
Abernethy,	Dundee,	Lochmaben,
5 Alford,	Dunfermline,	Penpont,
Annan,	15 Fordyce,	Selkirk,
Ayr,	Forfar,	25 St Andrews,
Brechin,	Garioch,	Stranraer.
Cupar,	Haddington,	

2. That reports, either less regular or less complete than the above, have been returned by the following Presbyteries, viz. :—

Biggar,	Kirkcaldy,	Peebles,
Chirnside,	Lewis,	Perth,
Edinburgh,	Linlithgow,	Strathbogie,
Irvine,	Meikle,	Turriff.
5 Kincardine-O'Neil,	10 Paisley,	

3. That no returns whatever have been made by the other thirty-eight Presbyteries, so that there is this year a still greater deficiency in the number of returns than was reported to last Assembly.

4. That, on comparing the returns in 1825 and 1826 with those sent up to the present Assembly, it appears that these returns have, during that period, been made almost entirely by the very same Presbyteries; a circumstance which will deserve

the special attention of the committees of future Assemblies, as it may otherwise be supposed, in the course of two or three years, that returns have been received from every Presbytery in the Church, while the fact may really be, that not many more than a half of the Presbyteries have actually made such returns.

5. That the practice of making merely general reports on the back of commissions, or of sending up separate reports from particular parishes, instead of the prescribed abstract that should be drawn up by Presbyteries, still prevails, and ought to be distinctly discountenanced, as rendering the reports necessarily most imperfect, and making it almost impossible for any committee of Assembly sufficiently to examine them.

6. That, notwithstanding the statements in the two former reports of the committee, there is still nothing said in the returns from the Presbytery of Lewis, as to the actual erection of a parochial school-house in the parish of Lochs.

7. That the returns of this year continue to furnish the most satisfactory evidence of the great advantages resulting from the stated presbyterial visitation of schools, and should be felt by the Assembly as a powerful inducement to the renewed enforcement of their regulations in so important a subject.

8. That it is of the utmost consequence that the third recommendation and injunction of the Assembly, 1820, anent the Examination of Schools, be more strictly observed in future, viz. "That every Presbytery take care to have their returns made up and transmitted to the Agent for the Church, on or before the first week of the sitting of the General Assembly, to whom they will be answerable."

All which is, in name and by appointment of the committee, respectfully submitted to the Assembly,

DAVID DICKSON, *Convener*.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1827.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1828.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly,

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

Note.—Overtures respecting the Union of Offices in the Church were again laid on the Assembly's table:—"After reasoning, it was moved and seconded, 'That the General Assembly, considering that there is at the present time a Royal Commission holding sittings in this country, for remedy of all evils or inconveniences alleged to exist in the Universities of Scotland, deem it inexpedient to enter upon the consideration of the subject of the Overtures on the table of the Assembly; and, therefore, resolve that the consideration of the said Overtures shall be postponed until the meeting of the next General Assembly, and that the said Overtures shall, in the meantime, lie on the table.' Another motion was made and seconded, 'That the General Assembly, considering that there is at the present time a Royal Commission holding sittings in this country, for remedy of all evils or inconveniences alleged to exist in the Universities of Scotland, deem it inexpedient to enter upon the consideration of the subject of the Overtures on the table of this Assembly;' and the vote being called for, it was agreed the state of the vote should be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Second Motion; and, therefore, the Assembly, considering that there is at the present time a Royal Commission holding sittings in this country, for remedy of all evils or inconveniences alleged to exist in the Universities of Scotland, deem it inexpedient to enter upon the consideration of the said Overtures."—*Ed. 1843.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1828.

I.

*Sess. 1, May 22, 1828.—The King's Commission to James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
produced, and ordered to be recorded.*

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

*Sess. 1, May 22, 1828.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly,
presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.*

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

*Sess. 3, May 24, 1828.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious
Letter.*

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

*Sess. 9, May 31, 1828.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and
Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.*

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

*Sess. 9, May 31, 1828.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the
Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Ma-
jesty's Royal Bounty to that end.*

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

*Sess. 10, May 31, 1828.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing
beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.*

(See Act 15th, 1835.)

VII.

*Sess. ult., June 2, 1828.—Report of the Committee of Assembly on the Returns of Pres-
byteries as to Schools.*

The General Assembly, having heard this report, approve thereof, direct the clerks

to insert the same in the printed Acts ; and instruct Presbyteries to send returns, taking for their model the schedules formerly printed and circulated.

1. That returns appear from forty Presbyteries, a list of which will be found appended. That thirty-eight Presbyteries having omitted to send up returns, and this neglect having become habitual with many of them, it is for the Assembly to consider in what manner the repeated and salutary orders of the Supreme Ecclesiastical Court ought to be enforced. Your committee think it would be necessary to send copies of the printed form to each of these Presbyteries, which, if accompanied by a renewed order specially sent to them, it is humbly thought would have the effect.

2. As no less than seventeen out of the forty returns of this year are on common paper, and this mode of preparing them causes much trouble to the clerks, and is also less uniform and satisfactory, your committee hope that the Assembly will be pleased to authorise printed forms to be issued to the members of Presbyteries who may call for them, or to the clerks who may send an application for this purpose ; and that in the event of any more being printed, a column be left, as formerly ordered, for the population, to be compared with the numbers of scholars. One printed report to be made up for each Presbytery, duly attested.

3. That regular and most interesting reports have come up from Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Brechin, Cupar, Mull, St Andrews, and various other Presbyteries, and that, in general, these embrace not only the parish, but also the other schools in their bounds, which are supported by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the Gaelic School Society, the Committee of the General Assembly, the Inverness Education Society and its auxiliaries, the Society in Glasgow, the funds mortified for that purpose, and the sums contributed by the benevolence and patriotism of individuals.

4. That, from the aspect of these returns, compared with the extent and population of nearly as many Presbyteries, who have omitted to send in reports, it appears to your committee that there are at present under the superintendence of the General Assembly, and the inspection of Presbyteries in their committees, above 5000 schools in all, containing above 250,000 scholars ; and that hardly any thing can be more salutary than the moral and religious influence of an engine so extensive, and so well directed, which, with an energy even more increased of late than the augmenting population of Scotland, has been directed to the promoting of literature and science, with sound principles and habits, and all the best interests of the kingdom.

5. That your committee think it their duty to observe, that, in the remote and desolate parish of Lochs, in the Presbytery of Lewis, the report bears, that still there is no parish school erected, a circumstance which must now also deprive the people of any school from the Assembly's committee. That, in many Presbyteries, a number of the teachers have not yet qualified to Government, by taking the Oath of Allegiance before any magistrate. That the teachers ought also to qualify, by subscribing the Confession of Faith before the Presbytery, and signing the Formula, 1694. That a number of the parish teachers have been allowed only the minimum salary, and that others possess too little, and far too mean accommodation in school-houses and dwelling-houses ; and that now when, by the Act, 1803, an augmentation falls to be made to the salaries of parish teachers, if landholders are pleased to give liberal attention to these objects, it may raise the character of that useful order of men, instead of depressing it, and withering the salutary influence of their labours, by leaving them so meanly endowed and accommodated as many now are.

6. Your committee are bound in duty to notice the fact, that no scholars attend the parish school of Balmerino, which, to a parish containing 965 souls, must be very highly injurious ; and, in thus noticing it, your committee hope that their doing so may tend, in some degree, to correct an evil, for which, in the report, no reason is assigned.

7. That though the Episcopal teachers in Montrose made opposition to the Presbytery's committees of examination some years ago, for which an apology was made at the bar of this House, the schools there are now regularly visited and reported from year to year ; and even the schools at New Lanark are not only open for exa-

mination, but the Scriptures are daily read in them, through the Christian prudence and attention of the minister of Lanark. That the report from Aberdeen bears, that religious instruction is given in the ancient and flourishing High School of the New City, where 204 scholars are learning Latin, and 80 are learning Greek, and that your countenance and influence, it is humbly hoped, may induce other classical schools to follow so good an example. That, in general, the number of scholars are increasing in the numerous seminaries; an instance being reported from the academy at Ayr, as containing 578 scholars, and being also an excellent and thriving institution.

WM. SINGER, *Convener*.

List of Presbyteries who have sent up Returns of Examination of the Schools in 1827:—

Aberdeen,	15 Dundee,	Lauder,
Aberlour,	Dunfermline,	30 Linlithgow,
Abernethy,	Fordoun,	Lochmaben,
Alford,	Fordyce,	Mull,
5 Annan,	Forfar,	Paisley,
Arbroath,	20 Garioch,	Peebles,
Ayr,	Haddington,	35 Penpont,
Biggar,	Jedburgh,	St Andrews,
Brechin,	Irvine,	St Andrews,
10 Chirnside,	Kirkcaldy,	Selkirk,
Cupar,	25 Kirkcudbright,	Stranraer,
Dalkeith,	Kincardine-O'Neil,	40 Strathbogie,
Dumbarton,	Lanark,	And in Dunblane, for
Dunbar,	Lewis,	parish of Kilmadock.

WM. SINGER, *Convener*.

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1828.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be held within the New Church Aisle of Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1829.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1829.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1829.—The King's Commission to James Ochoncar Lord Forbes produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1829.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1829.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1829.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1829.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1829.—Report and Injunction concerning Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to Class the Returns upon the subject of the Examinations of Schools, which was produced and read. The Assembly approved of the Report, and directed the Clerk to have it inserted in the Printed Acts, and also to write letters to all the Clerks of Presbyteries, requiring them peremptorily to send up by their Commissioners to the next General Assembly, returns of the Examination of the Schools in their several bounds, in the form of the printed Schedules, containing the names not only of all the Schools examined, but of every School which has not been examined in the course of the year, with the cause of such omission; which Schedules must be delivered to the Clerks not later than the first week of the sitting of the General Assembly.

Your committee beg leave first to advert to two particulars in last year's Report,—the schools of Montrose, and the school of Balmerino, in the Presbytery of Cupar.

In last year's Report it was stated, by mistake, that the Episcopal teachers in Montrose had, some years ago, refused to allow the Presbytery of Brechin to examine their schools; whereas it was from the magistrates of that place that the opposition arose. While your committee deem it right, in consequence of the information they have received, to bear their testimony to the submission, the diligence, and success of those teachers, they are, at the same time, bound to state, on authentic intelligence, that the magistrates of that burgh are now in the regular practice of cordially giving their countenance to the Presbytery in the examination of the different schools of that place.

By a letter just received from the clerk of the Presbytery of Cupar, it appears

that an arrangement has happily been at length completed, by which a schoolmaster is about to be appointed at Balmerino, and the youth of that parish, it is to be hoped, in future to enjoy the benefit arising from an active teacher.

With regard to this year, returns have been received from the following Presbyteries, viz. :—

Aberdeen,	Dunfermline,	Lanark,
Aberlour,	15 Edinburgh,	Lauder,
Abernethy,	Elgin,	Lewis,
Alford,	Ellon,	30 Linlithgow,
5 Annan,	Fordyce,	Lochmaben,
Arbroath,	Garioch,	Meigle,
Ayr,	20 Haddington,	Mull,
Brechin,	Jedburgh,	Peebles,
Cupar,	Irvine,	35 Penpont,
10 Dalkeith,	Kirkcaldy,	St Andrews,
Dunbar,	Kirkcudbright,	Strathbogie,
Dumbarton,	25 Kincardine-O'Neil,	Tongue.
Dundee,	Kintyre,	

It thus appears, that not so many returns have this year been laid before the Assembly as there were twelve months ago.

By comparing these returns with those of last and some former years, it will be observed, that while about the half of the Presbyteries of the Church have been in the practice of complying with the injunction of the Assembly, by the other half the order so frequently issued by the Assembly is totally disregarded.

Many of the returns received are both drawn up with great accuracy, and give evidence of strict attention paid by the different members of these Presbyteries to the moral and religious instruction of the youth under their care. Still, in some of the returns, it appears that several members of Presbyteries either neglect to examine the schools in their parishes, or, if that be done, to make a return to that effect.

One instance has been stated of a teacher, more anxious to disseminate opinions hostile to the Established Church, than to instruct the youth under his care; and in another Presbytery, two teachers, it appears, who have not qualified, would not say, when asked, whether they were or not willing to do so. But as there is no doubt that what is here pointed out will speedily be corrected, it is not deemed to be necessary to direct the attention of the Assembly more particularly to this subject.

Your committee are of opinion, that attention to the instruction of the rising generation is one of the first objects to which the attention of the Church can be turned; and though it cannot be doubted that the Presbyteries who persist in declining to make returns are nevertheless mindful of this most essential part of their duty, yet, as no evidence to this effect is laid before the Assembly, your committee would humbly suggest that some step ought to be taken by which this might be ascertained. Perhaps this might be, to direct the Clerk of Assembly to address, without delay, a letter to the Clerk of each Presbytery, ordering him peremptorily to send up a return to next Assembly, on one of the printed schedules, of the schools examined within the respective Presbyteries during the twelve months, and to state where any school has not been examined, the name of that school, and the cause of the delay.

Were such an order issued, and compliance yielded to it, a pleasing view would then be exhibited of the diligence and zeal with which ministers in Scotland attend to the useful, but especially to the pious, interests of the rising generation, spread over the various parts of the Church.

GEO. WHITSON, *Convener.*

VII.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1829.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1829.—Overtures and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew.

(These Overtures having been amended in 1832, were ultimately passed in 1833.
See 9th Act of that year.—*Ed. 1843.*)

IX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1829.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be held at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th day of May 1830.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1830.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1830.—The King's Commission to James Ochoncar Lord Forbes produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1830.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

GEORGE, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1830.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1830.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1830.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty to that end.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 29, 1830.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

VII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1830.—Overtures and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew.

(Re-transmitted.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1830.—Act appointing the Presbyteries of Lerwick and Burravoe, and Synod of Shetland.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on the Petition from the Presbytery of Shetland, which was given in by Dr Baird, the Convener, and read, the tenor whereof follows:—

The Committee respectfully reports,

1. That on mature consideration of the details stated in the petition of the Presbytery of Shetland, they are of opinion that it would be expedient to divide the present Presbytery, not into three Presbyteries as petitioned for, but into two; the one of these two to be called the Lerwick Presbytery, to hold its ordinary meetings at Lerwick; and the other to be called the Burravoe Presbytery, to hold its ordinary meetings at Burravoe, in the parish of Yell.

2. That the committee have come to the above opinion from the authentic information obtained by them, that the purposed arrangement would be acceptable to all the members of the present Presbytery; that it is required by the physical localities of the Shetland Isles, and that it will tend to relieve the ministers, agents, and parties having business in connection with that court, from many of the perils and difficulties to which they would otherwise be exposed in travelling over hills and mosses, without roads, or along rocky shores, through rapid and boisterous tides, to any one fixed place of meeting.

3. That the committee recommend, if the subdivision humbly suggested above is approved and authorised by the Assembly, that the Presbytery of Lerwick shall con-

sist of the following parishes, viz.:—Dunrossness, Walls, Sandsting, Tingwall, Lerwick, and Bressay; and that the Presbytery of Burravoe shall consist of the following parishes, viz.:—Nesting, Delting, Northmavine, Yell, Fetlar, and Unst; thus comprising six parishes in each of the two Presbyteries.

4. That the committee are of opinion, that the said two Presbyteries should be appointed to form a Synod with full synodical powers; that Lerwick should be appointed as the fixed place of the meetings of the Synod of Shetland, where its records should be kept, and where the records of the present Presbytery should be deposited and kept *in retentis*.

5. That the Presbytery of Lerwick should be appointed to meet at Lerwick on the second Wednesday of July next, and proceed to business; that the Presbytery of Burravoe should be appointed to meet at Burravoe on the third Wednesday of July next, and proceed to business; and that the Synod of Shetland should be appointed to meet at Lerwick on the last Wednesday of April 1831, and proceed to business.

(Signed)

GEO. H. BAIRD, *Convener*.

The General Assembly approve of the report, and enact in terms thereof, and order the same to be inserted in the printed Acts of the General Assembly.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1830.—Report concerning Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for classing Returns of the Examination of Schools, which was given in by Dr Stirling, the Convener, and read. The General Assembly approve of the Report, and appoint it to be inserted among the printed Acts.

The committee of the General Assembly for classing Returns from Presbyteries, respecting the Examination of Schools, reports as follows:—

1st, That regular returns of all the schools within their bounds have been transmitted to your committee by the following Presbyteries, viz.:—

Aberbrothock,	15 Dunoon,	Lauder,
Aberlour,	Elgin,	30 Lewis,
Abernethy,	Ellon,	Linlithgow,
Alford,	Fordoun,	Lochmaben,
5 St Andrews,	Fordyce,	Lorn,
Biggar,	20 Garioch,	Meikle,
Brechin,	Haddington,	35 Mull,
Chirnside,	Inverness,	Nairn,
Cupar,	Jedburgh,	Paisley,
10 Dalkeith,	Kincardine-O'Neil,	Penpont,
Dumbarton,	25 Kintyre,	Selkirk,
Dunfermline,	Kirkcaldy,	40 Stranraer,
Dundee,	Kirkcudbright,	Strathbogie,
Dunse,	Langholm,	42 Skye.

2d, That returns, more or less regular and complete, have been sent from the following Presbyteries, viz.:—

Aberdeen,	Dunblane,	Hamilton,
Annan,	Dumfries,	Kirkwall,
Auchterarder,	Edinburgh,	Peebles,
Ayr,	Forfar,	Perth,
5 Dornoch,	10 Irvine,	15 Turriff.

3d, That a letter has been received from the Moderator of the Presbytery of North Isles, praying to be excused for not sending up any return to this Assembly, as, be-

fore he and his co-presbyters received the Assembly's order of 30th May 1829, the unfavourable season had set in, and they were unable, in their insular situations, to accomplish presbyterially the examination of their schools, but promising implicit obedience to the Assembly's injunctions on this subject in all time coming.

4th, That from the remaining nineteen Presbyteries of the Church, no returns of any kind have been received.

5th, That in the Abbey parish of Paisley, and West parish of Greenock, though landward parishes, there are no schoolhouses, and that, notwithstanding the attention of the Assembly has been drawn by your committee on some former years to the situation of the parish of Lochs, in the Presbytery of Lewis, yet no steps seem yet to have been taken to get a schoolhouse built in that parish.

6th, That a complaint, which accompanies this report, has been made by the Presbytery of Mull, of the conduct of certain teachers of the Gaelic School Society within their bounds; but your committee are fully persuaded that, when the justice of this complaint is made known to that society, by which the interests of education have been so greatly promoted, immediate steps will be taken for its redress.

7th, That in several returns which have been made, due care has not been taken to have them authenticated by the signatures of the moderator and clerk of Presbytery, or even by the minister of the parish in which the school is situated. Nor do some of the Presbyteries, from which the most complete returns have come, seem to be aware of the obligations under which they lie, to see that the teachers within their bounds take the oaths to government; a striking example of this is afforded in the towns of Paisley and Greenock, for, out of fifty-nine schools in the former of these towns, forty-five of the teachers have not qualified to government; and out of thirty-four schools in the latter, twenty-nine of the teachers are in the same state.

8th, That your committee have great satisfaction in perceiving, that where the duty of Presbyterial examination of schools has regularly taken place, the very best effects have resulted from it,—that the methods of teaching have been improved,—that the zeal and diligence both of the teachers and taught have been powerfully excited. And your committee cannot conclude this report without expressing their earnest desire that the venerable Assembly would continue to enforce upon all the Presbyteries of this Church, and especially upon those from which no returns have come, the faithful performance of a duty so eminently calculated to promote the best interests of the rising generation.

(Signed)

JOHN STIRLING, *Convener*.

X.

*Sess. ult., May 31, 1830.—Overture as to printing Extracts from the Records of the Inferior Church Courts.**

The General Assembly called for the Overture from the Presbytery of Ellon on the printing of Extracts from the Records of the Inferior Church Courts, which was produced and read as follows:—

“Unto the venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, it is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Ellon, that, for enabling the members of Assembly more fully to understand all matters coming before them, it be enacted, that the 16th Act of the General Assembly, 1700, discharging the printing of any part of ecclesiastical processes without allowance, be repealed, and that, in future, all overtures be printed and laid on the Assembly's table, in sufficient numbers, for the use of members, on the first Monday of its sitting, unless in the case of matters coming to the knowledge of the Court during its sitting, and which may require immediate attention; but that, in every such case, the overture to be proposed shall be printed and laid on the Assembly's table at least three days before it shall be discussed; and

* This Overture was next year referred to the Committee on the Form of Process.—*Ed.* 1843.

that it be farther enacted, that in all references, complaints, or appeals, the record of the Inferior Court shall be printed, and a sufficient number of copies for the use of members, in all causes coming before the Court before the Wednesday, be laid on the Assembly's table the first Saturday of its sitting, and of all others on the first Monday of the Assembly."

The General Assembly agree to transmit the overture for the consideration of Presbyteries.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1830.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1831.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1831.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1831.—The King's Commission to Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven produced, and ordered to be recorded.

The General Assembly, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1831.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly, presented to them by his Majesty's Commissioner.

WILLIAM, R.

Right Reverend and Well-beloved, we greet you well.—Highly sensible of the firm adherence which your former meetings have uniformly shown to the succession of the Crown of this realm in our Family, and knowing their attachment to the Protestant faith, and to the general interests of religion and sound morality, we most willingly sanction with our royal authority your present Assembly; and we gladly avail ourselves of this first opportunity of giving you the assurance of our fixed purpose to continue to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland the same countenance and support which it has received from our royal ancestors, and to maintain it in the full possession of all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

We are persuaded that you will manifest, in the whole course of your proceedings, during the present Assembly, an enlightened and well-tempered zeal in the cause of true religion and good morals, and that your conduct will be distinguished by that moderation, candour, and wisdom, which are essentially necessary for giving effect to your counsels.

We commit with confidence to your pastoral care the interests of the Church of Scotland, earnestly hoping that you will be enabled to promote the great object which we have always at heart—the happiness and welfare of our people.

We have thought fit to appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven to be the Representative of our royal person in this Assembly,

being well assured of his zealous attachment to the Church of Scotland, and of his ability and earnest wish to discharge faithfully the high and important duties with which he is entrusted. And we are persuaded that this choice will be acceptable to you.

We earnestly recommend you, Well-beloved, to the care of Divine Providence, and heartily bid you farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 9th day of May 1831, in the first year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

MELBOURNE.

Addressed thus—To the Right Reverend and Well-beloved the Moderator, Ministers, and Elders, of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1831.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, the members of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, have received with sentiments of the profoundest respect and warmest gratitude, the gracious letter with which your Majesty has condescended to honour us on this occasion.

Nothing can yield us greater satisfaction than the assurance so graciously conveyed, that your Majesty—highly sensible of the firm adherence which former Assemblies have uniformly shown to the succession of the Crown of this realm in your Majesty's illustrious Family, and knowing our attachment to the Protestant faith, and to the general interests of religion and sound morality—most willingly sanctions, with your royal authority, our present Assembly. It is also peculiarly gratifying to us, that your Majesty has been pleased to give us the assurance of your fixed purpose to continue to the Church of Scotland the same countenance and support which it has received from your royal ancestors, and to maintain it in the full possession of all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

It will be our most earnest endeavour to manifest, in the whole course of our proceedings during this Assembly, an enlightened and well tempered zeal in the cause of true religion and good morals; and we trust that, by the blessing of God, our conduct will evince that moderation, candour, and wisdom, which are essentially necessary for giving effect to our counsels.

Entrusted as we are with the religious interests of the Church of Scotland, we will anxiously labour, under Providence, to assist in promoting the great objects which we know your Majesty has always at heart—the happiness and welfare of your people.

The appointment of a Commissioner so well recommended as Lord Belhaven, by his loyalty, by his hereditary attachment to the Church of Scotland, and by the interest he has personally taken in the proceedings of former Assemblies, is most acceptable to us; and we are confident that, from his ability and earnest wish to discharge faithfully the high and important duties committed to him, we shall receive the most effectual co-operation and support.

The royal donation of L.2000, for the propagation of Christian knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, we accept with the liveliest gratitude, as a pledge of your Majesty's anxiety to promote the extension of pure religion; and we shall apply it with all fidelity to the pious purpose for which it is bestowed.

That Almighty God may bless your Majesty, your Royal Consort, and all the members of the Royal Family;—that He may ever direct and prosper your Majesty's

government;—and that He may maintain, till the latest ages, the national blessings we now enjoy, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

JAMES WALLACE, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1831.—The General Assembly's Address to the King on his Accession to the Throne of these Realms.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The Loyal and Dutiful Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's faithful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in this General Assembly, cordially approving of the conduct of the Commission of the last General Assembly, in having conveyed to the throne those sentiments of respect and attachment which are so justly due to your Majesty's person and government, and which are universally felt by the members of this National Church, embrace with alacrity the earliest opportunity which our annual meeting affords, of expressing our condolence on the death of our late illustrious King, and our congratulations on your Majesty's auspicious elevation to the sovereignty of the United Kingdom.

The retrospect of the many signal advantages which we enjoyed under the government of your Majesty's royal brother, during a series of the most eventful years in the history of our land, while it excites our gratitude to the Supreme Governor among the nations, cannot fail to revive the sorrowful impressions with which all of us contemplated an event most afflicting to your Majesty and the Royal Family, and deplored as a heavy public calamity throughout the whole extent of the British Empire.

It is with no common emotions of delight that we recognize in your Majesty the son of a venerable Monarch, who, in the course of a reign of almost unprecedented duration, was eminently distinguished by his pure faith and fervent charity—by his vigilance and firmness in the most difficult times—by the mild lustre of his domestic virtues—by his reverence for the laws and constitution of this happy country—and by the bright combination of virtuous qualities which engaged the veneration and love of his subjects;—and we gladly anticipate from your Majesty the same fidelity and zeal in fulfilling the arduous duties of your elevated station—the same resolute adherence to every honourable purpose—the same generous encouragement of every pious and beneficent undertaking—and the same countenance, protection, and favour to the Church of Scotland, for the defence of whose rights and privileges the most solemn pledge was given in the first act of your Majesty's administration.

We beg leave most earnestly to express the high value which we attach to the assurances of your Majesty's determination to preserve inviolate our ecclesiastical establishment, which, under the fostering care of Divine Providence, has had the felicity of enjoying complete security, ever since the period when the British Crown was transferred to your Majesty's Illustrious Family—a family to which the members of this Church have uninterruptedly maintained the most steadfast fidelity. Highly as we estimate the benefits derived from the constitution, under which it is our happiness to live, we feel the sacred obligation of exemplifying and inculcating, along with that fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, the duty of honouring the

King, and submitting to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, "as free, and not using liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God."

That the Lord God Almighty, whose kingdom ruleth over all, may give your Majesty length of days, riches, and honour;—that He may establish your throne in righteousness;—that He may eminently bless our gracious Queen, and all the Royal Family;—that He may impart to you in rich abundance the consolations and hopes of the Gospel;—and that, after a long and prosperous reign, He may receive you to the glories and felicities of the heavenly kingdom, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

JAMES WALLACE, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1831.—The General Assembly's Address to the Queen on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne.

TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

May it please your Majesty,

We, his Majesty's loyal and faithful subjects, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, gladly seize the first occasion which our meeting has afforded us, of congratulating your Majesty on the auspicious accession of our beloved Sovereign, and on the unmingled satisfaction felt by every loyal and patriotic heart, in hailing your Majesty as the partaker of his throne.

While we rejoice in believing that your Majesty, though not insensible of the value of the distinction of sharing the dignity and soothing the cares of a great Monarch, and commanding the deference of an admiring nation, is still more earnest in seeking the honour which cometh from God only, we render thanks to the Supreme Disposer of events, who has been pleased to exalt to a station so conspicuous, a Princess who has already been distinguished as a pattern of personal and conjugal excellence, and who is acknowledged to be most happily qualified to adorn the lofty circle in which she moves, and to diffuse amongst all classes of his Majesty's subjects the influence of a conversation becoming the Gospel.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may ever guide and guard your Majesty;—that He may enrich your soul with the fruits of the Spirit, and make you exceeding glad with his salvation;—and that, when the fashion of the world shall have passed away, your Majesty may receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

JAMES WALLACE, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 9, May 28, 1831.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1831.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1831.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1831.—Overture and Interim Act relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Class of Hebrew.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. 9, May 30, 1831.—Report concerning Schools.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for classing Returns of the Examination of Schools, which was given in by Dr Dickson, the Convener, and read. The General Assembly approve of the Report, and authorise the insertion thereof among the printed Acts.

Your Committee beg leave to report,

I. That regular returns concerning all the public or parochial, and in many instances also the private schools within their bounds, have been received from the following Presbyteries:—

Aberdeen,	Dumbarton,	Lewis,
Aberlour,	Elgin,	Linlithgow,
Abernethy,	Ellon,	Lochmaben,
Abertarff,	Fordoun,	Lorn,
5 Alford,	20 Fordyce,	35 Meikle,
Annan,	Forfar,	Mull,
Arbroath,	Garioch,	Nairn,
Auchterarder,	Haddington,	North Isles,
Ayr,	Jedburgh,	Paisley,
10 Brechin,	25 Kincardine-O'Neil,	40 Peebles,
Chirnside,	Kintyre,	Penpont,
Cupar,	Kirkcudbright,	Selkirk,
Dalkeith,	Lanark,	Strathbogie,
Dingwall,	Langholm,	44 Turriff.
15 Dunfermline,	30 Loudon,	

II. That returns, of which some are very nearly, but others very far from complete, have been received from the following Presbyteries :—

Biggar,
Dunblane,
Dundee,
Edinburgh,

5 Hamilton,
Kelso,
Irvine,
Lochcarron,

St Andrews,
10 Stranraer,
Uist.

III. That to the equal surprise and regret of your committee, they find, from examining the returns of the former years, that none whatever have been received during the last four years from the following Presbyteries, who, in the opinion of your committee, ought to be peremptorily enjoined to send up returns to next General Assembly :—

Cairston,
Caithness,
Chanonry,
Deer,

5 Dunkeld,
Forres,
Glasgow,

Inverary,
Stirling,
10 Tain.

IV. That, in regard to the returns which your committee have reported as being complete, except as to the examination of private schools, while they are aware that it may be difficult for Presbyteries within whose bounds large towns, such as Kilmarnock, Greenock, Paisley, &c., are situated, to examine all such schools every year, they would suggest the propriety of at least the number of such schools, and of the children attending them, with the kind of instruction received in them, being annually reported; it being most desirable that as full a view as possible of the whole provision for education throughout Scotland be annually laid before the Assembly; and not only should female and charity and Sunday schools be included in such returns, but those of the General Assembly's Committee, the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the Gaelic School Society, and other similar institutions; with the number and state of which, though they may be reported separately to the committees or societies to which they more particularly belong, it is of no small importance that the Church also be made acquainted.

V. That in a considerable number of instances, even the returns that may be regarded as complete in one view, are often extremely defective in another; some of them, though reporting the number and kind of schools, giving no statement whatever as to the *manner* in which they are taught, or whether the Scriptures and Church Catechisms are regularly used in them; others omitting to report whether the teachers have qualified to Government or not, and some stating merely, in the most general terms, that the schools within the bounds have been examined during the year, without saying a single word more respecting them.

These defects should be carefully avoided in future, and with this view, your committee would especially recommend that all the Presbyteries be strictly enjoined to employ the last printed schedules prepared by the Assembly for the very purpose of securing complete as well as regular returns; instead of continuing to use the older schedules, and still less of being satisfied, as some of them most improperly are, with making their returns on the back of the Commissions of their representatives to the Assembly. In every case, too, the returns should be attested by the Moderator or Clerk of the Presbytery.

VI. That school-houses appear to be still wanting in the Abbey Parish of Paisley, and the West Parish of Greenock, though these are landward parishes; and that, there is still no report from the Presbytery of Lewis, as to a school-house being provided for the parish of Lochs.

VII. That your committee regret to find the complaint made to last Assembly by the Presbytery of Mull, respecting the irregular conduct of some of the Gaelic School Society teachers, renewed this year.

VIII. That in all cases, and these are not a few, in which teachers who have not yet qualified to Government, but who have expressed their willingness to do so, your committee would suggest that the Presbyteries be instructed to direct them to apply without delay for that purpose to the proper authorities.

IX. That as the number of returns this year is still by no means so great as, in consequence of the special injunction of Assembly, 1829, on the subject, might reasonably have been expected, and as many of them were so late of being sent up or delivered to the clerks, that the committee have found the due examination of them to be attended with much difficulty and inconvenience, from want of sufficient time, they consider it of essential importance, that that injunction be renewed by the present Assembly, with the view of securing a greater number of returns next year, and of putting it into the power of the committee who may then be appointed to class them, to make out a fuller digested statement of the interesting and useful information, which, there can be little doubt, will be contained in them.

DAVID DICKSON, *Convener.*

XL

Sess. ult., May 30, 1831.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th day of May 1832.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1832.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1832.—The King's Commission to the Right Honourable Lord Belhaven.

GULIELMUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1832.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

WILLIAM, R.

Right Reverend and Well-beloved, we greet you well.—Having received from you on all occasions the most satisfactory proofs of your zeal for the maintenance and advancement of the Protestant religion, and of your loyalty and affection to our person and government, we most cheerfully sanction this your meeting with our full approval.

We feel confident that you will persevere to act upon the same enlightened principles which have hitherto marked your conduct, and that you will endeavour to the utmost to maintain, in all your proceedings, a spirit of moderation, wisdom, and Christian charity. On your part, you may rest assured that the Church of Scotland, as by law established, shall enjoy our undiminished protection for securing to it all its rights and privileges.

We have again thought fit to appoint our right trusty and well-beloved Robert

Montgomery Lord Belhaven to be our Commissioner, and to represent our person in this General Assembly; not doubting that the same qualifications which have recommended him to our choice, will continue to make him acceptable to you in the execution of the important trust committed to his care; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 10th day of May 1832, in the second year of our reign.

By his Majesty's Command,

MELBOURNE.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1832.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

The gracious letter with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour the present General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has been received by us with the most lively sentiments of respect and gratitude.

We offer our most sincere and humble acknowledgments for the approbation which your Majesty has been pleased to express of our zeal for the maintenance and advancement of the Protestant religion, and of our loyalty and affection to your person and government.

Permit us to assure your Majesty that it shall be our great endeavour to act upon the same enlightened principles, which your Majesty condescends to say have hitherto marked our conduct, and to carry on all our proceedings in that spirit of moderation and Christian charity which become us as the servants of the Prince of Peace.

That your Majesty continues to countenance our Assembly with your royal authority is to us a gratifying proof of your paternal goodness; and we repose with confidence on the pledge which your Majesty has given us, that the Church of Scotland, as by law established, shall enjoy your undiminished protection for securing to it all its rights and privileges.

The hereditary attachment of Lord Belhaven to the cause of civil and religious liberty, his undoubted regard for the Church of Scotland, his exemplary conduct in private life, as well as the wisdom and urbanity with which, on a former occasion, he discharged the duties of his high office, render the re-appointment of him to represent your Majesty's royal person an acceptable mark of attention to our National Church.

We rejoice in the renewed expression of your Majesty's zeal for the propagation of the reformed Protestant religion in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and it shall be our care, by a faithful application of the sum your Majesty has graciously bestowed, to fulfil the pious and benevolent intentions of the royal donor.

That Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, may protect your Majesty's person, prolong your days, and prosper your government; that He may bless the Queen and all the Royal Family; that He may continue with us the many national privileges which we enjoy under your Majesty's mild administration, and transmit them as a precious inheritance to our children, and our children's children; and that, after a long reign over a free, a loyal, and a happy people, you may receive from him the recompense of a heavenly crown, are the fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

THOMAS CHALMERS, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1832.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1832.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1832.—Standing Orders to be observed as to Procedure in the General Assembly.

1. That the Committee of Overtures shall be appointed to meet on the evening of the first Thursday of the Assembly, immediately after the rising of the committee for revising commissions, and again on the following morning at ten o'clock.

2. That there shall be two sessions held on the first Friday of the Assembly, the one thereof at twelve o'clock noon, to be spent in prayer, as at present; the other as soon thereafter as the Assembly may choose to appoint, for the purpose of hearing the reports of the committees on bills and overtures, and for the arrangement and dispatch of business generally.

3. That the practice of reading the Answer to the King's Letter, or any address, paragraph by paragraph, in the Assembly itself, be dispensed with in future, reserving the right of members to make such observations as may occur to them thereon as at present.

4. That on the second Thursday of its sitting, the Assembly shall determine when reports of committees, not previously lodged and disposed of by special order, shall be taken up.

5. That rolls of the order of causes, overtures, reports, and other matters of business, shall be printed for the use of the members of Assembly.

6. That, in as far as may be possible, separate days shall be set apart for the hearing of causes, and consideration of overtures.

7. That when a Presbytery acquiesces in the sentence of a Synod, it shall not be entitled to appear as a separate party at the bar of the Assembly; but the members of Presbytery shall nevertheless be heard as members of Synod.

8. That in no case shall there be more than two speeches for each party at the bar, besides the reply, to which the appellant or complainer shall be entitled. And when there are more than two parties, there shall only be one speaker, and one speech for each, besides the reply. It being understood that where there is more than one complainer, each shall be considered as a different party only in case of its appearing to the Assembly that the complaints rest upon distinctly separate grounds.

VII.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1832.—Overture on the Form of Process.

(See Act 11th, 1832.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1832.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

IX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1832.—Overtures and Interim Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew.

(Re-transmitted.)

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1832.—Report of the Committee appointed by the General Assembly for Classing Returns as to Schools.

The Committee beg leave to report to the venerable Assembly :—

1. That the following Presbyteries have made returns, including every parish within their respective bounds, and specifying, with more or less minuteness, the state of the parochial schools, and in the greater number of instances the state of private schools also, viz. :—

Aberbrothock,
Aberdeen,
Aberlour,
Alford,
Annan,
Breachin,
Chirnside,
Cupar,
Dalkeith,
Dumbarton,
Dundee,

Dunse,
Ellon,
Fordoun,
Fordyce,
Forfar,
Garioch,
Inverness,
Kincardine-O'Neil,
Kelso,
Lanark,

Lauder,
Lewis,
Linlithgow,
Lochmaben,
Meigle,
Mull,
Penpont,
Selkirk,
Strathbogie,
Tongue.

2. That the following Presbyteries have made returns, which include nearly all the parishes within their respective bounds, viz. :—

Abernethy,
Auchterarder,
Ayr,
Biggar,
Deer,
Dunbar,
Dunfermline,

Dumfries,
Elgin,
Haddington,
Jedburgh,
Kirkcudbright,
Kirkcaldy,
Lerwick,

Lochcarron,
Lorn,
North Isles,
Peebles,
Perth,
St Andrews,
Stranraer.

3. That only a few parishes are noticed in the returns from the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Irvine, and but one in that from the Presbytery of Hamilton; while the report sent by the Presbytery of Turriff is in the form of a general certificate written on the back of the commission paper; and the report from Paisley is also very brief.

4. That the following Presbyteries have made no returns, viz. :—

Abertarf,
Burravoe,
Chanonry,
Caithness,

Cairston,
Dingwall,
Dornoch,
Dunblane,

Dunkeld,
Dunoon,
Forres,
Glasgow,

Inverary,
Kintyre,
Kirkwall,
Langholm,

Nairn,
Skye,
Stirling,

Tain,
Uist,
Wigton.

5. That several of the returns, such as those from the Presbytery of Aberdeen, including very minute details of the state of education in the West Parish of Aberdeen, and from the Presbyteries of St Andrews, Cupar, Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Dumfries, Ayr, Linlithgow, and some others, appear to be made with most commendable attention.

6. That the Presbyteries of Mull and Lewis complain again of the irregular conduct of certain teachers within their bounds, who have been publicly preaching on the Lord's Day, and at other times. But this irregularity, in so far as the Presbytery of Mull is concerned, being now under the consideration of a committee of the General Assembly, is in the way of being prevented in future.

7. That two of the school-houses in Glenorchy and Inishail, in the Presbytery of Lorn, are represented as being very much out of repair, and even dangerous to the health of the scholars, and that the schoolmasters of Kilchrennan and Dalavich, in the same Presbytery, have no dwelling-house assigned to them.

8. That all the Presbyteries of the Church ought to have a supply of printed schedules on which to make their returns. Owing to the want of these, it is apprehended, the reports are, in several instances, not regular as to form, and defective.

9. That it is with great pleasure the committee observe, that the plan of instruction which is so successfully followed in the Sessional School of Edinburgh is adopted, and also that infant schools are opened in several parishes.

10. That while the committee entertain no doubt that, in teaching the principles of religion, the Church Catechism, along with the Bible, is universally employed in the parochial schools, they would like to see the daily use of it recognised by a formal statement in all, as it is in many, of the returns.

11. That in the following parishes, viz. the West Parish of Greenock, the Abbey of Paisley, and Lady Parish, in the Presbytery of North Isles, it appears that there is no parochial school.

WILLIAM MUIR, *Convener.*

XI.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1832.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th day of May 1833.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1833.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1833.—The King's Commission to the Right Honourable Lord Belhaven.

GULIELMUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1833.—His Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

WILLIAM, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 17, 1833.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 20, 1833.—The General Assembly's Loyal and Dutiful Address to the King.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to avail ourselves of our annual meeting in General Assembly, to approach the throne with the assurance of our most cordial and affectionate attachment to your Majesty's person and family; and to express to your Majesty our most sincere and heartfelt congratulations on your providential escape from the daring and treasonable attack which was made upon your Majesty's sacred person since the last Assembly of this National Church. We have felt, in common with all other classes of your Majesty's faithful subjects, the utmost abhorrence of that most audacious act; and we now embrace the earliest opportunity that the constitution of this Assembly has afforded, of recording our unanimous sentiments, along with those of the nation at large.

That Almighty God may long preserve your Majesty to reign over a loyal, happy, and religious people, and that the royal sceptre may descend in your Illustrious House, with undiminished splendour, to the latest posterity, are,

May it please your Majesty, the united prayers of the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

JOHN STIRLING, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 9, May 24, 1833.—Declaratory Enactment and Recommendation as to Colonial Churches.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, enact and declare, That it is proper and expedient for ordained ministers of the Church of Scotland connected with fixed congregations in any of the British Colonies, to form themselves, where circumstances permit, into Presbyteries and Synods, adhering to the Standards of this Church, and maintaining her form of worship and government.

That no minister should be received as a member of any such Presbytery or Synod, when first formed, who has not been ordained by a Presbytery of this Church; that no minister of this Church should be afterwards received as a member who does not come specially recommended from the Presbytery by which he was ordained, or

in which he has last resided ; and that no probationer of this Church should receive ordination from any such Presbytery, except on his producing extract of licence, with a testimonial of his good character, from the Presbytery or Presbyteries within whose bounds he has resided, down to the time of his leaving Scotland.

That it is not expedient for such Presbyteries, in the present state of education in the Colonies, to exercise the power of licensing Probationers ; but that licentiates of the Church of Scotland, who shall be ordained by any such Presbytery to particular charges in the manner above described, shall remain in full communion with the Church of Scotland, and retain all the rights and privileges which belong to licentiates or ministers of this Church ; and that members of congregations, under the charge of ministers so ordained, shall, on coming to Scotland, be admitted to Church privileges, on the production of satisfactory certificates of their religious and moral character, from the minister and session of the congregation to which they have severally belonged.

And the Assembly earnestly recommend to all ministers and probationers of this Church, who remove to those Colonies in which such Presbyteries are constituted, to put themselves under the inspection of the Presbytery of the bounds within which they may reside ; and, in the event of their returning to this country, to produce testimonials from such Presbytery or Presbyteries of their character and conduct during their absence.

The General Assembly further named a standing committee to correspond with such Churches in the Colonies, for the purpose of giving advice on any question with regard to which they may choose to consult the Church of Scotland, and affording them such aid as it may be in the power of the committee to give in all matters affecting their rights and interests.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 25, 1833.—Declaratory Enactment as to Parliamentary Churches.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, enact and declare, That the whole districts in Scotland, now or to be hereafter provided with places of worship and ministers, in terms of the Acts 4th Geo. IV. c. 79, and 5th Geo. IV. c. 90, shall be, and are hereby, from and after this date, erected into separate parishes *quoad sacra*, and to that effect are hereby declared to be disjoined and separated from the parishes of which they at present constitute a part. And the General Assembly further enact and declare, that all ministers, already inducted or settled as ministers within the said districts, or who shall hereafter be inducted and settled in the same, shall be and are hereby authorised to exercise and enjoy, within their respective districts, the whole powers and privileges now competent to parish ministers of this Church, and that as fully and freely in every respect, and without molestation or interference, as if their respective districts had been ordinary parishes, and they had been regularly inducted as ministers thereof. Moreover, the General Assembly hereby declares, that the said ministers are and shall be constituent members of all Presbyteries, Synods, Church Courts, and Judicatories whatsoever, and shall enjoy every privilege, as fully and freely, and with equal powers, as parish ministers of this Church ; hereby enjoining and requiring all Presbyteries, Synods, Church Courts, and Judicatories, within whose bounds the said churches are or shall be situated, to receive and enrol the said ministers as members thereof, and put them, in all respects, on a footing of Presbyterian equality with the parish ministers of this Church, giving, granting, and committing to the said ministers the like powers and authority, and privileges, now pertaining by law to parochial ministers of this Church, within their respective bounds.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 25, 1833.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 25, 1833.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1833.—Acts relative to the Attendance of Students of Divinity on the Classes of Church History and Hebrew.

The General Assembly, with consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, hereby enact and ordain,

I. That every student of divinity shall, on application to be taken on trials before any Presbytery, produce a certificate or certificates of having regularly attended the class of Church History, during two of the sessions which he claims to be considered as sessions of regular attendance at the Divinity Hall, if such a class exist in the University or Universities at which he has prosecuted his theological studies.

II. That every student of divinity shall henceforth attend the Hebrew class, in one or other of the Universities during two of the sessions which he claims to be considered as sessions of regular attendance at the Divinity Hall; and that the certificate or certificates of such attendance shall in every case be required by Presbyteries before receiving students of divinity on trials: it being understood, that a senior and junior class are taught by every Professor of Hebrew at separate hours.

X.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1833.—Overture on the Form of Process.

(Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1833.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

(Re-transmitted.)

XII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1833.—Report of the Committee appointed by the General Assembly for Classing Returns relative to Schools.

The Committee appointed to examine the Returns as to the Examination of Schools beg leave to report,

I. That returns have been received from thirty-two Presbyteries, bearing that the schools in all the parishes within their bounds have been examined during the past years, viz. :—

Aberlour,
Alford,
Annan,
Arbroath,
Auchterarder,
Biggar,

Brechin,
Burravoe,
Cupar,
Dalkeith,
Deer,
Dundee,

Ellon,
Fordoun,
Fordyce,
Forfar,
Garioch,
Inverness,

Kincardine-O'Neil,
Kintyre,
Kirkcudbright,
Lanark,
Langholm,

Lewis,
Meikle,
Mull,
North Isles,
Penpont,

Selkirk,
St Andrews,
Tongue,
Turriff.

II. That returns have been received from twenty-five Presbyteries, bearing that the schools, in a greater or less proportion, of the parishes in their bounds have been examined, viz. :—

Aberdeen,
Ayr,
Chirnside,
Dornoch,
Dumfries,
Dumbarton,
Dunbar,
Dunblane,
Dunfermline,

Dunse,
Edinburgh,
Elgin,
Haddington,
Hamilton,
Irvine,
Kelso,
Kirkcaldy,

Lauder,
Lochcarron,
Lochmaben,
Peebles,
Perth,
Stranraer,
Strathbogie,
Uist.

And that in some of these returns, reasons are assigned for there being no reports as to some of the schools, which appear satisfactory to the committee.

III. That it appears that there are twenty-two Presbyteries who have sent no returns this year, and that of these, Kirkwall and Wigton have sent none for the last five years, and Cairston, Caithness, Chanonry, Dunkeld, Forres, Glasgow, Inverary, Stirling, and Tain, none for the last six. It seems, therefore, extremely desirable that measures should be adopted by the Assembly to obtain compliance with their instructions from all the Presbyteries of the Church, and especially from those which have of late habitually neglected them.

IV. That considerable irregularity still exists in the manner in which these reports are made up, which might in a great measure be obviated by the use of the schedules printed by order of the Assembly. These schedules have not been used in twenty-five of the returns this year transmitted, and of these, returns from Langholm and Turriff are simply marked on the back of the commission to their representatives, and that from Hamilton consists of lengthened separate reports from the various parishes; a mode which, if in any degree generally practised, would vastly increase the labours of the committee appointed to examine the annual returns, and which, besides, does not afford so clear a view of the state of education in the district. It may be added, that in no fewer than fourteen of the returns, either date or signature, or both, are wanting.

V. That great care and attention seem to have been bestowed on the preparation of many of these returns, of which those from Brechin, Cupar, Mull, St Andrews, Aberdeen, Ayr, Kirkcaldy, and the Tron Church and St Stephen's parishes in Edinburgh, may be particularly noticed; and that a gratifying indication is abundantly exhibited of the advantages that result from a faithful discharge of the duties of Presbyteries in examining the seminaries of education within their respective bounds. In many of the reports it is stated, that religious instruction is well attended to in the schools, and, particularly, that the Scriptures are daily read, the Church Catechisms regularly taught, and the schools opened with prayer; and while these circumstances are not adverted to in the other reports, the committee have, at the same time, no reason to believe that any Presbytery is unmindful of these most important points, in its inquiry into the manner in which the schools under its superintendence are conducted.

VI. In reference to the complaints which were in former years made by the Presbytery of Mull, regarding the conduct of some of the teachers employed in their bounds, by the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society, the committee are happy to observe, that the proceedings adopted by last Assembly have had the effect of re-

moving, in a great degree, the grounds of complaint on the part of the Presbytery. At the same time, it is stated in the report, that two of the teachers, while they abstain from publicly exhorting as before, "still refuse to attend the stated ministration of ordinances," and that the Society have "intimated, that they have no rule prescribing to their teachers an attendance on ordinances."

VII. That in Irvine, in consequence of the school having been recently attached to a chartered academy, there is now no parochial school, a want which seems likely to be in some degree supplied in Cupar, by the munificent bequest of the late Dr Andrew Bell for the foundation of a school in that place. A copy of that part of Dr Bell's will which contains the bequest has been transmitted, along with the report, from the Presbytery of Cupar. In Largs, Presbytery of Irvine, the parish school has been shut up, without any reason being assigned to the Presbytery, except that the scholars had disappeared.

VIII. That the only other circumstances mentioned in the returns, which it appears to the committee necessary to notice in their report, are, that in Glenshiel, Presbytery of Lochcarron, there is no school-house; that in Cupar Presbytery a teacher in the parish of Kettle declined to submit to the examination of the Presbytery; that in the Presbytery of Irvine, and parish of Kilbirnie, there are two teachers whose characters and conduct are described as in various respects objectionable; that in Nesting, Presbytery of Burra, the station of the parochial school has been most injudiciously altered last year, so as to reduce the scholars from 68 to 19; and that in the Presbytery of North Isles, Lady Parish, and the united parishes of Cross, Burness, and North Ronaldshay, have only one central school supported by the heritors, instead of separate parochial schools, an arrangement manifestly defective, and at variance with the law, while the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, not very consistently with its rules, (but probably from a desire to supply a glaring defect,) has established a school in Lady Parish, and two in North Ronaldshay. In regard to some of these objectionable facts, it may, perhaps, only be necessary for the Assembly to recommend to the different Presbyteries to exercise the prudence and zeal which have formerly, in similar circumstances, happily conduced to the great end of affording moral and religious instruction to the rising generation.

(Signed) JOHN COOK, *Convener.*

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1833.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 22d day of May 1834.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

Note 1.—The General Assembly of 1833 had under their consideration certain Overtures on the system of National Education in Ireland. The following appears in the Abridgment on this subject:—

"The General Assembly called for the Overtures on the system of National Education lately introduced in Ireland. The Overtures from the Synod of Aberdeen, the Presbytery of Haddington, the Synod of Moray, the Presbytery of Dingwall, and the Presbytery of Alford, were then read. The following motion was made and seconded:—That the General Assembly, being convinced that the only sure foundation of sound morality and useful knowledge is to be found in the revealed Word of God, are of opinion that no countenance from the government of this realm ought to be bestowed on any system of National Education, of which instruction in the Holy Scriptures does not form an essential part: That they have observed with much regret and disappointment, that a system of National Education is still maintained in Ireland, in which no adequate provision is made for the daily reading of the entire Word of God, in the authorised version, without note or comment; and that they feel it incumbent upon them, as representing a branch of the Protestant Church, to petition Parliament against any further countenance being given to such a system. Another motion was made and seconded, That as the petitions of the last General Assembly expressed the decided and unanimous opinion of the Church of Scotland, that any scheme for the education of the people of Ireland ought to secure the daily use of the Scriptures in the authorised Protestant version, without note or comment, as part of the regular instruction of the scholars in a daily Bible

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 22, 1834.

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Sess. 1, May 22, 1834.—The King's Commission to the Right Honourable Lord Belhaven.

GULIELMUS, &c.

class, for all Protestant children, and all others desirous to avail themselves of that privilege, in order that they may thus become acquainted with the whole truths and doctrines of our holy religion, the General Assembly, retaining the same opinion, and earnestly and fervently trusting that full effect will be given to it by the Legislature, do not, however, feel themselves called upon at present again to petition Parliament on the subject. It was agreed that the state of the vote should be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried First Motion, by a majority of 162 to 59. The General Assembly accordingly appointed a committee to prepare a petition to both Houses of Parliament, and to report."—*Ed. 1843.*

Note 2.—Overtures on the Settlement of Parishes were also this year discussed.—“The General Assembly called for the Overtures relating to the Settlement of Parishes, including the Overtures on Calls and the Overtures on Patronage. The Overture from the Synod of Moray anent the Settlement of Ministers in Vacant Parishes, and several other Overtures, having been read, the General Assembly proceeded to the consideration of the Overtures on Calls. It was moved and seconded, That the General Assembly, having maturely weighed and considered the various Overtures now before them, do find and declare, that it is, and has been ever since the Reformation, a fixed principle in the law of this Church, that no minister shall be intruded into any pastoral charge contrary to the will of the congregation; and considering that doubts and misapprehensions have existed on this important subject, whereby the just and salutary operation of the said principle has been impeded, and in many cases defeated, the General Assembly further declare it to be their opinion, that the dissent of a majority of the male heads of families resident within the parish, being members of the congregation, and in communion with the Church at least two years previous to the day of moderation, whether such dissent shall be expressed with or without the assignment of reasons, ought to be of conclusive effect in setting aside the presentee, (under the patron's nomination,) save and except where it is clearly established by the patron, presentee, or any of the minority, that the said dissent is founded in corrupt and malicious combination, or not truly founded on any objection personal to the presentee, in regard to his ministerial gifts or qualifications, either in general, or with reference to that particular parish; and in order that this declaration may be carried into full effect, that a committee shall be appointed to prepare the best measure for carrying it into effect accordingly, and to report to the next General Assembly. Another motion was made and seconded, That the General Assembly declare, that in all cases in which a person is presented to a vacant parish, it is, by the law of the Church, sanctioned by the law of the land, competent for the heads of families in full and regular communion with the Church to give in to the Presbytery within the bounds of which the vacant parish lies, objections of whatever nature against the pre-entee, or against the settlement taking place; that the Presbytery shall deliberately consider these objections; that if they find them unfounded, or originating from causeless prejudices, they shall proceed to the settlement; but if they find that they are well founded, that they reject the presentation, the presentee being unqualified to receive it; it being competent to the parties to appeal from the sentence if they see cause. The Assembly further appoint a committee to prepare regulations, in conformity to this deliverance, for the guidance of Presbyteries in the settlement of parishes, and report to the next General Assembly. After long reasoning, the motions were put to the vote, and it was agreed that the state of the vote should be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Second Motion, by a majority of 149 to 137. Therefore, the General Assembly declare and find in terms of the Second Motion. From this judgment Mr Samuel Martin dissented in his own name, and in name of all who should adhere to him.”—*Ed. 1843.*

Note 3.—A discussion also took place on Patronage. The following is the notice of it:—

“The General Assembly called for the Overtures on Patronage, which were read, and several members heard on the subject. It was moved and seconded, That the General Assembly do now empower and direct the Commission to make due application to the King and Parliament for redress of the grievance of Patronage, in case a favourable opportunity for so doing shall occur during the subsistence of the present Commission. Another motion was made and seconded, That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that after the proceedings which have already taken place in regard to the question of Calls, it is unnecessary and inexpedient to adopt at present any further proceeding in reference to Patronage. And the vote being called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote shall be, First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Second Motion, by a majority of 134 to 33. And, therefore, the General Assembly find in terms of the Second Motion. From this judgment the following members entered their dissent:—Mr Alexander Clark, James Bridges, Esq., Dr Welsh, Mr Macnaughton, W. Howison Crawford, Esq., Mr W. Ross Taylor, W. F. Hunter Lawrie, Esq., and A. Johnston, Esq.”—*Ed. 1843.*

II.

Sess. 1, May 22, 1834.—His Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,

WILLIAM, R., &c,

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1834.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 5, May 26, 1834.—The General Assembly's Address of Thanks to the King.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's faithful and dutiful subjects, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to approach your Majesty with the renewed assurance of our steady and unaltered attachment to your person and government.

While, as Scotsmen, we feel gratified in viewing the ancient abode of your Majesty's royal predecessors adorned and enlivened by the temporary residence of your representative, we desire, as members of the Church of Scotland, to recognise in this arrangement a new proof of your Majesty's considerate regard for the honour of our National Establishment, and an additional pledge of your adherence to that sacred compact which unites the Church to the State.

We entreat permission to acknowledge most gratefully the readiness with which your Majesty's Commissioner, acting, as we are well assured, by your Royal instructions, has complied with the wishes of the Church and people of Scotland, in removing all pretence for abusing his Grace's presence amongst us, as an excuse for the neglect or violation of the duties of the Sabbath; and we regard this compliance as affording a confirmation of our confidence in your Majesty's solicitude for the best interests of our ecclesiastical institutions, and a fresh testimony of the judgment displayed in selecting a nobleman who is a member and elder of our National Church, and who is so well entitled to our esteem and gratitude, to represent your person in this Assembly.

That the Providence of Almighty God may grant your Majesty long to reign in the hearts of a free, loyal, and affectionate people, is the prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the Church of Scotland met in General Assembly.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

PATRICK M'FARLAN, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.—The General Assembly's Address to the King on the Abolition of Slavery.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of

the Church of Scotland, beg leave to embrace the opportunity which our meeting in the General Assembly affords us of approaching your Majesty's throne, for the purpose of expressing the lively satisfaction with which we have observed that an act has recently been passed by the legislature, in consequence of which the system of slavery, so long contemplated by ourselves and our brethren with feelings of regret and anxiety, will, before the termination of the present year, stand abolished for ever throughout the British dominions. We humbly beg to congratulate your Majesty on this event, as one which cannot fail to bestow eminent distinction on your Majesty's reign, and to afford so great facilities for the spread of the Gospel throughout your Majesty's colonies. That, by the blessing of God resting on your Majesty's efforts for giving effect to the act referred to, these efforts may be crowned with an abundant measure of success, is the fervent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders met in the General Assembly of the National Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

PATRICK M'FARLAN, *Moderator.*

VI.

Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr Patrick M'Farlan, minister of the West Church of Greenock, their Moderator; and from the Presbytery of Dunoon, Mr John Macdougall at Lochgoilhead, Mr Joseph Stark at Kilfinnan, ministers; Dr Daniel Dewar, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Rothsay, John Ker, Esq., of Raeside. From the Presbytery of Kintyre, Mr Daniel Kelly at Campbeltown, Mr Alexander Cameron at Kilchoman, Mr John M'Arthur at Kilcalmonell, ministers; John Fleuning, Esq., of Moisdale, Captain R. N., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Campbeltown, George Macneal, Esq., of Ugadale. From the Presbytery of Inverary, Mr Colin Smith at Inverary, Mr Peter Mackichan at Lochgilphead, ministers; Duncan Macneill, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Inverary, Robert Mackenzie, Esq. of Sallachry, W.S. From the Presbytery of Lorn, Mr William Fraser at Kilchrenan, Mr Donald Macnaughton at Duror, ministers; George Buchan, Esq., of Kelloe, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Mull, Mr John Macleod at Morven, Mr Angus MacLaine at Ardnamurchan, Mr David Stewart at Kenlochspelve, ministers; Ranald Macdonald, Esq., of Staffa, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunkeld, Mr William Herdman at Rattray, Mr John Stewart at Blair-Athol, Mr Michael Stirling at Cargill, Mr Henry Henderson at Kinclaven, ministers; Archibald Butter of Faskally, Esq., John Muir Mackenzie, younger of Delvine, Esq., ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Perth, Mr John Findlay at Perth, Mr James Esdaile at Perth, Mr John Edward Touch at Kinnoul, Mr David Duncan at Abernethy, ministers; Adam Pringle, Esq., Lord Provost of Perth, James Mellis Nairne, Esq., of Dunsinnan, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Perth, Thomas Robert Sandeman, Esq., wine-merchant in Perth. From the Presbytery of Stirling, Mr John Caw at Bothkennar, Mr Christopher Greig at St Ninian's, Mr John Dempster at Denny, ministers; Dr Muschet of Birkhill, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Stirling, Thomas Balfour, Esq., of Blackburn. From the Presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr John Brown at Glendovan, Mr John Clark at Blackford, Mr Peter Brydie at Fossoway, ministers; John Moubray, Esq., of Cambus, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunblane, Mr William Wylie at Port, Mr Robert C. Graham at Aberfoil, ministers; Henry Paul, Esq., Accountant in Glasgow, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr William Forfar at Saline, Dr George Dalziel Craig Buchanan at Kinross, Mr Andrew Bethune Dun-

can at Culross, ministers; Henry Beveridge of Inzievar, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dunfermline, John Campbell, Esq., of Carbrook, W. S. From the Burgh of Culross, Henry Cockburn, Esq., his Majesty's Solicitor-General for Scotland. From the Burgh of Inverkeithing, James Newton, Esq., W. S. From the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, Mr John MacLachlan at Wemyss, Mr George Brewster at Scoonie, ministers; Charles Maitland Christie, Esq., of Durie, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Kirkcaldy, Mr Alexander Balfour, merchant in Kirkcaldy. From the Burgh of Burntisland, Alexander Hutchison, Esq., writer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Cupar, Mr Joseph Crichton at Ceres, Mr Andrew Melville at Logie, Mr John Macfarlane at Collesie, Mr Adam Cairns at Dunboig, ministers; James Anstruther, Esq., W. S., John Govan, Esq., W. S., ruling elders. From the Burgh of Cupar, Peter Walker, Esq., of Muirhead. From the Presbytery of St Andrews, Dr James Macdonald at Kemback, Dr Thomas Laurie at Newburn, Mr George Wright at Kingsbarns, Mr William Nicolson at Ferry-Port-on-Craig, ministers; John Hope, Esq., Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, Dr George Cook, Professor of Moral Philosophy, St Andrews, ruling elders. From the Burgh of St Andrews, Dr Thomas Gillespie, St Andrews. From the University of St Andrews, Dr Robert Haldane, Principal of St Mary's College. From the Burgh of Pittenweem, Andrew Johnston, Esq., younger of Rennyhill. From the Burgh of Crail, Mr Peter Jarvis, farmer, Wester Newhall. From the Burgh of Anstruther Easter, Sir Ralph Abercromby Anstruther of Balcaskie, Baronet. From the Burgh of Anstruther Wester, Robert Bruce, Esq., of Kennet. From the Presbytery of Meigle, Mr William Ramsay at Alyth, Mr James S. Barty at Ruthven, Mr James Flowerdew at Essay and Nevay, ministers; George Smith, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forfar, Mr George Loudon at Inverarity, Mr William Ogilvie at Cortachy, ministers; Andrew Alexander, Esq., Professor of Greek in the United College of St Andrews, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Forfar, Henry Baxter, Esq., of Idvies, Advocate. From the Presbytery of Dundee, Dr Patrick Macvicar at Dundee, Mr Alexander Davie at Inchtute, Mr James Thomson at Dundee, ministers; Alexander Balfour, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dundee, Alexander Keay, Esq., Session-Clerk of Dundee. From the Presbytery of Aberbrothock, Mr Thomas Guthrie at Arbirlot, Mr James Whitson at Guthrie, ministers; William Andson, Esq., Provost of Arbroath, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Aberbrothock, Sir James Wellwood Moncreiff, Bart., one of the Senators of the College of Justice. From the Presbytery of Brechin, Mr David Harris at Fern, Mr James Brewster at Craig, Mr Thomas Hill at Logiepert, ministers; Henry D. Hill, Esq., W. S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Brechin, George Crawford, Esq., merchant in Montrose. From the Presbytery of Fordoun, Mr Allan Stewart at Kinneff, Mr John Glegg at Bervie. Mr John Cook at Laurencekirk, ministers; George Douglas, Esq., Sheriff-depute of Kincardineshire, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Bervie, Alexander Gibbon, Esq., of Johnstone, Advocate in Aberdeen. From the Presbytery of Aberdeen, Dr Duncan Mearns, Professor of Divinity, King's College, Dr Alexander Black, Professor of Divinity, Marischal College, Mr William Robertson Pirie at Dyce, Mr John Murray, North Parish, ministers; Professor Robert J. Brown, Marischal College, Dr John Abercrombie, Physician in Edinburgh, ruling elders. From the City of Aberdeen, Mr Alexander Harper, one of the present Bailies. From the King's College, Dr Patrick Forbes, minister of Old Machar, and Professor of Humanity and Natural History in King's College. From the Marischal College, John Cruickshank, Esq., Doctor of Laws, and Professor of Mathematics in said College. From the Presbytery of Kincardine-O'Neil, Mr Alexander Macfarlane at Crathie, Mr Robert Milne at Aboyne, Mr Hugh Burgess at Glenmuik, ministers; the Earl of Aboyne, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Alford, Mr James Paul at Tullynessle, Mr James Farquharson at Alford, Mr Robert Meiklejohn at Strathdon, ministers; Colonel Leith Hay, younger of Rannes, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Ellon, Mr Maxwell Gordon at Foveran, Mr James Robertson at Ellon, ministers; Mr Hercules Scott, Professor in King's College, Aberdeen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Garioch, Mr Alexander Cushney at Oyne, Mr James Bisset at Bourtie, Mr Thomas Burnet at Daviot, ministers; Hugh Gordon, Esq., of Manaar, ruling elder. From the Presby-

tery of Deer, Mr Charles Gibbon at Lonmay, Mr William Donald at Peterhead, Mr James Welsh at New Deer, ministers; Alexander Youngson, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Turriff, Mr George Ramsay Davidson at Drumblade, Mr John Manson at Fyvie, ministers; James Grant Duff, Esq., of Eden, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordyce, Mr James Gardner at Rathven, Mr John Innes at Fordyce, ministers; James Macinnes, Esq., S. S. C., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Cullen, James Mackenzie, Esq., W.S. From the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr James Walker at Huntly, Mr William Rennie at Bellie, ministers; Major Alexander Francis Taylor, at Rothiemay-house, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberlour, Mr Lewis William Forbes at Boharm, Mr William Asher at Inveraven, ministers; Richard Wharton Duff of Orton, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abernethy, Mr Charles Macpherson at Tomentoul, Mr J. Robertson Glass at Inch, ministers; the Hon. Colonel Francis William Grant of Grant, M.P., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Elgin, Dr Richard Rose at Drainie, Mr William Gordon at Elgin, ministers; his Grace George Duke of Gordon, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Elgin, Robert Bell, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Forres, Mr George Mackay at Rafford, Mr William Robertson at Kinloss, ministers; William Young, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Forres, George Cumming, Esq., W.S. From the Presbytery of Nairn, Mr Alexander Campbell at Crøy, Mr Alexander Fraser at Cawdor, ministers; William Macintosh, Esq., of Geddes, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Nairn, James Campbell Brodie, Esq., of Lethen. From the Presbytery of Inverness, Dr Alexander Rose at Inverness, Mr Alexander Clark at Inverness, ministers; Alexander David Fraser, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Inverness, John Fraser, Esq., merchant, and senior Bailie of the Burgh. From the Presbytery of Chanonry, Mr Donald Sage at Kirkmichael, Mr Alexander Stewart at Cromarty, ministers; James Wardrope Dickson, Esq., Sheriff-Substitute of Stirlingshire, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Fortrose, the Rev. Archibald Brown of Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Tain, Mr David Carment at Rosskeen, Mr Charles Ross Matheson at Kilmuir Easter, ministers; John Tawse, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Tain, Robert Paul, Esq., Secretary to the Commercial Bank of Scotland. From the Presbytery of Dingwall, Mr John Noble at Fodderty, Mr David Tulloch at Kinloch Leuchart, ministers. From the Presbytery of Abertarff, Mr John Macintyre at Kilmanivaig, Mr Donald Cameron at Laggan, ministers; Robert Johnston, Esq., of Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Skye, Mr Coll Macdonald at Portree, Mr James Souter at Duirinish, ministers; Thomas Elder Baird, Esq., younger of Forneth, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lewis, Mr John Cameron at Stornoway, Mr John Macrae at Cross, ministers; Roderick Mackenzie, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Uist, Mr Alexander Nicolson at Barra, Mr Finlay Macrae at North Uist, ministers; John Bowie, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochcarron, Dr Thomas Ross at Lochbroom, Mr Donald Macrae at Poolewe, ministers; Alexander Dunlop, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dornoch, Mr James Campbell, Kildonan, Mr Donald Gordon at Store, ministers; John Mackay, Esq., of Rockfield, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dornoch, William Gibson-Craig, Esq., of Riccarton. From the Presbytery of Tongue, Mr Angus Macgillivray at Strathie, Mr George Tulloch at Edrachilles, ministers; James Bridges, Esq., Writer to the Signet, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Caithness, Mr Peter Jolly at Cannisby, Mr George Davidson at Latheron, ministers; Robert Johnston, junior, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Wick, Sir James Gibson-Craig of Riccarton, Bart. From the Presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr Andrew Smith at Holm, Mr Peter Petrie at Kirkwall, ministers; Alexander Earle Monteith, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Kirkwall, Graham Speirs, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Cairston, Mr Charles Clouston at Sandwick, Mr Peter Learmonth at Stromness, ministers. William Graham Watt, Esq., of Breckness, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of North Isles, Mr John Armit at Westray, Mr Patrick Fairbairn at North Ronaldsay, ministers; Thomas Balfour, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lerwick, Mr James Gardiner at Quarff, Mr Alexander Stark at Sandwick, ministers; Robert White,

Esq., W. S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Burravoe, Mr John Macgowan at Nesting, Mr William Stevenson at Northmaving, ministers; Isaac Bayley, Esq., S. S. C., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Mr James Grant at South Leith, Dr David Ritchie, Edinburgh, Mr Daniel Wilkie, Edinburgh, Mr John Thomson at Duddingstone, Mr Henry Grey, Edinburgh, Dr John Gilchrist, Canongate, ministers; George Ross, Esq., Advocate, William Paul, Esq., Accountant, Thomas Sawers, Esq., one of the Bailies of Edinburgh, ruling elders. From the City of Edinburgh, the Right Honourable James Spittal, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Dr Alexander Macauley, one of the Councillors thereof. From the University of Edinburgh, Dr George Husband Baird, Principal of said University. From the Church in India, William Nicol, Esq. From the Presbytery of Linlithgow, Dr Andrew Bell at Linlithgow, Mr John Fergusson, junior, at Uphall, Mr John Brown Patterson at Falkirk, Mr Andrew King at Torphichen, ministers; James Maitland Hog, Esq., of Newliston, Robert Bauchope, Esq., ruling elders. From the Burgh of Linlithgow, Alan Alexander Maconochie, Esq., Advocate, younger of Meadowbank. From the Burgh of Queensferry, Donald Horne, Esq., of Langwell, W.S. From the Presbytery of Biggar, Mr John Alpine at Skirling, Mr Hamilton Paul at Broughton, ministers; Norman Lockhart, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Peebles, Mr Alexander Affleck at Lyne, Mr Patrick Robertson at Eddleston, ministers; James Robertson, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Peebles, Adam White, Esq., merchant in Leith. From the Presbytery of Dalkeith, Mr Thomas Wright at Borthwick, Mr Thomas Pitcairn at Cockpen, Mr James Bannerman at Ormiston, ministers; Robert Dundas of Arniston, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Haddington, Mr John Abernethy at Bolton, Mr James Macfarlane at Humble, Mr Robert Balfour Graham at North Berwick, ministers; the Most Noble Marquis of Tweeddale, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Haddington, Mr Thomas Dods, merchant, Haddington. From the Burgh of North Berwick, Mr James Porteous of Gifford. From the Presbytery of Dunbar, Mr John Thomson at Prestonkirk, Mr Andrew Baird at Cockburnspath, ministers; William Horne, Esq., Advocate, Sheriff-depute of Haddingtonshire, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dunbar, Simon Sawers, Esq., Provost of the said burgh. From the Presbytery of Dunse, Mr George Maclean at Fogo, Mr Walter Home at Polwarth, ministers; Carlyle Bell, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chirnside, Mr John Edgar at Hutton, Mr Alexander Cuthbertson at Edrom, ministers; David Milne, Esq., junior, of Milne-Graden, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kelso, Mr Joseph Thomson at Ednam, Mr John Sym at Sprouston, ministers; George Dunbar, Esq., Professor of Greek, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Jedburgh, Mr David Aitken at Minto, Mr John A. Wallace at Hawick, Mr James Wight at Oxnam, ministers; Archibald Jerdon of Bonjedward, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Jedburgh, William Oliver, Esq., of Dinlabyre. From the Presbytery of Lauder, Mr Peter Cosens at Lauder, Mr James Paterson at Gordon, ministers; John Shank More, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lauder, William Boswell, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Selkirk, Mr Thomas Jolly at Bowden, Mr John Campbell at Selkirk, ministers; Alexander Pringle, Esq., of Whytebank, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Selkirk, John Anderson, Esq., of Hathornbank. From the Presbytery of Annan, Dr Henry Duncan at Ruthwell, Mr Richard Nivison at Middlebie, ministers; William Grierison of Garroch, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Langholm, Mr William Berry Shaw at Langholm, Mr Angus Barton at Castleton, ministers; George Graham Bell, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochmaben, Dr William Singer at Kirkpatrick-Juxta, Dr Robert Colvin at Johnston, Mr David Buchan Dowie at Drysdale, ministers; William Francis Hunter Laurie, Esq., W. S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lochmaben, Robert Threshie, Esq., junior, of Mousewald Place. From the Presbytery of Penpont, Mr Robert Wilson at Tynron, Mr George Smith at Penpont, ministers; Sir Thomas Kirkpatrick, Bart., of Closeburn, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Sanquhar, Robert Whigham of Lochpatrick, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Dumfries, Mr John Yorston at Torthorwald, Mr William Thorburn at Troqueer, Mr John Wightman at

Kirkmahoe, ministers; William Woodburn, Esq., of Terregles, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dumfries, John Barker, Esq., Treasurer of said burgh. From the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Mr John Maclellan at Kelton, Mr Thomas Turnbull at Anwoth, Mr George Hamilton at Kirkcudbright, ministers; David Welsh, Esq., of Collin, W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Kirkcudbright, Alexander Craig, Esq., of Ann Street, Stockbridge, Edinburgh. From the Burgh of New Galloway, James Morgan, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Wigton, Mr Christopher Nicholson at Whithorn, Mr Samuel Clanaghan at Glasserton, ministers; John Marshall, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Wigton, James Smith, Esq., of Monkhill, residing in Wigton. From the Burgh of Whithorn, Alexander Hannay, Esq., Physician in Glasgow. From the Presbytery of Stranraer, Mr William Mackergo at New Luce, Mr John Lamb at Kirkmaiden, ministers; Alexander Smith, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Stranraer, William Black, Esq., merchant in Stranraer. From the Presbytery of Ayr, Dr John Stirling at Craigie, Mr John Stewart at Sorn, Mr Robert Houston at Dalmellington, Mr James Chrystal at Auchinleck, Mr Alexander Duncan at Coyton, ministers; William Campbell, Esq., of Netherplace, Charles Ferguson, Esq., Advocate, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Ayr, John Cowan, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Irvine, Mr David Strong at Kilmarnock, Mr George Colville at Beith, Mr James Drummond at Cumbræ, Mr John Bryce at Ardrossan, ministers; the Lord Justice-Clerk, William Howieson Crawford of Crawfordland, Esq., ruling elders. From the Burgh of Irvine, Captain John Brooks of Knockewart. From the Presbytery of Paisley, Mr Robert Douglas at Kilbarchan, Dr Andrew Stewart at Erskine, Mr Alexander Fleming at Neilston, ministers; John Shaw Stewart, Esq., Advocate, Dr John Speirs, Physician, Greenock, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Renfrew, Mr John Stewart, wright and merchant in Renfrew, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Hamilton, Dr John Russell at Dalserf, Dr James Begg at New Monkland, Dr Matthew Gardiner at Bothwell, ministers; Walter Campbell, Esq., of Sunderland, in Islay, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lanark, Mr John Wilson at Lesmahago, Mr William Lamb at Carmichael, ministers; William Dickson, Esq., wine-merchant, Leith, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lanark, James Wyld, Esq., of Gilston, merchant in Leith. From the Presbytery of Glasgow, Mr William Burns at Kilsyth, Mr John Watson at Cumbernauld, Dr William Black at Glasgow, Mr John Forbes at Glasgow, ministers; William Brown, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, Archibald Young, Esq., Writer there, ruling elders. From the City of Glasgow, William Gilmour, Esq., merchant, and one of the Magistrates of said city. From the University of Glasgow, Dr Duncan Macfarlane, Principal of said University. From the Burgh of Rutherglen, Mr William Shaw, one of the Bailies of the burgh. From the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Dr John Graham at Killearn, Dr William Hamilton at Strathblane, Mr Matthew Barclay at Old Kilpatrick, ministers; Andrew Smollet, younger of Bonhill, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dumbarton, Mr William Govan, residenter in the burgh of Dumbarton. And the Assembly added thereto, Dr Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, in place of the Moderator; and also, from the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, Dr John Martin at Kirkcaldy, whose commission had been rejected on account of informality, to be commissioners, &c.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Act Disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Paisley, and from the Presbytery of Irvine, and forming them into the Presbytery of Greenock.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, without a vote, did, and hereby do, disjoin the parishes of Erskine, Kilmacolm, Port-Glasgow, the three parishes of Greenock, and that of Innerkip, from the Presbytery of Paisley, and the parishes of Largs and Cumbræ from the Presbytery of Irvine; and form those nine parishes into a separate Presbytery, the seat thereof to be at Greenock; and the General Assembly appoint the first meeting of this newly erected Presbytery to be at Greenock, on the second Tuesday of July next.

IX.

*Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Declaratory Enactment as to Chapels of Ease.**

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, without a vote, approve of the report of their committee, and did, and hereby do, enact and declare, that all ministers already inducted and settled, or who shall hereafter be inducted and settled, as ministers of Chapels of Ease, presently erected and established, or which shall be hereafter erected and established, in terms of the act anent Chapels of Ease, of 1798, or prior thereto, by authority of the General Assembly, or by the Presbyteries of the bounds, are, and shall be, constituent members of the Presbyteries and Synods within whose bounds the said chapels are, or shall be respectively situated, and eligible to sit in the General Assembly; and shall enjoy every privilege as fully and freely, and with equal powers, with parish ministers of this Church; hereby enjoining and requiring all Presbyteries, Synods, Church Courts, and Judicatories, within whose bounds the said chapels are or shall be situated, to receive and enrol the said ministers as members thereof, and put them in all respects on a footing of Presbyterian equality with the parish ministers of this Church; giving, granting, and committing, to the said ministers the like powers and authority and privileges now pertaining to ministers of this Church, within their

* The following is the notice given in the Abridgment of the Assembly Proceedings, respecting the discussion on the Overtures relative to Chapels of Ease:—

"The General Assembly called for the Overtures relating to Chapels of Ease, with the Petitions on that subject, and the Reference from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, relating to the Chapels in the parish of St Cuthbert. Mr Clason, Mr Gray, and Mr Brown, were heard in support of the views of the several petitioners. It was moved and seconded, That the General Assembly, having maturely considered the Report of the Committee of last Assembly on the subject of Chapels of Ease, and the Overtures and Petitions on the same subject, approve of the principles and recommendation of this Report, and appoint a Committee to prepare a Declaratory Enactment, to give effect to those principles and recommendation, and to report to a future diet of this Assembly. Another motion was made and seconded, That the General Assembly, having considered the various Overtures relative to Chapels of Ease, and also the Report of the Committee of last Assembly in respect thereto, highly approve the purpose of these Overtures and of that Report; and, with a view of most effectually and permanently securing it, appoint a Committee to correspond with Government, or with the Officers of the Crown, for obtaining a legislative enactment, through which, with the consent of all parties interested, parishes may be divided, or the districts now attached to Chapels of Ease *quoad spiritualia*, may be assigned to them as parishes, when the Church is satisfied that this is proper or necessary for the instruction of the people. The General Assembly further instruct the Committee to take the measures which to them may seem best calculated to procure permanent endowments to such Chapels as it may be deemed expedient to erect into Parish Churches, and to make all arrangements relative to carrying the scheme into effect; and, in the mean time, the General Assembly instruct Presbyteries to report to next Assembly, whether, in their estimation, such a change as to Chapels of Ease should take place, and the present law with regard to them be, upon the adoption of the new system, rescinded. The vote having been called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote should be First or Second Motion; and the roll having been called, and votes marked, it carried First Motion, by 153 to 103; and, therefore, the General Assembly find in terms of the First Motion. From which resolution Dr Mearns dissented, and thereto adhered 33 other members, and took instruments. A Committee appointed to prepare a Declaratory Enactment in terms of the resolution. Professor Brown, Con- venter."—*Ed. 1843.*

respective bounds: And, further, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, remit to the Presbyteries within whose bounds the said chapels now established are situated, to allot and assign to each of the said chapels a territorial district, and to erect such districts into separate parishes *quoad sacra*, and to disjoin the same *quoad sacra* from the parishes whereof they at present form parts; and also to take the necessary measures for selecting and ordaining, according to the rules of the Church, for each of the said districts so to be erected, a body of elders, who, with the said ministers respectively, may exercise sessional jurisdiction within the same: And the Assembly instruct Presbyteries to be cautious not to assign a more populous district than it seems possible to attend to; provided always, that it shall be understood that the chapels to be erected into parishes shall first have been constituted according to the laws of this Church, for which purpose it will be open to chapels to apply, if not so constituted already.

X.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.—Standing Orders appointed by the General Assembly to be observed in future.

1. That all papers, whether forming part of the record, or produced in evidence in any of the Inferior Courts, shall, at the time when they are lodged, be dated and numbered by the clerk of such court, and marked with his initials; and no paper not so authenticated shall be received in the Courts of Review unless upon special cause shown.

2. That, in future, all overtures transmitted through the committee, and all petitions or other applications to the Assembly, transmitted through the Committee of Bills, shall be printed and laid on the Assembly's table, in sufficient numbers for the use of members, on or before the first Monday of its sitting; excepting in the case of matters which may come to the knowledge of the Assembly during its sitting; in which case the overtures, petitions, &c., shall be printed and laid on the table at least one day before they are discussed.

3. That the libel and defences,—or when the case commences without a libel,—the petition or other initiatory step, and the answers thereto, with the sentences of the Inferior Courts, shall be considered as the record.

4. That in all references, complaints, and appeals, under the exception mentioned in Article 8th, the same, together with the evidence adduced, shall be printed in sufficient numbers to afford a copy to every member of Assembly; which copies shall be laid on the table of the Assembly in sufficient time to admit of the cause being taken up on one of the days during its sitting, otherwise the appeal or other application shall be held to have been fallen from.

5. That when the appeal, complaint, or reference, is made merely on a point of law or relevancy, it shall only be necessary to print such parts of the evidence, if any, as the party may think requisite for the determination of such point of law or relevancy; but in such cases the papers shall be printed in such time as to enable the respondent to print any other parts of the evidence which he may deem material for the right understanding of the case.

6. That reasons of dissent or appeal, and the answers thereto, when made, as well as all other papers not included in the record, shall be produced to the Assembly as heretofore, but shall not be held as included in the regulation as to printing.

7. That, in causes, the expense of printing shall be borne by the appellant, when there is one. When the Inferior Court shall refer a cause to the Assembly, without pronouncing judgment, the expense shall be borne by the parties mutually, under the certification that the party refusing to pay his share thereof, before the time appointed for laying the same on the table, shall be considered as having deserted the cause, and shall not be entitled to be heard.

8. That when there is no appeal or reference, it shall be optional to individual members of Inferior Courts, who may find it their duty to bring the proceedings of

these Courts under the review of the Assembly by complaint, either to comply with the regulations as to printing, or to furnish a complete written copy of the whole papers and proceedings to the Clerk of the Assembly.

9. That in all other cases, such as petitions, &c., the expense shall be borne by the party bringing the matter under the notice of the Assembly.

10. That causes arising out of trials for licence or ordination, and matters relating to Church ordinances; as also references on matters which do not affect the interests of the parties in the cause, shall be excepted from this rule, excepting when the parties may think proper to print of their own accord.

11. That a copy of every printed paper shall be kept by the Clerk of Assembly, to be bound up and kept in the Records of Assembly, with a copy of the judgment annexed.

XI.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.—Overture on the Form of Process.

(Re-transmitted.)

XII.

*Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Overtures and Interim Acts on the Calling of Ministers.**

I. OVERTURE AND INTERIM ACT ON CALLS.

The General Assembly declare, that it is a fundamental law of this Church, that no pastor shall be intruded on any congregation contrary to the will of the people; and, in order that this principle may be carried into full effect, the General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, do declare, enact, and ordain, that it shall be an instruction to Presbyteries, that if, at the moderating in a call to a vacant pastoral charge, the major part of the male heads of families, members of the vacant congregation, and in full communion with the Church, shall disapprove of the person in whose favour the call is proposed to be moderated in, such disapproval shall be deemed sufficient ground for the Presbytery rejecting such

* The following is the notice given in the Abridgment of the discussion on the Overtures relative to this subject:—

“The General Assembly called for the Overtures relating to the Calling of Ministers. The Overtures from the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, from the Synod of Aberdeen, and the Presbytery of Inverness, were read. After reasoning, the following motion was made and seconded, That the General Assembly, having maturely considered the Overtures, do declare, that it is a fundamental law of the Church, that no pastor shall be intruded on any congregation contrary to the will of the people; and that, in order to carry this principle into full effect, the Presbyteries of this Church shall be instructed, that if, at the moderating in a call to a vacant pastoral charge, the major part of the male heads of families, members of the vacant congregation, and in full communion with the Church, shall disapprove of the person in whose favour the call is proposed to be moderated in, such disapproval shall be deemed sufficient ground for the Presbytery rejecting such person, and that he shall be rejected accordingly, and due notice thereof forthwith given to all concerned; but that if the major part of the heads of families shall not disapprove of such person to be their pastor, the Presbytery shall proceed with the settlement according to the rules of the Church: And farther declare, that no person shall be held to be entitled to disapprove as aforesaid, who shall refuse, if required, solemnly to declare, in presence of the Presbytery, that he is actuated by no factious or malicious motive, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interest of himself or the congregation; and resolve, that a committee be appointed to report to a future diet of this Assembly in which manner, and by what particular measures, this declaration and instruction may be best carried into full operation. It was also moved and seconded, That the General Assembly adhere to the Declaratory Law of last Assembly, approve of the report of the committee of last Assembly for preparing regulations, and direct Presbyteries to proceed in terms thereof. The vote being called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote should be First or Second Motion; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried First Motion, by 184 to 139. And, therefore, the General Assembly declare in terms of the First Motion. Against this resolution Dr Mearns dissented, and to his dissent 105 other members gave in their adherence, subscribed by their names.”—*Ed.* 1843.

person, and that he shall be rejected accordingly, and due notice thereof forthwith given to all concerned; but that, if the major part of the said heads of families shall not disapprove of such person to be their pastor, the Presbytery shall proceed with the settlement according to the rules of the Church: And farther declare, that no person shall be held to be entitled to disapprove as aforesaid, who shall refuse, if required, solemnly to declare, in presence of the Presbytery, that he is actuated by no factious or malicious motive, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interests of himself or the congregation.

The General Assembly agree to transmit the above Overture to Presbyteries for their opinion, and, without a vote, convert the same into an Interim Act.

II. OVERTURE, WITH REGULATIONS FOR CARRYING THE ABOVE ACT INTO EFFECT.

Edinburgh, June 2, 1834.

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, enacted, and ordained, in terms of their Act, passed in the sederunt of 31st May ult., on the subject of the moderating in of calls; and whereas it is necessary, for the better regulating the forms of proceeding under that Act, that some precise and definite rules should be laid down, the General Assembly do, therefore, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, declare, enact, and ordain, that the following directions and regulations shall be observed:—

1. That when any Presbytery shall have so far sustained a presentation to a parish, as to be prepared to appoint a day for moderating in a call to the person presented, they shall appoint one of their own number to preach in the church of the parish on a day not later than the second Sunday thereafter; that he shall, on that day, intimate from the pulpit that the person presented will preach in that church on the first convenient Sunday, so as it be not later than the third Sunday after such intimation; and that he shall, at the same time, intimate that on another day, to be fixed, not less than eight, nor more than ten, days after that appointed for the presentee to preach, the Presbytery will proceed, within the said church, to moderate in a call to such person to be minister of the said parish in the usual way; but that the Presbytery, if they deem it expedient, may appoint the presentee to preach oftener than once, provided that the day for moderating in the call be not more than six weeks after that on which the presentation has been sustained.

2. That, on the day appointed for moderating in the call, the Presbytery shall, in the first instance, proceed in the same manner in which they are in use at present to proceed.

3. That if no special objections, and no dissents, by a major part of the male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and in full communion with the Church, according to a list or roll to be made up and regulated in manner hereinafter directed, shall be given in, the Presbytery shall proceed to the trials and settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church.

4. That it shall be competent to any one or more of the heads of families in the parish, in full communion with the Church, by themselves, or by an agent duly authorised, to state any special objections to the settlement of the person presented, of whatever nature such objections may be; and that, if the objections appear to be deserving of deliberate consideration or investigation, the Presbytery shall delay the farther proceedings in the settlement till another meeting, to be then appointed, and give notice to all parties concerned then to attend, that they may be heard.

5. That if the special objections so stated affect the moral character or the doctrine of the presentee, so that, if they were established, he would be deprived of his licence, or of his situation in the Church, the objectors shall proceed by libel, and the Presbytery shall take the steps usual in such cases.

6. That if the special objections relate to the insufficiency or unfitness of the presentee for the particular charge to which he has been appointed, the objectors shall not be required to become libellers, but shall simply deliver, in writing, their specific grounds for objecting to the settlement, and shall have full liberty to substantiate the same; upon all which the presentee shall have an opportunity to be fully heard, and

shall have all competent means of defence. That the Presbytery shall then consider these special objections, and if it shall appear that they are not sufficient, or not well-founded, they shall proceed to the settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church. But if the Presbytery shall be satisfied that the objector or objectors have established that the presentee is not fitted usefully and sufficiently to discharge the pastoral duties in that parish, then they shall find that he is not qualified, and shall intimate the same to the patron, that he may forthwith present another person ; it being always in the power of the different parties to appeal from the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, if they shall see cause.

7. That if it shall happen, that, at the meeting for moderating in the call, dissents are tendered by any of the male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and in full communion with the Church, their names standing on the roll above referred to, without the assignment of any special objections, such dissents shall either be personally delivered in writing by the person dissenting, or taken down from his oral statement by the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery.

8. That if the dissents so lodged do not amount in number to the major part of the persons standing on the roll, and if there be no special objections remaining to be considered, the Presbytery shall proceed to the trials and settlement, according to the rules of the Church.

9. That if it shall appear that dissents have been lodged by an apparent majority of the persons on the said roll, the Presbytery shall adjourn the proceedings to another meeting, to be held not less than ten days, nor more than fourteen days thereafter.

10. That if the Presbytery deem it expedient, and the person presented be willing, or if he shall desire so to do, the Presbytery shall appoint him to preach to the congregation in the interval.

11. That it shall not be competent to receive any dissents without cause assigned, except such as shall be duly given in at the meeting for moderating in the call, as above provided ; but it shall be competent to any person, who may have lodged a dissent at that meeting, to withdraw such dissent at any time before the Presbytery shall have given judgment on the effect of the dissents.

12. That in case the Presbytery shall, at the second meeting appointed, find that the major part of the persons entitled to dissent do not adhere to their dissents, or that there is not truly a majority of such persons on the roll dissenting, they shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement.

13. That in case the Presbytery shall, at that meeting, find that there is a majority of the persons on the roll still dissenting, it shall be competent to the patron or the presentee, or to any member of the Presbytery, to require all or any of the persons so dissenting to appear before the Presbytery, or a committee of their number, at a meeting to be appointed to take place within ten days at farthest, at some place within the parish, and there and then to declare in terms of the resolution of the General Assembly ; and if any such person shall fail to appear after notice shall have been duly given to him, or shall refuse to declare in the terms required, the name of such person shall be struck off the list of persons dissenting, and the Presbytery shall determine whether there is still a major part dissenting or not, and proceed accordingly.

14. That if the Presbytery shall find that there is at last a major part of the persons on the roll dissenting, they shall reject the person presented, so far as regards the particular presentation, and the occasion of that vacancy in the parish ; and shall forthwith direct notice of this their determination to be given to the patron, the presentee, and the elders of the parish.

15. That if the patron shall give a presentation to another person within the time limited by law, the proceedings shall again take place in the same manner as above laid down, and so on, in regard to successive presentations within the time.

16. That if no presentation shall be given within the limited time to a person from whose settlement a majority on the roll do not dissent, the Presbytery shall then present *jure devoluto*.

17. That cases of presentation by the Presbytery *jure devoluto*, shall not fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly, but shall be proceeded in according to the general laws of the Church applicable to such cases.

But every person who shall have been previously rejected, shall be considered as disqualified to be presented to that parish on the occasion of that vacancy.

18. That in order to ascertain definitely the persons entitled, at any particular time, to give in dissents, every kirk-session of the Church shall be required, within two months after the rising of the present Assembly, to make out a list or roll of the male heads of families, who are, at the date thereof, members of the congregation, and also regular communicants, either in that parish, or some other parish of the Church; of which, in the latter case, proper evidence shall be produced to the kirk-session.

19. That the roll so made up shall be inserted in the kirk-session record, and shall be transmitted to the Presbytery; and after being inspected by the Presbytery, and countersigned on each page by the moderator, shall be returned to the kirk-session, and form part of its records for the foresaid purposes.

20. That the said roll shall be revised and re-adjusted immediately after the occasion of dispensing the Sacrament in the parish which shall have last preceded the 22d of November in each year, and shall be re-transmitted to the Presbytery within the first week of December.

21. That the said list or roll, as last revised immediately before the vacancy in the parish, shall be the only roll for determining the persons entitled to be reckoned in any dissents to be offered in the manner above set forth, against the admission of any presentee to be minister, in the moderating in a call, provided that it shall not be made to appear that they, or any of them, have ceased to be members of the congregation.

22. That the Presbyteries of the Church shall use their utmost endeavours to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and be at pains to avoid every thing which may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person that may be proposed to be their minister.

The General Assembly agree to transmit the above Overture and Regulations to Presbyteries for their opinion; and, in the mean time, without a vote, they convert the same into an Interim Act.

The General Assembly farther declare, that cases in which the vacancies have taken place before the rising of the present Assembly, shall not fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly, but shall be proceeded in according to the general laws of the Church.

XIII.

Sess. 10, May 31, 1834.—Report of the Committee appointed by the General Assembly for Classing Returns relative to Schools.

The Committee appointed to examine the Returns as to the Examination of Schools beg leave to report to the Venerable Assembly,—

I. That returns have been received from forty Presbyteries, bearing that the schools in all the parishes within their bounds have been examined during the past year, viz. :—

Abertarff,
Abernethy,
Aberlour,
Alford,
Auchterarder,
Ayr,
Brechin,
Chirnside,
Cupar,

Dalkeith,
Deer,
Dumbarton,
Dunfermline,
Dunblane,
Dunbar,
Dundee,
Dunoon,
Dunse,

Ellon,
Fordyce,
Forres,
Irvine,
Inverary,
Kelso,
Kincardine-O'Neil,
Kirkcudbright,
Kirkcaldy,

Lanark,
Lauder,
Lewis,
Linlithgow,
Lorn,

Mull,
North Isles,
Paisley,
Stirling,

Stranraer,
Strathbogie,
St Andrews,
Tain.

II. That returns, more or less regular and complete, have been received from twenty-five Presbyteries of the Church, viz. :—

Aberdeen,
Annan,
Biggar,
Burravoe,
Caithness,
Dornoch,
Dumfries,
Dunkeld,
Edinburgh,

Elgin,
Fordoun,
Garioch,
Haddington,
Hamilton,
Jedburgh,
Lochcarron,
Lochmaben,

Kirkwall,
Meikle,
Nairn,
Peebles,
Penpont,
Perth,
Selkirk,
Uist.

The returns from Edinburgh are peculiarly defective, including only the parishes of New Greyfriars, Tron Church, and St Stephen's.

III. That the other Presbyteries have sent no returns of any kind this year, and that of these, Wigton has sent none for these last six years; and Cairston, Chanonry, and Glasgow, none for seven years. It is, therefore, the opinion of your committee, that a more general compliance with the instructions of the Assembly should be enforced upon all the Presbyteries of the Church; but especially upon those who, notwithstanding the reiterated animadversions of former committees, still continue to neglect to send up reports.

IV. That to remedy the irregularity which exists in the manner of making up the reports, and which tends to increase greatly the labours of your committee annually appointed to class the Returns of the Examination of Schools, your committee now submit that the printed schedules should be transmitted and uniformly used, and that when regularly filled up, they should be dated and duly attested by the Clerk of Court.

V. That a very laudable attention has been bestowed upon the preparation of these returns by several Presbyteries in the Church, but particularly those of Dundee, Paisley, Selkirk, Stirling, and St Andrews.

VI. That there is appended to the report from the Presbytery of Stirling a very important suggestion for the consideration of the Assembly, as to the use of such books in schools as tend to promote the moral and religious instruction of the rising generation, and to the securing uniformity in this respect throughout the Church. Your committee perceive with regret, that in two of the burgh schools of Stirling the teachers have peremptorily refused to allow their schools to be examined, on the pretence that burgh schools are not subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery. On a similar pretence some Presbyteries have been refused access to schools taught by Dissenters.

VII. That the Abbey Parish of Paisley, which is a landward parish, and contains a population of upwards of 31,000 souls, has neither a parochial nor an endowed school, and that there is not a thirteenth part of its population now in the enjoyment of the means of education; and, further, that it is evident from the remarks annexed to the Presbytery's report, that, while they approve generally of the schools existing within their bounds, they deplore the want of parochial schools in this densely peopled district of the country.

VIII. That the parish school of Largs, in the Presbytery of Irvine, is at present totally lost to the community, there being but *one* scholar in attendance throughout the year; but your committee have to observe, with satisfaction, that measures have been taken by the Presbytery in order to remedy this defect.

IX. That there appears to be no return as to any school in the parish of Barra, in the Presbytery of Uist, where there is a population of 3000 souls. From the parish of Harris, in the same Presbytery, there is no return.

X. That a great number of the teachers of the schools in the Church (fully one half) are stated in the reports as not having qualified to government.

XI. That it is highly gratifying to your committee to observe, that in the schools, generally, the Holy Scriptures are regularly read, the Catechisms of our Church used, and, in many instances, the schools are opened and closed with prayer.

In conclusion, your committee are happy to observe the increased attention of the several Presbyteries of the Church to the state and condition of the schools within their bounds, which is so eminently calculated to encourage and stimulate the exertions of the teachers in the discharge of their important office, and thus to raise the moral and religious character of our country's population.

ROBERT COLVIN, *Convener*.

XIV.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.—Overture and Interim Act relating to Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.
(Re-transmitted.)

XV.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st day of May 1835.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1835.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1835.—The King's Commission to the Right Honourable Lord Belhaven.

GULIELMUS, &c.

Note — A Pastoral Admonition on the subject of Sabbath Sanctification was issued by the Assembly of 1834. See Appendix — *Ed.* 1843.

Note.—A Committee on Church Accommodation or Extension had existed for several years prior to 1834; but it was now only that the Committee was placed on a permanent footing, and its object adopted as one of the Schemes of the Church. The following notice respecting this appears in the Abridgment of the Proceedings of 1834:—

“The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Church Accommodation, which was given in and read by Dr Brunton, the Convener. It was moved, seconded, and agreed to, that the Assembly approve of the Report of the Committee on Church Accommodation, and resolve, in terms of the recommendation embodied in that Report, that a permanent Committee be formed, on the model of the Committee for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and that the Assembly enjoin all ministers of Parishes, and all ministers of Chapels of Ease throughout the Church, to recommend the subject from the pulpit, and take measures for collecting at the church doors, and furthering subscriptions for carrying the wishes of the Assembly into effect, and instruct the Committee to act on this injunction, to ascertain precisely, by communicating with the different Presbyteries, the state of Church Accommodation throughout the country, and to mature a plan for the, most beneficial distribution of the funds which may be so collected, to be reported to next General Assembly. The General Assembly re-appoint the Committee, with additional members. The Assembly returned thanks to the Convener, and through him to the Committee, and at his request, appointed Dr Chalmers to be Convener.”—*Ed.* 1843.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1835.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly.
WILLIAM, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1835.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c. .

IV.

Sess. 3, May 23, 1835.—The General Assembly's Address of Thanks to the King.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, beg leave to approach your Majesty with the renewed assurance of our attachment to your person and government.

The rapid increase of population, especially in the manufacturing and commercial districts of Scotland, having rendered essentially necessary the increase of the means of religious instruction and parochial superintendence, we have observed, with the most lively gratitude, that this very important subject has engaged your Majesty's paternal regard, and that, in the speech from the throne, at the opening of the present Parliament, your Majesty has commended it to the attention of the House of Commons.

We beg leave to express to your Majesty our deep-felt conviction of the urgent necessity of adopting some efficient measure for extending the means of spiritual improvement, and our earnest desire and hope that your Majesty's government may continue to have this subject under their serious consideration, and may devise such plans as shall, under the Divine blessing, issue in the religious and moral improvement of the people under our care.

That your Majesty's paternal desire to afford to your subjects more extended access to the ordinances of Divine worship may be speedily realized, and that you may be blessed abundantly with all spiritual and heavenly blessings, is the earnest desire of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most dutiful,
and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of the General
Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment.

WILLIAM AIRD THOMSON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 10, May 30, 1835.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 10, May 30, 1835.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 7, May 27, 1835.—Act and Order as to Synod Books.

The General Assembly, on calling for the different Synod Books of this Church, find that many Synods are not in the practice of sending up their books to the Assembly, as, by many former Acts, they are required to do. The General Assembly hereby do enact and ordain, that Synods shall in future be careful to cause their books to be regularly transmitted to every Assembly.

VIII.

Sess. 10, May 30, 1835.—Act in favour of the India Missions.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the Committee for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty, to be a committee of this Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and for managing the funds subscribed and given for that purpose, with the whole powers conferred by former Acts of Assembly, and with power also to appoint a sub-committee of their number, consisting of nine, for more effectually furthering the great end in view;—of the general committee, fourteen are hereby declared to be a quorum, whereof nine are to be ministers; and of the sub-committee to be appointed, five are hereby declared to be a quorum. That the committee shall hold stated monthly meetings for dispatch of business, in the Trustees' Hall, on the first Tuesday of every month, at three o'clock, with power always to adjourn, as shall be needful; and to meet on all occasions when urgent business shall demand. And the said general committee are hereby enjoined and required, through their sub-committee, to attend to the instructions and regulations formerly approved by the General Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel abroad; with power to make and carry into effect such further regulations as to them may seem most beneficial, such further regulations to be submitted to next Assembly. And the said general committee are hereby appointed to report their diligence, and that of their sub-committee, in calling forth the benevolence and support of the Christian public of Scotland,—their prudence in the expenditure of the funds obtained;—and, generally, their management, and the success of their operations in foreign parts. Farther, the General Assembly recommend to the favourable consideration of the committee the subject of the Memorial from the Missionaries at Bombay, leaving to the committee the time and manner of extending their countenance and pecuniary support to that object, and warmly recommend their efforts to the prayers and pecuniary assistance of the people of Scotland.

IX.

*Sess. 9, May 29, 1835.—Act on the Calling of Ministers.**

The General Assembly declare, That it is a fundamental law of this Church, that no pastor shall be intruded on any congregation contrary to the will of the people;

* The following appears in the Abridgment regarding this Act:—

“ The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, in so far as they relate to Calls, which having been read on Wednesday, and having been printed and circulated among the members, was now taken into consideration without being again read. After reasoning, it was moved and seconded, That the General Assembly, having considered the Report of their Committee for classing the Returns to Overtures, find that a majority of Presbyteries have given their consent to the ‘ Overture on Calls,’ transmitted by the last Assembly; and, therefore, the Assembly did, and hereby do, enact and ordain, that the said Overture shall be held and acted upon in all time coming as a Standing Law of this Church: And the General Assembly farther find, That the ‘ Overture, with regulations for carrying the above Act into effect,’ also transmitted by last Assembly, has not received the

and, in order that this principle may be carried into full effect, the General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, do declare, enact, and ordain, That it shall be an instruction to Presbyteries, that if, at the moderating in a call to a vacant pastoral charge, the major part of the male heads of families, members of the vacant congregation, and in full communion with the Church, shall disapprove of the person in whose favour the call is proposed to be moderated in, such disapproval shall be deemed sufficient ground for the Presbytery rejecting such person, and that he shall be rejected accordingly, and due notice thereof forthwith given to all concerned; but that, if the major part of the said heads of families shall not disapprove of such person to be their pastor, the Presbytery shall proceed with the settlement according to the rules of the Church: And farther declare, that no person shall be held to be entitled to disapprove as aforesaid, who shall refuse, if required, solemnly to declare, in presence of the Presbytery, that he is actuated by no factitious or malicious motive, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interests of himself or the congregation.

X.

*Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly on the Calling of Ministers.**

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, enacted, and ordained, in terms of their Act, passed into a law of the Church on the 29th May 1835, on the subject

consent of a majority of Presbyteries, but that various important suggestions on the subject of it have been sent up by Presbyteries who do not approve thereof as it stands; and the Assembly do, therefore, remit to a committee to consider the said Act, with regulations, and the returns thereon, and to report on Monday, in order that the said Act, or an amended Act for the same end and effect, may, if approved of, be again transmitted and passed as an Interim Act. Another motion was made and seconded, That the General Assembly, being satisfied that this Overture is, in its declaratory statement of the law, ambiguous and liable to be misinterpreted; that it contains a provision limiting improperly the privileges of members of congregations, and virtually setting aside the authority of the Church in judging of the qualifications of ministers; and that no means have been devised by which it can be carried into practical operation, did, and hereby do, find, that though approved of by a majority of Presbyteries, it ought not to be converted into a Standing Law of this Church; but being desirous to employ all the means in their power for promoting the comfortable settlement of parishes, giving due weight to the wishes of congregations, and maintaining the lawful authority of the Ecclesiastical Courts, appoint a committee to prepare the draft of a measure founded on those principles, and to report the same to a future diet of this Assembly. The vote being called for, it was agreed that the state of the vote should be First or Second Motion; and the roll being called and votes marked, it carried First Motion, by a majority of 178 to 124. Against which judgment Principal Macfarlan and several other members entered their dissent. A committee was then appointed in terms of the said judgment; to whose consideration were referred all the Overtures on the regulations as to Calls. —*Ed. 1843.*

* The following is the notice in the Abridgment respecting the transmission of this Overture :—

“The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for revising and amending the regulations for carrying into effect the Act on Calls, which was given in by Lord Moncreiff, the convener. Various amendments were moved, but not insisted on; and, particularly, it was moved and seconded, That persons proved to have combined for the purpose of obtaining the appointment of a particular candidate shall be considered as actuated by factious motives, and shall not be permitted to make the declaration prescribed in the general Overture; and if that declaration be required by the Presbytery, or by any of the parties in the case, shall have their names struck off from the list of dissents. This motion was negatived without a division. It was also moved and seconded, That the 14th Article stand thus, That in case the Presbytery shall, at the second meeting appointed, find that there is not truly a majority of such persons on the roll dissenting, they shall proceed to the settlement according to the rules of the Church. It was agreed that the state of the vote should be Motion or Not; and the roll being called, and votes marked, it carried Not, by a majority of 96 to 82. It was moved and seconded, That if it be proved that any canvassing take place in favour of a presentee, or influence be used with the parishioners to give a call, or be used to prevent their dissenting; in any of these cases the presentee shall be held to be disqualified, and the presentation shall not be sustained by the Presbytery. This motion was negatived without a division. It was then moved and agreed to without a vote, That the regulations shall be transmitted to Presbyteries for their opinion, and converted into an Interim Act. From this resolution Dr Mearns dissented, for reasons given in; to which dissent Dr Lee, Mr Whigham, Mr Smith, Mr Paul, Mr Aiton, and Mr James Robertson, adhered. Mr Gibbon also dissented, for reasons given in.” —*Ed. 1843.*

of the moderating in of calls; and whereas it is necessary, for regulating the forms of proceeding under that Act, that some precise and definite rules should be laid down, it is overtured, That the General Assembly do, therefore, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, declare, enact, and ordain, that the following directions and regulations shall be observed:—

1. That when a presentation shall be received by the Moderator of a Presbytery, he shall, within two days after it comes to his hand, call a meeting of Presbytery, to take place not less than eight, nor more than twelve, days from the date of such intimation; provided that no meeting of Presbytery shall have been already fixed to take place within three weeks; and that, if such meeting has been appointed, he shall merely give notice that the presentation has been received, and will be laid on the table at that meeting.

2. That when the presentation is so laid on the table of the Presbytery, they shall, in the first place, ascertain that in the vacant parish a roll of the male heads of families, being members of the congregation and communicants in the church, has been regularly completed, in the manner herein after directed; and that having done so, they shall proceed in terms of the 4th Regulation, after expressed.

3. That in case a roll has not been so completed, they shall, at that meeting, appoint one of their number to act as moderator, with the elders of the parish, to constitute a kirk-session, or where there are no elders, two or more of their own number to act as a kirk-session, in making up a roll, in terms of the Regulations hereby enacted; and in such a case, they shall not then appoint a day for moderating in a call, but shall adjourn to another day of meeting, not more than fourteen days thereafter, ordaining a roll, duly attested, to be then produced to them; at which meeting, if the roll shall be completed, approved of, and countersigned, it shall be competent to fix a day for moderating in a call: it being hereby farther provided, that in no case shall the day for moderating in the call be fixed until the roll shall have been completed to the satisfaction of the Presbytery.

4. That when any Presbytery shall be prepared to appoint a day for moderating in a call to the person presented, they shall appoint one of their own number to preach in the church of the parish on a day not later than the second Sabbath thereafter; that he shall, on that day, intimate from the pulpit that the person presented will preach in that church on the first convenient Sabbath, so as it be not later than the third Sabbath after such intimation, and also on some other Sabbath; and that he shall, at the same time, intimate, that on another day to be fixed, not later than the next Friday after the day last appointed for the presentee to preach, the Presbytery will proceed, within the said church, to moderate in a call to such person to be minister of the said parish, in the usual way; but that the Presbytery, if they deem it expedient, may appoint the presentee to preach oftener than twice, provided that the day for moderating in the call be not more than six weeks after that on which it was appointed.

5. That on the day appointed for moderating in the call, the Presbytery shall, in the first instance, proceed in the same manner in which they are in use at present to proceed.

6. That if no special objections be stated, and if there shall not be dissents by a major part of the male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and in full communion with the church, according to a list or roll to be made up, and regulated in manner herein after directed, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church.

7. That if any special objections to the settlement of the person presented, of whatever nature such objections may be, shall be stated to the Presbytery; and if such objections appear to be deserving of deliberate consideration or investigation, the Presbytery shall delay the farther proceedings in the settlement till another meeting, to be then appointed, not later than eight days thereafter, and give notice to all parties concerned then to attend, that they may be heard.

8. That if the special objections so stated affect the moral character or the doctrine of the presentee, so that, if they were established, he would be deprived of his licence, or of his situation in the Church, the objectors shall proceed by libel, and the Presbytery shall take the steps usual in such cases.

9. That if the special objections relate to the insufficiency or unfitness of the presentee for the particular charge to which he has been appointed, the objectors shall not require to become libellers, but shall simply deliver in writing their specific grounds for objecting to the settlement, and shall have full liberty to substantiate the same; upon all which the presentee shall have an opportunity to be fully heard, and shall have all competent means of defence: That the Presbytery shall then consider these special objections, and, if it shall appear that they are not sufficient, or not well-founded, they shall proceed to the settlement

of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church ; but if the Presbytery shall be satisfied that the objector or objectors have established that the presentee is not fitted, usefully and sufficiently to discharge the pastoral duties in that parish, then they shall find that he is not qualified, and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate the same to the patron ; it being always in the power of the different parties to appeal from the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, if they shall see cause.

10. That if, at the meeting for moderating in the call, dissents are tendered by any of the male heads of families, whose names stand on the roll above referred to, without the assignment of any special objections, such dissents shall either be personally delivered in writing by the person dissenting, or taken down from his oral statement by the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery.

11. That if the dissents so lodged do not amount in number to the major part of the persons standing on the roll, and if there be no special objections remaining to be considered, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement, according to the rules of the Church.

12. That if it shall appear that dissents have been lodged by an apparent majority of the persons on the said roll, the Presbytery shall adjourn the proceedings to another meeting, to be held not less than ten free days, nor more than fourteen, thereafter.

13. That it shall not be competent to receive any *dissents* without cause assigned, except such as shall be duly given in at the meeting for moderating in the call, as above provided ; but it shall be competent to any person who may have lodged a dissent at that meeting to withdraw such dissent at any time before the Presbytery shall have given judgment on the effect of the dissents.

14. That in case the Presbytery shall, at the second meeting appointed, find that there is not truly a majority of such persons on the roll dissenting, they shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement, according to the rules of the Church.

15. That in case the Presbytery shall, at that meeting, find that there is a majority of the persons on the roll dissenting, it shall be competent to the patron or the presentee, or to any member of the Presbytery, to require all or any of the persons so dissenting to appear before the Presbytery, at a meeting to be appointed to take place within ten days at farthest, at some place within the parish, and there and then to declare in terms of the Resolution of the General Assembly ; and if any such person shall fail to appear after notice shall have been duly given to him, or shall refuse to declare in the terms required, the name of such person shall be struck off the list of persons dissenting, and the Presbytery shall determine whether there is still a major part dissenting or not, and proceed accordingly.

16. That if the Presbytery shall find that there is at last a major part of the persons on the roll dissenting, they shall reject the person presented, so far as regards the particular presentation, and the occasion of that vacancy in the parish ; and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate this their determination to the patron, the presentee, and the elders of the parish.

17. That if the patron shall give a presentation to another person within the time limited by law, the proceedings shall again take place in the same manner as above laid down ; and so on, in regard to successive presentations within the time.

18. That if no presentation shall be given, within the limited time, to a person from whose settlement a majority on the roll do not dissent, or who shall not be excluded in consequence of special objections, the Presbytery shall then supply the vacancy, *tanquam jure devoluto*.

19. That cases of settlement by the Presbytery *jure devoluto* shall not fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly, but shall be proceeded in according to the general laws of the Church applicable to such cases. But every person who shall have been previously rejected, shall be considered as disqualified to be inducted into that parish on the occasion of that vacancy.

20. That in order to ascertain definitively the persons entitled, at any particular time, to give in dissents, every kirk-session which has not already made up a roll of the male heads of families, in conformity to the enactment of last General Assembly, shall, within three months of the rising of this present General Assembly, make up a roll of the male heads of families who are members of the congregation, and who are, at the date thereof, and have been for at least twelve months previous thereto, in full communion with the Church. And, lest any doubt should arise as to who are heads of families, it is hereby declared, that the term includes unmarried men and widowers, as well as married men, provided they occupy houses of which they are proprietors or tenants, and eldest sons when their fathers are deceased, provided they are of the age of 21 years or upwards, and reside in the same house with their mothers.

21. That the roll so made up shall be open to inspection by any parishioner or member of the congregation, for the space of one week, and thereafter shall be authenticated by the moderator and session-clerk, and then transmitted to the Presbytery; and after being inspected by the Presbytery, and countersigned on each page by the moderator, shall be returned to the kirk-session, and form part of its record for the foresaid purposes.

22. That the said roll shall be revised and re-adjusted immediately after the occasion of dispensing the sacrament in the parish which shall have last preceded the 22d of November in each year, and shall be re-transmitted to the Presbytery before the expiry of the first week of December.

23. That the said list or roll, as last revised before the vacancy in the parish, where a roll has been duly made up, revised, and authenticated, shall be the only roll for determining the persons entitled to be reckoned in any dissents to be offered, in the manner above set forth, against the admission of any presentee to be minister, in the moderating in a call, provided that it shall not be made to appear that they, or any of them, have ceased to be members of the congregation.

24. That in all cases in which the roll has been regularly made up, revised, and authenticated, before the vacancy, such roll shall be held to be conclusive as to the parties entitled to dissent in the moderation of a call for supplying that vacancy; and it shall not be competent to state any objections against it.

25. That in case any appeal shall be taken against any judgment or proceeding of the Presbytery, previous to the time when they are prepared either to proceed to the settlement, or to declare the presentee to be disqualified, and reject the presentation, such appeal shall not sist procedure; but the Presbytery, if they resolve to proceed to the settlement, shall delay doing so till the appeal be discussed; and, if they reject the presentee, it shall be still competent to him to discuss the merits of any appeal which may have been duly entered.

26. That in the districts of Orkney and Zetland, the Synod of Glenelg, and the Synod of Argyle, the number of days appointed by this Act, with regard to meetings and for other purposes, shall be double the number above provided.

27. That the regulations in this Act shall be applied to all cases of vacancies in which the Presbytery has not already appointed a day for moderating in the call; but the General Assembly hereby renew and continue the Interim Act, with regulations, enacted and transmitted by last Assembly, in regard to all cases in which the day for moderating in the call may have been already appointed; declaring it to be still in force as to all such cases, but no others.

28. That the Presbyteries of the Church are hereby enjoined to use all diligence to see that the regulations hereby laid down are duly observed and followed out; and also to use their utmost endeavours to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and be at pains to avoid every thing which may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person, who may be proposed to be their minister,

The General Assembly agree, without a vote, to transmit the above overture and regulations to Presbyteries for their opinion; and, in the mean time, they convert the same into an Interim Act.

The General Assembly, in transmitting this revised and amended overture for regulating the due execution of the Act of Assembly on the Calling of Ministers, now passed into a Standing Law of the Church, think it of importance that the people of the parishes in Scotland should not be misled as to the nature and effect of that Act. It gives to them a negative voice against the intrusion of any minister into the parish whom they are compelled, under the solemn sanction of their conscientious belief as Christians, uninfluenced by any extraneous consideration, to declare to be unfit for the ministry in that parish. But the Act is not intended to confer any rights of a different nature; and any attempt to wrest it to other purposes must defeat its object, and injure the fair interests of the people, which it is meant to protect. All canvassing and caballing, therefore, for obtaining the appointment of a particular person to be minister, and all combination beforehand for that purpose, are inconsistent with the principle of the Act; and ought to disable every man who acts with a due regard to his Christian character, whatever may be his opinion on the law of patronage, from conscientiously declaring in the terms which may be required of him. The Act has been proposed, and after much deliberation passed by the whole Church, for the benefit of the people, according to the view taken by the movers of it, of

their rights under the existing law. But, in order that it may have any chance of producing such benefit, it must be fairly acted on by the patrons, the Presbyteries, and the people—each party using the rights, and discharging the duties belonging to each, with the honest and single purpose of obtaining a good and faithful minister for the parish. It is only when this spirit shall duly influence all the parties, that any measure devised by the General Assembly of the Church can be expected to accomplish the great ends for which it is intended—the spiritual edification of the people, their peace, happiness, and prosperity, and the strength and stability of the Church of Scotland.

XI.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Act on the Form of Process.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee on the Returns to Overtures, that a majority of Presbyteries have approved of the Overture on the Form of Process, pass the same into a Standing Law of the Church.

The General Assembly therefore did, and hereby do, resolve, enact, and ordain, that when a Presbytery shall resolve to libel a minister or probationer, a complaint or appeal may be taken against such resolution; but neither that complaint or appeal, nor any other, either when the Presbytery or any other party shall be libeller, shall prevent the cause from going on till the relevancy shall be determined, so that all such complaints and appeals, and the judgments on the relevancy, if appealed from, may be disposed of at the same time.

XII.

*Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overture on the Form of Process.**

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on the Form of Process, which was given in by the Procurator. The General Assembly agree to transmit as an Overture to Presbyteries the first Thirteen Resolutions for their consideration.

29th May 1835.

The Committee on the Form of Process, having taken into their consideration the subject of the mode in which trials of causes may be most advantageously conducted, with a view to the due administration of justice, are humbly of opinion, that this important end would be far more effectually, correctly, and expeditiously attained, by having the questions of fact arising in certain classes of cases tried by Commissions of Assembly, specially appointed for the purpose; instead of being left to be decided by the ordinary judicatures of the Church. Without entering into detail, the committee may observe, that they have been led to this conclusion chiefly by the following considerations: 1st, That the time of the Assembly no longer admits of their deciding all the questions which come before them under the present system of procedure; and are every year under the necessity of remitting many of those causes to the ordinary Commission of Assembly, which is well known to be a very uncertain and undefined body; 2d, That a small committee, chosen by the Assembly, (every member of which must act under the feeling of individual responsibility,) will, from hearing the evidence delivered in their own presence, and from the opportunity thereby afforded them of judging of the demeanour of the witnesses, be much better qualified to judge of the weight and importance which should be attached to their depositions, than courts of review, who have the evidence presented to them only in a written shape, can ever be; 3d, That Presbyteries will, to a considerable extent, be relieved from the necessity of acting as prosecutors and judges in the same cases; and, 4th, That much vexation and delay will be saved by the change now recommended.

The committee, therefore, respectfully recommend to the Assembly to transmit the fol-

* This Overture was again transmitted in 1836, but not passed.—Ed. 1813.

lowing regulations to Presbyteries, with a view to their being enacted into a law of the Church :

1. That all cases relative to the settlement of ministers, licensing probationers, or involving in any way questions of heresy or false doctrine ; as also, all cases with regard to schools, or other matters in which the Presbyteries have a civil jurisdiction, should be excepted from the proposed regulations, and shall be determined as at present by the Presbyteries of the Church, and be subject to the usual rules with regard to appeals to the Superior Courts.

2. That in all cases of scandal, whether for censure or deprivation, the preliminary steps, as to resolving to libel, serving the libel, and fixing the relevancy, shall remain as at present.

3. That where both parties shall acquiesce in the determination of those matters by the Inferior Courts, the proceedings before those courts shall be transmitted to the clerk of Assembly, for the purpose of abiding the directions of the House as to further procedure.

4. That after all the preliminary matters before mentioned shall have been finally determined by the judicatories of the Church, the trial of any points of fact necessary for the decision of the cause shall be by special Commission of the General Assembly.

5. That such trials shall be held at Edinburgh, reserving, however, to the Assembly, whenever it sees cause, power to appoint the same to be held at Glasgow, Aberdeen, Perth, Inverness, or Dumfries.

6. That the Assembly shall first fix the time and place of trial, and shall then proceed to the appointment of the Commission ; for which purpose the names of thirty-six members, who may not be objected to, or excused on account of health, business, inconvenience, or otherwise, at the discretion of the Assembly, shall be taken by ballot ; there being always two ministers for one lay elder ; from which number each party shall be entitled to strike off one name alternately, the libeller or pursuer beginning, till the whole number is reduced to sixteen, it being always understood that the number of ministers retained on the roll shall never be less than eight ; and the sixteen members so chosen, with one clergyman, to be named by the Moderator of the Assembly, as preses or moderator, shall form the Commission for the trial of the case.

7. When the place of trial is fixed at any other place than Edinburgh, the ballot shall be taken from the members of Assembly from such adjacent Synods as may be fixed by the Assembly, with the exclusion of the Presbytery in which the case may have originated.

8. In the event of the unavoidable absence of any of the members, thirteen shall be a quorum ; but no other excuse for absence shall be sustained than a medical certificate, on soul and conscience, of incapacity to attend on account of ill health.

9. When the trial is held in Edinburgh, the Procurator shall be bound to attend as assessor to the Commission ; and when it is held at any other place, the Commission may, if they please, have power to appoint an assessor for themselves at the expense of the parties, when it is not convenient for the Procurator to attend.

10. At the trial the Commission shall appoint a clerk, and an officer or officers, also at the expense of the parties, to assist in the conduct of the case. The evidence shall be given *viva voce*, and shall not be taken down at length in writing ; but the preses or moderator, or the assessor, shall take notes of the same, and of any points of law which may occur during the trial. Presbyteries, when they are the prosecutors, shall be entitled to act by a counsel and agent, or one or more of their own body, appointed by them as a committee for the purpose. The accused shall have the privilege of reply. The moderator, or, if the committee shall require it, the assessor, shall sum up ; and the majority of the Commission shall decide ; the moderator having no vote excepting in case of equality.

11. It shall not be competent to appeal against the finding of the Commission, excepting on the ground of misdirection in point of law. Such appeal shall only be competent to the next General Assembly ; and the party desiring to appeal shall intimate his intention to that effect, according to the present practice of the Church, and shall lodge his reasons of appeal with the clerk of Assembly within one month after the date of the judgment. If he fails to do so, he shall be held to have fallen from his appeal, and the case shall be disposed of accordingly.

12. The facts having been determined by the Commission ; and the appeal, if any, on questions of law having been disposed of, or fallen from, the moderator of the Commission shall forthwith intimate the judgment to the Presbytery in which the cause originated, by causing the clerk to send an extract of it to the moderator and clerk of Presbytery, whereupon the Presbytery shall proceed, according to the rules of the Church, to summon the party accused, and pronounce sentence in terms of said judgment.

13. That an act of Parliament shall be obtained to enforce the attendance of witnesses.

XIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Standing Orders to be observed as to the Business of the General Assembly.

The Procurator, as Convener of the Committee on the Form of Process, then submitted a series of Resolutions on the subject of making Motions and putting the Vote, and also on the Printing of Papers; and the Assembly agreed to convert these into Standing Orders of the House.

I.—ON MOTIONS AND VOTES.

1. A motion, whether original or amended, shall be given in to the Clerk in writing, as soon as it shall have been made to the House, and immediately read to the House by the Moderator.

2. When a motion is duly seconded, and in possession of the House, it shall not be competent to make any alteration upon it, excepting in the shape of an amendment, or second or third motion, as the case may be, regularly proposed to the House, unless it shall be consented to by the mover and seconder of any other motion or amendment then before the House.

3. The person who makes the first motion shall have a right to reply; after which the debate shall be held to be definitively closed; and no other person shall be entitled to speak, excepting with regard to the manner of putting the vote.

4. All motions, except the first, shall be considered as amendments on the first, and disposed of accordingly.

5. When there are only two motions before the House, the question put to the vote shall be, Motion or Amendment.

6. When there are three motions, the first question shall be, whether the second or third motion shall be put as the amendment against the first; and the second question shall be, whether the first motion or the amendment so fixed shall be the determination of the House.

7. When there are more than three motions, the first question shall be, whether that last proposed shall be put as the amendment, and so on till only three remain, when the procedure shall be as prescribed in Article 6.

8. In causes, it shall not be competent to move an amendment to the motion, unless it be of such a nature as to decide the case, or to forward it in its progress.

II.—ON THE PRINTING OF PAPERS.

1. That all papers laid on the table of the Assembly shall be printed in the quarto form used in the Court of Session.

2. That it shall not be necessary to print petitions for the opinion of the Procurator, or for aid; or any other merely formal applications, which do not contain any statement on their merits.

3. That the extracts from the minutes of the Inferior Courts shall always be printed entire.

XIV.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Act for altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Glenelg, and of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale in May.

The General Assembly appoint the meeting of the Synod of Glenelg to be changed from the third Wednesday of July to the Wednesday preceding the opening of the General Assembly by one calendar month.

The General Assembly also appoint the meeting of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale in May, to be holden henceforth on the second instead of the first Tuesday of that month.

XV.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Act on the Examination of Students residing beyond the Bounds of this Church, before their entrance on the Study of Divinity.

On the Report of the Committee appointed to class Returns to Overtures, that a majority of Presbyteries had approved of this Overture, the General Assembly pass the same into a Standing Law of the Church.

The General Assembly therefore did, and hereby do, resolve, enact, and declare, that students not resident within the bounds of the Church of Scotland, who have finished a course of philosophy in any of the Universities of Scotland, may, previous to their enrolment as students of divinity, be examined by the Presbytery within whose bounds the University at which they have studied is situated, either at the end of the last session of their course of philosophy, or immediately before the commencement of their first session in divinity.

XVI.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overture anent a Hebrew Exercise.

(See Act 10th, Assembly, 1836.)

XVII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overtures anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity.

(See Act 8th, Assembly, 1837.)

XVIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overture for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church.

(See Act 9th, Assembly, 1837.)

XIX.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Declaratory Act for Explaining the Acts relative to the number of Commissioners sent from Presbyteries.

Whereas, by the 5th Act of Assembly, 1694, and the 6th Act of Assembly, 1712, appointing the number of representatives for Presbyteries, there is a proportion observed between the number of ministerial charges in each Presbytery, and the number of its representatives, yet the regulations contained in the said Acts are no farther expressed, than to allow six ministers and three ruling elders as the representatives of each Presbytery whose number exceeds thirty, the General Assembly, according to the design of said Acts, do declare and appoint, that in future every Presbytery, the ministerial charges in which shall exceed thirty-six, shall send to the Assembly seven ministers and three ruling elders; and every Presbytery whose ministerial charges shall exceed forty-two, shall send eight ministers and four ruling elders; and, farther, that in every case in which a Principal or Professor of Divinity in a University shall be entitled, in virtue of his office in such University, to a seat in the Presbytery of the bounds, (the said Principal or Professor not holding at the same time a cure of

souls within the Presbytery,) the office of such Principal or Professor shall be held, as far as regards the number of representatives to be elected by the Presbytery, to be a ministerial charge.

XX.

*Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Overture on New Churches.**

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on New Churches, which was given in by Dr M'Farlan, and read. The Assembly approve thereof, and agree to transmit the same to the Presbyteries for their consideration, with a view of its being converted into a Standing Law of the Church.

1. That the Act of Assembly, 1798, anent the Erection of Chapels of Ease, be rescinded.
2. That Presbyteries shall have the power of granting constitutions to new churches, under the control, and liable to the review, of the General Assembly.

3. That when a petition shall be presented to them for a new erection, they shall strictly observe the following rules:—

1st, They shall cause to be cited, in the usual form, all parties having interest,—namely, the minister and kirk-session of the parish in which the new church is to be built, the heritors of the parish, and in royal burghs the magistrates, allowing an interval of at least ten free days between the date of the citation and the day for entering on the consideration of the petition.

2dly, In every petition for a new erection, the petitioners shall be required to state explicitly and minutely the number of persons who may be accommodated in the intended church, the sum subscribed for its erection, the persons or corporate body in whom it is proposed to invest the property, the wished-for mode of electing the minister and other office-bearers, the provision made for keeping the church in repair, for defraying the expense of communion elements, and all the other circumstances with which the Presbytery may deem it necessary for them to be acquainted; and the constitution shall contain regulations as to these matters, and shall prescribe the bounds of the parish to be erected, the Presbytery abstaining carefully from giving decree for a new erection when there is not a reasonable prospect of the church being permanent.

3dly, The Presbytery shall make such arrangements as may appear to them to be adapted to each particular case. They shall, however, in all cases, require that, by the title-deeds, the church shall be inalienably mortgaged as a church in connection with the Church of Scotland, and that the building and ground shall not be subject to be made liable for the debts of the church or chapel.

4thly, Good and sufficient security shall be given for the regular annual payment of the minister's stipend, which shall not be under L.80.

5thly, In every constitution it shall be expressly provided, that no profit shall be drawn by contributors from the church, in the shape of interest, seat rents, or otherwise.

6thly, No constitution shall be granted till two-thirds of the expense incurred in purchasing ground and building the church shall have been liquidated.

7thly, It shall be provided in all constitutions, that whensoever a permanent endowment, of not less than L.100 per annum, shall be secured by act of Parliament, allocation out of the teinds, or mortification by the heritors, the whole collections at the church-doors shall be paid into the poor's funds of the parish, notwithstanding any special provision thereanent in the constitution, but subject to such deductions as are competent by law, in the case of ordinary parish churches.

8thly, When the terms of the constitution shall have been settled, and the requisites above mentioned complied with, the Presbytery shall pronounce a deliverance erecting the church into a parish church, and the district into a parish ecclesiastical, in which the minister shall exercise all the functions of a parish minister, agreeably to the Act of Assembly, 1834, and sanctioning the constitution agreed on; provided always, that where the Gaelic language is to be used in the church, the Presbytery shall not assign to it any exclusive parochial district to the whole of the inhabitants of which the minister shall be pastor, but shall assign certain limits to all the Gaelic inhabitants, in which it shall be his

* This Overture was re-transmitted in 1836, amended and transmitted again in 1837; and in 1838 was remitted to a Committee for further consideration.—*Ed.* 1843.

peculiar duty to minister, and of such of whom as join his congregation, he and his session shall have the exclusive spiritual jurisdiction, subject to the review of the superior judicatories of this Church.

4. That it shall be competent for all parties to appeal, if they see cause, against the actings of the Presbytery; and appeals shall be taken directly to the General Assembly; but appeals on points not affecting the proposal for a new erection shall not sist procedure.

5. That it shall be competent for the trustees or managers, or the minister and session, to apply to the Presbytery for alteration in the constitution of all such churches already erected and constituted, or hereafter to be erected and constituted; and the Presbytery shall thereupon cause all parties interested to be cited, and after inquiring into the circumstances and grounds of the application, shall report the same to the General Assembly, who may sanction such alterations as are not inconsistent with the regulations hereby enacted.

6. That Presbyteries shall report all new erections and constitutions to the General Assembly which shall be holden next after such erection shall have been made.

7. That this act shall not be construed to extend to the case of rebuilding, or re-erecting on another site the churches of such parishes as are or may be established by decree of the Court of Teinds.

8. That nothing in this overture shall be construed as affecting the right of Presbyteries and parish ministers to sanction the establishment of preaching stations within their bounds.

XXI.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Act appointing a Day of Humiliation.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, having taken into serious consideration the prevailing sins of this land, did, and hereby do, in conformity with the frequent practice of this National Church, especially in its earliest times, appoint a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, to be universally observed throughout the bounds of the Church, on Thursday, the 23d day of July next to come, earnestly exhorting all ranks of men to unite together in confession, supplication, and intercession to the Almighty God, that, in fulfilment of his gracious promises to the contrite, he may be pleased to forgive us our multiplied and aggravated transgressions, and to turn away from us his threatened judgments. And the several Presbyteries of this Church are hereby enjoined to take care that the said day of humiliation shall be reverently kept; and all parents and masters are admonished to warn the members of their families, and especially the young, to beware of converting the time set apart for this devout and solemn exercise into a day of idleness and relaxation, lest, by neglecting to consider their ways, and to turn to Him who hath smitten, and who alone can heal, they provoke the vengeance of Heaven, and bring down on themselves swift destruction.

The General Assembly further ordains all ministers to read this Act from their pulpits on the Lord's Day immediately preceding the said 23d day of July, or on some other convenient day, with the Address hereunto subjoined.

ADDRESS TO THE MINISTERS, ELDERS, AND PEOPLE, OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

We have appointed a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, to be solemnly observed throughout the Church of Scotland; and in virtue of that authority with which we are invested, we call upon you to suffer the word of exhortation.

We need not inquire in what respects, and to what extent, the former times were better than these. We have ground for believing that there have been periods when this portion of the United Kingdom was more distinguished than it is now for the attention of the inhabitants to the religious instruction of children, the careful reading of the Holy Scriptures, the duty of family devotion, and attendance on public ordinances, as well as the prudent, temperate, industrious, and peaceable habits, which are nourished and strengthened by the knowledge and love of the truth. But, without attempting to estimate the comparative de-

merits of this our day, and the ages which are past, it is sufficient cause of humiliation, that with us, even with us, are sins against the Lord our God, and that iniquity must prove our ruin, if, after having been weighed in the balances, and found wanting, we continue hardened and insensible, while God, by the voice of his Providence, is loudly calling us to turn to Him with all our heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.

Let us, then, search and try our ways; and let us all, in our several stations, make confession of the innumerable and grievous trespasses by which we have augmented the fierce anger of the Lord.

Far be it from us to lead away your thoughts from the manifest occasions of humiliation which exist within the Church to any of those which prevail without. Ill would it become a people laden with iniquities to fast for strife and debate, and to foster a spirit of variance, emulation, envying, and vain-glory, instead of the penitential exercises of self-denial and self-abasement. Let us seriously reflect, whether, as ministers, and elders, and members of the Church, we have, in any respect, left our first love, and let us remember whence we have fallen, and repent and do the first works, in which our fathers excelled, lest our offended Judge come quickly, and remove the candlestick out of its place.

If among us who bear the vessels of the Lord, and who have been allowed to keep the charge of his sanctuary, there has been any decline in the exercise of vigilant superintendence, and salutary discipline, and rightly dividing the word of truth,—if there has been any undue relaxation of labour, either in public teaching, or in the attentions which require to be paid from house to house,—if there has been less devoted ardour, or less persevering diligence, in feeding the flock of the Chief Shepherd, than was worthy of our vocation,—if we have not sufficiently commended the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and the pleasantness and profitableness of a holy life,—if we have failed to make full proof of our ministry, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,—it is now high time to awake out of sleep, and to cast the beam out of our own eyes, that we may see clearly to cast the mote out of the eyes of our brethren.

And if among you, brethren, for whose souls we are bound to watch, there be any root of bitterness, any forgetfulness of God, any hatred of the light, any disrelish for the doctrine of grace, any preference of the things of time to the interest of the eternal world, any indulged disposition to dishonour the name of God, to profane his Sabbaths, to counteract the free course of his Word, to resist the operation of his Spirit, to yield to the influence of the ungodly and worldly lusts, which the grace of God teaches us to deny,—and thus, by carnality of mind, to live in a state of enmity against God,—be admonished even now, while it is called to-day, to consider your ways, to cast off all the unfruitful works of darkness, to loathe and renounce all the forms of intemperance which degrade the nature of man below that of the beasts that perish, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world, and to walk circumspectly before God, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

In the course of this Assembly our attention has been drawn to many painful facts, all of which must, in a great measure, be traced to neglect or remissness in the discharge of the great duties of our Christian stewardship. The result of all our inquiries impresses on us more and more the appalling consideration, that in all the most populous districts of the kingdom multitudes are passing onward to eternity, in utter ignorance of the only way of salvation, and many thousands of children are growing up to manhood, without being brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and we dare not acquit ourselves of the guilt of having failed to provide the means which it might have been in the power of our hand to employ, for averting or removing these growing evils. We have cause to blush and be ashamed when we reflect on the supineness which has too long and too extensively prevailed in the bosom of a Church which, even in its infant state, was so strenuous and so successful in lifting up the standard against all the varieties of error and ungodliness; and we desire to apply to ourselves, as well as to you, the exhortation to be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain and are ready to die. We have reason to fear that the example of indifference to the value of spiritual blessings has not originated with the lower orders; and if among them there be less now than formerly of the regular observance of the offices of a religious life, and less firm and ardent attachment to the principles of the Reformation, for which our fathers struggled and bled, we are constrained to own, that far less diligence and zeal have been exercised than the pastors and teachers of former generations were wont to manifest, in stirring up both the high and the low, without respect of persons, to the faithful performance of these sacred duties.

It is also a subject of serious lamentation that in our various colonies, peopled, as some

of them are, to a great extent, with natives of Scotland, who were in their youth trained up in attachment to the doctrines and worship of this Church, there is so great a destitution of the opportunities of religious instruction, that many have become reconciled to the habit of living in a state of estrangement from all Christian fellowship, and have yielded to the temptation of casting off the restraints of piety, and foregoing the precious consolations of God,—while many others, holding fast the profession of their faith, and hungering for the bread of life, have been, year after year, imploring from us that brotherly aid which our hands have been too slack in rendering. And though we have not turned away our ear from their reiterated cry, we have neither pleaded so perseveringly as we ought with the Government, nor sufficiently stimulated the bounty of the wealthy, many of whom might have been willing to communicate to so good a work as that of providing instruction in righteousness to souls pining under the famine of the Word of the Lord.

Not less humbling is the reflection that in the vast regions of the East, whence wealth, with a train of luxuries, has flowed profusely into this land, so slow has been the progress of Christian truth, that even at this hour an hundred and thirty millions of human beings are said to bow the knee at the altars of idolatry ; while no effort, except on a most minute scale, and during a very brief period, has been made by our Church to rescue these bond-slaves of superstition from the power of darkness, and to translate them to the glorious liberty of the children of God. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there is hope in Israel concerning this thing ; and that, though it be but as yesterday, the sons of the stranger have now begun to be taught to do the work of evangelists in their native land, and thus have we the gladdening prospect of seeing a seed raised up to serve the Lord, and to be accounted to him for a generation who shall come and declare his righteousness to a people who shall be born.

That our exertions have hitherto been so languid and inefficacious, may be regarded as a mortifying symptom of the littleness, if not the lack, of the faith which purifieth the heart to the unfeigned love of the brethren ; and if it be so with us, we cannot too earnestly pray that God may be pleased to forgive our past omissions of duty, and to animate us by his grace, that we may henceforth abound more and more, both in the cultivation of personal piety, and in the labour of bringing others to the knowledge of that truth by which alone they can be sanctified and saved.

It may be also too justly laid to our charge, that in dealing with such as follow not with us, we have occasionally been less patient and peaceable, less gentle and conciliating, than becomes the followers of Him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again ; and if in this or in any other respect we have been verily guilty concerning our brethren, rather provoking one another than overcoming evil with good, let us resolve more strictly to judge ourselves, and more tenderly to exercise forbearance towards others, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, that, following after charity and peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart, and avoiding questions and contentions which are unprofitable and vain, we may all come, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

In recommending such healing courses, we would by no means countenance any surrender of sound and stedfast principle. The wisdom that is from above, being first pure and then peaceable, constrains all who are under its influence to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints ; but they who are most valiant for the truth know well that it is more efficaciously conveyed from soul to soul when it is spoken in love, than when the unbridled tongue proclaims the vanity of its professions of religion by indulging in bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and uncharitableness. These are not the fruits of the Spirit ; nor is it to be expected that while such effusions of worldly-minded animosity are poured forth, truth will spring out of the earth, or righteousness look down from heaven. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Humbling ourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, and endeavouring every man to understand his errors, and to know the plague of his own heart, let us lay aside the sin that doth so easily beset us, and come to the Throne of Grace with the sacrifice of a broken spirit, which God will not despise ;—let us pray the Lord of the harvest that he may return and look down from heaven, and visit this vine, and the vineyard which his right hand hath planted, causing it to take deep root, and fill the land, and to send out its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the ends of the earth ;—and let such of us as are keepers of the vineyard, watching on the walls of Zion, and seeing eye to eye, lift up the voice together, and continue instant in supplication, until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest ; and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

XXII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th day of May 1836.

Collected and extracted from the Records of the General Assembly, by

JOHN LEE, CL. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1836.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1836.—The King's Commission to the Right Honourable Lord Belhaven.

GULIELMUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1836.—The King's most gracious Letter to the General Assembly.

WILLIAM, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1836.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 10, May 28, 1836.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 10, May 28, 1836.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1836.—Act Disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Kintyre, and forming them into the Presbytery of Islay and Jura.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, disjoin the parishes of Killarrow, Kildalton, Kilchoman, Kilmeny, Oa, Portnahaven, Jura, and Colonsay, from the Presbytery of Kintyre, and form these seven parishes into a new Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Islay and Jura, the seat thereof to be at Bowmore; and the General Assembly appoint the first meeting of this newly elected Presbytery to be held at Bowmore, on the third Wednesday of July next.

VII.

Sess. 6, May 24, 1836.—Act Disjoining certain Parishes from the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and forming them into the Presbytery of Weem.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, disjoin the parishes of Weem, Logierait, Dull, Kenmore, Fortingall, Killin, Rannoch, Foss, Glenlyon, and Strathfillan, from the Presbytery of Dunkeld, and form these ten parishes into a separate Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Weem, the seat thereof to be at Weem; and the General Assembly appoint the first meeting of this newly elected Presbytery to be held at Weem, on the last Wednesday of October next.

VIII.

Sess. 7, May 25, 1836.—Act in favour of India Missions.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and the following elders, who are members of Assembly, viz., Charles Fergusson, Esq., &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and for managing the funds subscribed and given for that purpose, with the whole powers conferred by former Acts of Assembly, and with power also to appoint sub-committees; and particularly, a sub-committee of their number, consisting of nine, for more effectually furthering the great end in view. Of the general committee, nine are hereby declared to be a quorum; and of the sub-committee to be appointed, three are hereby declared to be a quorum. The committee shall hold stated monthly meetings, for dispatch of business, in the Presbytery Hall, or other suitable place, on the first Monday of every month, at two o'clock, with power always to adjourn as shall be needful, and to meet on all occasions when urgent business shall demand. And the said general committee are hereby enjoined and required, by themselves, and through their sub-committee, to attend to the instructions and regulations formerly approved by the General Assembly, for the propagation of the Gospel abroad; with power to make and carry into effect such farther regulations, and to adopt such measures as to them may seem most beneficial, such farther regulations and the measures adopted to be submitted to next Assembly; and the said general committee are hereby appointed to report their diligence, and that of their sub-committee, in calling forth the benevolence and support of the Christian public of Scotland, their prudence in the expenditure of the funds obtained, and generally their management, and the success and extent of their operations in foreign parts. The General Assembly renew their former recommendations to the ministers throughout the Church, that they continue their exertions in aid of the funds of the Mission, and earnestly recommend that in every

parish there be a collection yearly, on behalf of this important cause; and that one minister in every Presbytery be appointed to receive contributions, and transmit them to the Treasurer:

IX.

*Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Act in favour of Colonial Churches.**

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Colonial Churches, which was given in and read by Principal Macfarlan, the convener, who was farther heard on the subject. The General Assembly approve of the report, and appoint the following ministers and elders, viz., the Moderator, &c.; a special committee for carrying the measures suggested by said report into effect, to be called, "The General Assembly's Committee for promoting the Religious Interest of Scottish Presbyterians in the British Colonies." Appoint this committee to meet in Edinburgh on the Wednesday after the rising of the Assembly, at eleven o'clock, A. M., and thereafter statedly on the Tuesdays before the stated meetings of the Commission, with power at their first said meeting to choose their own clerk, and, if necessary, their treasurer; and with power to appoint sub-committees to meet in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and elsewhere, for the purpose of collecting funds, and furthering the objects of their appointment. The Assembly recommend to the Presbyteries of the Church to make public collections within their respective bounds, so as to enable the committee to send ministers and other teachers to stations in the Colonies, where their services are required, and to assist those already employed there, whose circumstances call, in a peculiar manner, for sympathy and assistance; and the committee is empowered to apply the funds put under their management to the purposes above mentioned, and instructed to continue in correspondence with the several Synods, Presbyteries, and, where these have not been formed, individual clergymen in said Colonies. This committee is farther instructed to correspond and co-operate with the Colonial and other societies having the same benevolent objects in view; and it is a special instruction to them to renew, in the name of the Assembly, the application made by the last General Assembly to his Majesty's government, in support of the Memorial presented by the clergy of Upper Canada respecting the Clergy Reserve Fund. It is also made a special instruction to this committee, that they act in terms of the report in matters respecting the churches in Van Diemen's Land. And the committee is instructed and empowered to embrace every proper opportunity of asserting and practically maintaining the rights of members of the Church of Scotland resident in the British Colonies, to all the privileges and emoluments secured by the Treaty of Union to the Established Churches of the United Kingdom. The Assembly appoint the report, with their deliverance thereon, to be printed, with such documents as the committee may think proper to add in an appendix, and to be circulated throughout the Church and in the Colonies.

X.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Act anent a Hebrew Exercise.

The Committee on Returns to Overtures, having reported that a majority of Presbyteries had approved of the Overture on a Hebrew Exercise, the General Assembly pass the same into a Standing Law of the Church.

The General Assembly, therefore, with the view of more effectually promoting the great end of the Christian ministry in our National Established Church, did, and hereby do, resolve, enact, and declare, that as nothing can be more important to the

* The Assembly of this year added the Colonial Churches to the number of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland for the Advancement of the Cause of Christ at Home and Abroad. A Committee of Correspondence had previously existed.—*Ed.* 1843.

interests of the Christian Church, than the adequate preparation of those who are to sustain the office of the sacred ministry, for the discharge of the duties of that office ; and as an exact and critical acquaintance with the Scriptures in the original languages is an attainment that is indispensable for enabling them, by the Divine blessing, to convey to the minds of the people a just and accurate knowledge of the revealed will of God ; a critical Hebrew Exercise on some portion of the original text of the Old Testament shall henceforth be appointed to be prepared and delivered by every theological student in the course of his attendance at the Divinity Hall, in addition to those exercises which are already prescribed by the Church.

XI.

*Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers. **

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, enacted, and ordained, in terms of their Act, passed into a law of the Church on the 29th May 1835, on the subject of the Calling of Ministers ; and whereas it is necessary, for regulating the forms of proceeding under that Act, that some precise and definite rules should be laid down, the General Assembly do, therefore, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, declare, enact, and ordain, that the following directions and regulations shall be observed :—

1. That, at the first meeting of any Presbytery, after a vacancy occurring in any parish, or on any application regularly brought before the Presbytery, for the appointment of an assistant and successor, the Presbytery shall ascertain that a roll of the male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and communicants in the church, has been completed in the manner herein after directed ; and that, if such a roll has been made, they shall proceed to purge the same, by striking off the names of all persons who may have died, ceased to be members of the congregation, or fallen under church censures, since such roll was so made up.

2. That, in case a roll has not been so completed, they shall at that meeting appoint one of their number to act as moderator, with the elders of the parish, to constitute a kirk-session, or, where there are no elders, two or more of their own number to act as a kirk-session, in making up a roll, in terms of the regulations hereby enacted, and shall ordain the said roll, duly attested, to be produced to them at their next meeting, or any special meeting to be appointed for that purpose.

3. That in no case shall the day for moderating in the call be appointed until the roll shall have been completed and purged, to the satisfaction of the Presbytery.

4. That, in order to ascertain definitively the persons entitled, at any particular time, to give in dissents, every kirk-session which has not already made up a roll of the male heads of families, in conformity to the enactment of last General Assembly, shall, within three months of the rising of this present General Assembly, make up a roll of the male heads of families, who are members of the congregation, and in country parishes resident within the same, and who are, at the date thereof, and have been for at least twelve months previous thereto, in full communion with the Church. And, lest any doubt should arise as to who are heads of families, it is hereby declared that the term includes unmarried men and widowers, as well as married men, provided they occupy houses of which they are proprietors or tenants, and eldest sons when their fathers are deceased, provided they are of the age of

* The following is the notice of the transmission of this Overture in the Proceedings of Assembly, 1836 :—

“ The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on the Regulations as to the Calling of Ministers, which was given in by Lord Moncreiff, the convener, and read. The General Assembly approve of the Report, and order the Overture and Regulations to be transmitted to Presbyteries for their consideration, and converted the same into an Interim Act. Mr Clark of Inverness dissented in his own name, and in the name of those who may adhere to him, from the resolution to convert the Overture and Regulations into an Interim Act, in so far as these regulations enjoin Presbyteries to sustain the Call, in every case where there is not a majority of dissents by male heads of families in full Communion with the Church. Mr Mackenzie dissented from the resolution to transmit the Overture and Regulations, and convert them into an Interim Act. A Committee named with power to receive any new or additional returns which may be sent to them on or before the first of March next, with instructions to consider these and the returns already received, and to report to next Assembly.”—*Ed. 1843*

twenty-one years or upwards, and reside in the same house with their mothers, they being always in full communion with the Church.

5. That the roll so made up shall be open to inspection by any parishioner or member of the congregation, for the space of one week, of which notice shall be given from the pulpit, and thereafter shall be authenticated by the moderator and session-clerk, and then transmitted to the Presbytery; and after being inspected by the Presbytery, and countersigned on each page by the moderator, shall be returned to the kirk-session, and form part of its record for the foresaid purposes.

6. That the said roll shall be revised and re-adjusted immediately after the occasion of dispensing the sacrament in the parish which shall have last preceded the 22d of November in each year, and shall be open for inspection in the same manner as before, and shall be re-transmitted to the Presbytery before the expiry of the first week of December.

7. That the said list or roll, as last revised before the vacancy in the parish, or before any application, as aforesaid, for the appointment of an assistant and successor, where a roll has been duly made up, revised, and authenticated, after being examined and purged, as provided under the first regulation, or the roll made up immediately after such vacancy or application, where none had been made before, shall be the only roll for determining the persons entitled to be reckoned in any dissents to be offered against the admission of any presentee to be minister, in the moderating in a call; but it shall still be the duty of the Presbytery to remove from the said roll the names of all persons who may have died, removed from the parish, or become otherwise disqualified, previous to the time appointed for moderating in the call.

8. That when a presentation shall be received by the moderator of a Presbytery, he shall, within two days after it comes to his hand, call a meeting of Presbytery, to take place not less than eight, nor more than twelve, days from the date of such intimation; provided that no meeting of Presbytery shall have been already fixed to take place within three weeks; and that, if such meeting has been appointed, he shall merely give notice that the presentation has been received, and will be laid on the table at that meeting.

9. That when any Presbytery shall be prepared to appoint a day for moderating in a call to the person presented, they shall appoint one of their own number to preach in the church of the parish on a day not later than the second Sabbath thereafter; that he shall, on that day, intimate from the pulpit that the person presented will preach in that church on the first convenient Sabbath, so as it be not later than the third Sabbath after such intimation, and also on some other Sabbath; and that he shall, at the same time, intimate, that on another day to be fixed, not later than the next Friday after the day last appointed for the presentee to preach, the Presbytery will proceed, within the said church, to moderate in a call to such person to be minister of the said parish in the usual way; but that the Presbytery, if they deem it expedient, may appoint the presentee to preach oftener than twice, provided that the day for moderating in the call be not more than six weeks after that on which it was appointed.

10. That on the day appointed for moderating in the call, the Presbytery shall, in the first instance, proceed in the same manner in which they were in use to proceed before the passing of the Act of Assembly, 1835, anent Calls.

11. That if there shall not be dissents by a major part of the persons standing on the roll, made up and regulated in manner herein before directed, and if no special objections be made, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church.

12. That if dissents are tendered by any of the male heads of families, whose names stand on the roll above referred to, such dissents shall either be personally delivered in writing by each of the persons dissenting separately, or taken down from his oral statement by the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery; but that no person shall be entitled so to dissent who shall have previously petitioned the patron for the appointment of the person presented; it being always open to him to state special objections at the proper time.

13. That if dissents so lodged do not amount in number to the major part of the persons standing on the roll, and if there be no special objection requiring consideration stated, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement, according to the rules of the Church.

14. That if it shall appear that dissents have been lodged by an apparent majority of the persons on the said roll, the Presbytery shall adjourn the proceedings to another meeting, to be held not less than ten free days, nor more than fourteen, thereafter.

15. That it shall not be competent to receive any dissents, except such as shall be duly given in at the meeting for moderating in the call, as above provided; but it shall be competent to any person, who may have lodged a dissent at that meeting, to withdraw such dis-

sent at any time before the Presbytery shall have given judgment on the effect of the dissents.

16. That in case the Presbytery shall, at the second meeting appointed, find that there is not truly a majority of such persons on the roll dissenting, and no special objections be stated, they shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement according to the rules of the Church.

17. That in case the Presbytery shall, at that meeting, find that there is a majority of the persons on the roll dissenting, it shall be competent to the patron or the presentee, or to any member of the Presbytery, to require all or any of the persons so dissenting to appear before the Presbytery, at a meeting to be appointed, to take place within ten days at farthest, at some place within the parish, and there and then to declare in terms of the Act of Assembly, 1835; and if any such person shall fail to appear, after notice in writing, either personally or at his dwelling-house, shall have been duly given to him, or shall refuse to declare in the terms required, the name of such person shall be struck off the list of persons dissenting, and the Presbytery shall determine whether there is still a major part dissenting or not, and proceed accordingly.

18. That if the Presbytery shall find that there is at last a major part of the persons on the roll dissenting, they shall reject the person presented, so far as regards the particular presentation, and the occasion of that vacancy in the parish; and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate this their determination to the patron, the presentee, and the elders of the parish.

19. That if, at the meeting for moderating in the call, dissents by a majority on the roll shall not be stated, and if any special objections to the settlement of the person presented, of whatever nature such objections may be, shall then be stated to the Presbytery by any person entitled to object by the general laws of the Church; and if such objections appear to be deserving of deliberate consideration or investigation, the Presbytery shall delay the farther proceedings in the settlement till another meeting, to be then appointed, not later than eight days thereafter, and give notice *apud acta* to all parties concerned then to attend, that they may be heard.

20. That if the special objections so stated affect the moral character or the doctrine of the presentee, so that, if they were established, he would be deprived of his licence, or of his situation in the Church, the objectors shall proceed by libel, and the Presbytery shall take the steps usual in such cases.

21. That if the special objections relate to the insufficiency or unfitness of the presentee for the particular charge to which he has been appointed, the objectors shall not be required to become libellers, but shall simply deliver, in writing, their specific grounds for objecting to the settlement, and shall have full liberty to substantiate the same; upon all which the presentee shall have an opportunity to be fully heard, and shall have all competent means of defence: That the Presbytery shall then consider these special objections, and, if it shall appear that they are not sufficient, or not well-founded, they shall proceed to the settlement of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church; but if the Presbytery shall be satisfied that the objector or objectors have established that the presentee is not fitted usefully and sufficiently to discharge the pastoral duties in that parish, then they shall find that he is not qualified, and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate the same to the patron, it being always in the power of the different parties to appeal from the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, if they shall see cause.

22. That the Presbytery shall not receive such special objections in any case, until after it has been finally ascertained whether there are dissents by a majority of the persons on the roll; but it shall always be competent, as soon as this is ascertained, to state special objections.

23. That if the Presbytery shall have rejected the presentee, and if the patron shall give a presentation to another person within the time limited by law, the proceedings shall again take place in the same manner as above laid down; and so on, in regard to successive presentations within the time.

24. That if no presentation shall be given within the limited time, to a person from whose settlement a majority on the roll do not dissent, or who shall not be excluded in consequence of special objections, the Presbytery shall then supply the vacancy, *tanquam jure devoluto*.

25. That cases of settlement by the Presbytery *jure devoluto* shall not fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly, but shall be proceeded in according to the general laws of the Church applicable to such cases. But every person who shall have been previously rejected in that parish shall be considered as disqualified to be inducted into that parish on the occasion of that vacancy.

26. That in case any appeal shall be taken against any judgment or proceeding of the Presbytery, previous to the time when they are prepared either to proceed to the settlement, or to declare the presentee to be disqualified, and reject the presentation, such appeal shall not sist procedure; but the Presbytery, if they resolve to proceed to the settlement, shall delay doing so till the appeal be disposed of; and, if they reject the presentee, it shall be still competent to him to discuss the merits of any appeal which may have been duly entered.

27. That, in the districts of Orkney and Zetland, the Synod of Glenelg, and the Synod of Argyle, the number of days appointed by this Act with regard to meetings and for other purposes, shall be double the number above provided.

28. That the regulations in this Act shall be applied to all cases of vacancies in which the Presbytery has not already appointed a day for moderating in the call; but the General Assembly hereby renew and continue the Interim Act with regulations, enacted and transmitted by last Assembly, in regard to all cases in which the day for moderating in the call may have been already appointed; declaring it to be still in force as to all such cases, but no others.

29. That the Presbyteries of the Church are hereby enjoined to use all diligence to see that the regulations hereby laid down are duly observed and followed out; and also to use their utmost endeavours to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and be at pains to avoid every thing which may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person, who may be proposed to be their minister.

The General Assembly agree, without a vote, to transmit the above Overture and Regulations to Presbyteries for their opinion; and, in the mean time, they convert the same into an Interim Act.

The General Assembly, in transmitting this revised and amended overture for regulating the due execution of the Act of Assembly on Calls, now passed into a Standing Law of the Church, think it of importance that the people of the parishes in Scotland should not be misled as to the nature and effect of that Act. It gives to them a negative voice against the intrusion of any minister into the parish, whom they are compelled, under the solemn sanction of their conscientious belief, as Christians, uninfluenced by any extraneous consideration, to declare to be unfit for the ministry in that parish. But the Act is not intended to confer any rights of a different nature; and any attempt to wrest it to other purposes must defeat its object, and injure the fair interests of the people which it is meant to protect. All canvassing and caballing, therefore, for obtaining the appointment of a particular person to be minister, and all combination beforehand for that purpose, are inconsistent with the principle of the Act, and ought to disable every man who acts with a due regard to his Christian character, whatever may be his opinion on the law of patronage, from conscientiously declaring in the terms which may be required of him. The Act has been proposed, and after much deliberation, passed by the whole Church, for the benefit of the people, according to the view taken by the movers of it, of their rights under the existing law. But, in order that it may have any chance of producing such benefit, it must be fairly acted on by the patrons, the Presbyteries, and the people,—each party using the rights, and discharging the duties belonging to each, with the honest and single purpose of obtaining a good and faithful minister for the parish. It is only when this spirit shall duly influence all the parties, that any measure devised by the General Assembly of the Church can be expected to accomplish the great ends for which it is intended,—the spiritual edification of the people, their peace, happiness, and prosperity, and the strength and stability of the Church of Scotland.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture anent the Qualification of Representative Elders.

(See Act 12th, Assembly, 1839.)

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture on the Form of Process.
(Re-transmitted.)

XIV.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity.
(Re-transmitted.)

XV.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church.
(Re-transmitted.)

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Act for Altering the Day of Meeting of the Synod of Sutherland and Caithness.

The General Assembly appoint the next meeting of the Synod of Sutherland and Caithness to be held as hitherto, on the third Wednesday of July, and the meeting of Synod immediately following, on the last Wednesday of April 1837, and thenceforth, annually, on the last Wednesday of April.

XVII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture on New Churches.
(Re-transmitted.)

XVIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Overture on the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology.
(See Act 12th, Assembly, 1838.)

XIX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.

PASTORAL LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND ON FAMILY WORSHIP.

The General Assembly, having considered and approved the Overtures recommending a renewed Admonition for the purpose of stirring up the people of this land to the faithful and regular observance of the worship of God in their families, did, and hereby do, require the following Pastoral Letter to be read by all the ministers of this Church from their several pulpits, on the first convenient Lord's Day after it shall come into their hands.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, To our dearly beloved people :
Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

On your behalf, brethren, we thank God, whom we serve with our spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that your faith and devotion have long been spoken of throughout the world ; and we are bound always to have remembrance of you in our prayers night and day, greatly desiring that, like your forefathers in times of clearest light, you may continue stedfastly in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, abounding in the exercises of that unfeigned godliness, which is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

In compliance with the solicitations of many who watch for your souls, and are jealous over you with godly jealousy, we have resolved to issue this brotherly exhortation on the sacred and indispensable duty of family worship,—not as if we had any recent ground for apprehending that it is likely to fall into more extensive neglect, but because we know too well that it is by no means universally practised, and because even the purest minds require to be stirred up by way of remembrance, that, while they hold fast the profession of their own faith without wavering, they may consider one another to provoke and encourage, by good counsel and good example, to the love of truth and holiness, and to the habitual and serious observance of those offices of piety, whereby, as surely as the body is nourished and refreshed by its daily bread and its nightly rest, the soul of man, through the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is progressively matured in excellence and strength, till it is advanced to the perfection and glory of its immortal existence.

In calling your attention to this momentous topic, we think it superfluous to enlarge on the high obligations by which the duty is enforced—obligations which are involved in the very constitution of our frail and dependent being, and impressed on the understanding and the heart by the persuasive voice of Scriptural authority, opening the ears of men and sealing the instruction, by which God speaketh, not once or twice, but at sundry times, and in divers manners, adding line upon line, precept upon precept, promise upon promise, and threatening upon threatening, so as to bring perpetually to remembrance both the blessings which are multiplied to them that fear the Lord, and the fury which is poured out on the families which call not on his name. The appointment of the reasonable service of bowing down at the domestic altar before the Lord our Maker, that, in waiting for the promised effusion of the Spirit of grace and supplications, we may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, has ever been regarded by all men of sound mind and Christian experience, not as the imposition of an irksome yoke, but as the conveyance of an inestimable privilege ; for as often as we mark the tokens of God's power and presence in making the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, must every enlightened and purified heart, lifting up its affections to the Father of spirits, acknowledge, with triumphant satisfaction, that it is a good thing to show forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night.

To those only who have tasted and seen it, can we speak intelligibly of the tranquil delight which is awakened and sustained by such periodical acts of household worship, as are not a mere formal ceremony in which the members join with reluctant or cold compliance, but the fervent utterance of lips, which, out of the abundance of the heart in which the love of God is shed abroad, are, by the influence of that unquenchable affection, most pleasingly constrained to celebrate the mercies which are new every morning, and to offer up the spiritual incense of prayer, with as unceasing regularity as from the sanctuary of Israel the smoke of the evening sacrifice arose, or as the early dew of Hermon descended on the mountains of Sion, when there the Lord commanded the blessing—even life for evermore.

Without all controversy, the benefits produced by this hallowed exercise are ineffably precious. It is not enough to say that thus are devout and grateful emotions awakened,—thus is faith in the superintending Providence and holy promises of God confirmed,—thus are the graces of humility, resignation, and patience, nourished and increased,—while, with the contemplation of the infinite excellence, the unwearied beneficence, and the everlasting strength of the Lord Jehovah, we contrast the instability, deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of the heart of man. By the infallible testimony of Heaven we are authorised to affirm constantly that there is an efficacy in the prayer of faith, which, though inexplicable by our feeble understandings, must, through all ages, continue to avail as much as it did in the days of those patriarchs, prophets, and righteous men, who, as princes, had power with God, when receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, they had grace to serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. The Lord is ever nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, when, taking with them the words which inspired wisdom has taught them to utter, they lift up their desires at his footstool,

not seeking great things for themselves, or panting after the dust of the earth, or sighing for the vain delights of the sons of men, but thirsting and longing for the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, and who, being justified by faith, has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have no encouragement to hope that, by taking thought for temporal satisfactions, we shall find grace in the sight of the Lord; but if we aspire after the best gifts which are the heritage of the faithful, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, we believe and are sure that his divine power will give us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Though our Father in the heavens knoweth what things we have need of before we ask them, and though the purposes of his everlasting kindness are often fulfilled more substantially by withholding than by granting the desires which we naturally cherish, it is only to them who worship him in spirit and in truth that he has promised to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think; and we have no more solid ground to expect that we shall receive without asking, or that we shall find without seeking, than the husbandman has to look for an abundant harvest springing up in the fields which he has neither planted nor watered, or than the merchant has to calculate on receiving his own with usury for the talent which has been tied up in a napkin or buried in the earth.

It is not for us to unfold the laws of the spiritual world, so as to demonstrate why and how it is that the communications of heavenly influence and favour are in any degree suspended on the frequency and fervency of our supplications. But this we know, that, as in old time the father of the faithful commanded his children, and his household after him, to unite with him in the exercises of a holy life, that the Lord might bring upon Abraham that which he had spoken of him,—even so, in all generations, may the willing and obedient hope, that, while seeking unto God, and committing their cause to him who doeth great things and unsearchable, they place their confidence not in their own importunity or their own efforts, but in the exalted merit and prevalent intercession of the Mediator of the New Covenant, they cannot fail to be made partakers of that abundant grace which ought to be the chief object of all our prayers, and which is never denied to the humble. We know assuredly that our heavenly Father giveth his Holy Spirit to them who ask him; and if, for the sake of his beloved Son, he is pleased to bestow this unspeakable gift, in answer to the prayer of the believing soul, why should we hesitate to admit that it is of the Lord's mercies that, by the eternal ordination of divine wisdom, prayer has been rendered one of the sure and sufficient means of transmitting to the faithful every other good and perfect gift which cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning?

To the duties of social prayer and thanksgiving, accompanied with that instruction in righteousness which the reading of the Scriptures is calculated to impart, let the benefits thus conferred on your several domestic circles operate as a strong incitement. It is not, indeed, within the compass of human ability to infuse grace into the souls which are most tenderly beloved. But great will probably be the influence of a pious example on those who confide in your affection, and have cause to revere your worth. If your children and dependants perceive that, while you are not slothful in the business of time, you are also fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and that, while you provide for your own the food and the raiment, which are obtained by the blessing of God on the hand of the diligent, you ask for them that bread of heaven which strengtheneth the heart, may you not hope that they will be stirred up both to pray and to labour for the meat which endureth to life everlasting, and that they will learn to regard the favour of God as a better portion than the abundance of corn and wine? May you not hope that, while your own minds are elevated, by contemplating the works of creation, providence, and redemption, and by reflecting on the dignified and endearing relation to which you have been raised, in having "received the spirit of adoption, whereby you cry, Abba, Father," they who look up to you for guidance and protection will take pleasure in approaching to God, and, through the experience of the peace of walking with the wise, will be taught to abhor the enticements of sinners, and to hold fast that which is good? And even in the case of those who, through perversity of heart, and the snares of an evil world, have forsaken the path of integrity and truth, may it not be hoped that the wise counsels which they have for a season forgotten, and the devotional habits which they have long failed to imitate, will, like the bread cast upon the waters, be found after many days? Small must have been your experience of the discipline of Providence, if you have never known so much as one who had wandered so far from the way of peace as to disappoint the earnest expectations of his father, and to turn the joy of her who bare him into bitterness, but who, after his own wickedness had corrected him, and his backslidings reproved him, has been awakened to new obedience, by recalling to his agonized mind, with reverential awe, the solemn image of the parental

guide, in whose quiet habitation the daily exercises of prayer and praise hallowed every pursuit, lightened every care, soothed every sorrow, and seasoned every enjoyment, so as to render the voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous a lively type of the blessed conversation of heaven, and a delicious foretaste of the fellowship of the saints in light.

If ye know these things by your own experience, or by the incontrovertible testimony of them who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, happy are ye if ye do them. Nor can you have peace and safety if, knowing what is good, you leave it undone.

And while you present your supplications for yourselves and your families, forget not the eternal concerns of the families which call not on the name of God. If it be, as it ought to be, your hearts' desire that they may be brought to the obedience of the Gospel, brethren, pray for us, and for all the ministers of the truth, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you. Such an intercession as this will assuredly prove efficacious towards the enlargement of the household of faith, if all of you, both small and great, not only in the congregations of the upright, who, in heaviness of heart, sigh for the abounding of iniquity and the failing of truth, but in your families apart, and in your unseen retirements, prostrate yourselves at the footstool of your Father in heaven, who seeth in secret, and pour out your desires before him in that effectual fervent importunity which, like the long and patient waiting of the husbandman for the precious fruit of the earth, will, according to the sure word of promise, issue in plenteous showers of blessings, not confined to any favoured spot, or any privileged community, but dropping down fertility far and wide, over fields co-extensive with the inhabited world, filled as it shall be in that evening-time of light with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and thus the God of the whole earth, in remembrance of his holy covenant, and in fulfilment of the good pleasure of his goodness, will arise and have mercy, not only on the mountain of holiness, in which he had his dwelling in time past, but on all in every place who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; so that, while he clothes his priests with salvation, and makes his people shout for joy, the ways of Zion, which have mourned, because few came to the solemn feasts, shall be thronged with the multitudes who keep the holy day with thanksgiving in their hearts, and the high praises of God in their mouths,—wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of those times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when his work shall appear before the face of his servants, and his glory to their children; and they that fear the Lord, being all replenished with the riches of grace, shall take that sweet counsel together which revives the inward part, and knits the brotherhood of Christians in the unity of the faith and the holy bond of perfectness. “Then shall the offering of his people be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years.” “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”

XX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Act recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly, considering the obligation which lies on this Church to promote to the utmost extent of the means wherewith God hath entrusted them, the progress of the Gospel of Christ among our own people, our brethren in the colonies, and the heathen throughout the world; and considering farther, how greatly our efforts have been impeded from a want of due arrangements for properly collecting the contributions of our several congregations, and confiding in the liberality and Christian zeal, were fit occasions regularly presented to them for contributing to the advancement of the four great Schemes now prosecuted by the Church, and recited in the Overtures above mentioned, earnestly recommend to all the ministers of this Church to make collections on behalf of each of these objects, viz. (1.) The Church Extension Scheme; (2.) Colonial Churches; (3.) Education; (4.) Foreign Missions. And the Assembly direct, that within eight days after each collection every minister shall transmit to the clerk of his Presbytery a return of the amount of the collection in his parish; and the said clerk shall communicate to the committee of Assembly for the Scheme for which the collection is made a statement of the whole returns within his Presbytery; and that the committees for the several Schemes shall annually re

port jointly to the Assembly the collections of the several Presbyteries for each of the said objects, with the names of the ministers who have failed to make the collections as recommended. Farther, the General Assembly appoint every minister, on the Sabbath immediately preceding that on which each collection is to be made, to give due intimation thereof from the pulpit, accompanied with such information on the object of the collection as he may deem fitting; and they earnestly urge on their faithful people seriously to consider the duty under which they lie liberally to contribute towards the advancement of Christ's cause, according to the means wherewith God has blessed them. And, finally, the General Assembly appoint this Act to be read on every Sabbath when intimation of a collection is given as aforesaid.

XXI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1836.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th of May 1837.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, Cl. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 18, 1837.

I.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1837.—The King's Commission to Lord Belhaven.
GULIELMUS, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 18, 1837.—His Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.
WILLIAM, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 20, 1837.—The General Assembly's Answer to the King's most gracious Letter.
May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.
The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing his Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 6, May 24, 1837.—Act in favour of India Missions.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and the following elders, who are members of Assembly, viz., James Stark, Esq., &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and for managing the funds subscribed and given for that purpose, with the whole powers conferred by former Acts of Assembly, and with power also to appoint sub-committees; and particularly, a sub-committee of their number, consisting of nine, for more effectually furthering the great end in view. Of the general committee, nine are hereby declared to be a quorum; and of the sub-committee to be appointed, three are hereby declared to be a quorum. The committee shall hold stated monthly meetings for dispatch of business in the Presbytery Hall, or other suitable place, on the first Monday of every month, at two o'clock, with power always to adjourn as shall be needful; and to meet on all occasions when urgent business shall demand. And the said general committee are hereby enjoined and required, by themselves, and through their sub-committee, to attend to the instructions and regulations formerly approved by the General Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel abroad; with power to make and carry into effect such farther regulations, and to adopt such measures as to them may seem most beneficial, such farther regulations, and the measures adopted, to be submitted to next Assembly; and the said general committee are hereby appointed to report their diligence, and that of their sub-committee, in calling forth the benevolence and support of the Christian public of Scotland, their prudence in the expenditure of the funds obtained, and generally their management, and the success and extent of their operations in foreign parts. The General Assembly renew their former recommendations to the ministers throughout the Church, that they continue their exertions in aid of the funds of the mission, and earnestly recommend that in every parish there be a collection yearly on behalf of this important cause; and that one minister in every Presbytery be appointed to receive contributions, and transmit them to the treasurer.

VII.

*Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.**

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, enacted, and ordained, in terms of their Act, passed into a Law of the Church on the 29th May 1835, on the subject of

* The following is the notice respecting the transmission of this Overture and Interim Act :—
 "The Report on the Regulations in reference to the Overtures and Interim Acts relating to the Calling of Ministers was given in by Lord Moncreiff and read. It was moved and seconded, That the words after 'provided,' in the 8th regulation, under the second head, shall be omitted. It was also moved and seconded, That the Assembly approve of the report of the Committee as amended, and transmit the regulations to the Presbyteries, convert them into an Interim Act, renew the Committee on these regulations, and enjoin Presbyteries to transmit their suggestions as to these regulations to that Committee, on or before the 1st of March, that the whole may be deliberately considered, and a report made to the next Assembly. A vote being taken, the second motion was carried by a majority of 115 to 76."—*Ed.* 1843.

the Calling of Ministers ; and whereas it is necessary, for regulating the forms of proceeding under that Act, that some precise and definite rules should be laid down, the General Assembly do, therefore, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, declare, enact, and ordain, that the following directions and regulations shall be observed:—

I. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN MAKING UP AND ADJUSTING THE ROLL TO BE USED IN THE MODERATION OF CALLS.

1. That at the first meeting of any Presbytery after a vacancy occurring in any parish, or on any application regularly brought before the Presbytery for the appointment of an assistant and successor, the Presbytery shall ascertain that a roll of the members of the kirk-session and male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and communicants in the church, has been completed in the manner herein after directed ; and that, if such a roll has been made, they shall proceed to purge the same, by striking off the names of all persons who shall be ascertained to be dead, or to have ceased to be members of the congregation, or to be under Church censures.

2. That in case a roll has not been so completed, they shall, at that meeting, appoint one of their number to act as moderator, with the elders of the parish, to constitute a kirk-session, or, where there are no elders, two or more of their own number, to act as a kirk-session, in making up a roll in terms of the regulations hereby enacted, and shall ordain the said roll, duly attested, to be produced to them at their next meeting, or any special meeting to be appointed for that purpose.

3. That in no case shall the day for moderating in the call be appointed until the roll shall have been completed, and purged to the satisfaction of the Presbytery.

4. That in order to ascertain definitively the persons entitled, at any particular time, to give in dissents, every kirk-session which has not already made up a roll, in conformity with the enactment of last General Assembly, shall, within three months of the rising of this present General Assembly, make up a roll of the members of the kirk-session, and of the male heads of families who are members of the congregation, and in country parishes resident within the same, and who are, at the date thereof, and have been for at least twelve months previous thereto, in full communion with the church ; but declaring, that, in the special case where new churches have been erected ecclesiastically, persons who are heritors or tenants, having a legal right to sittings in the original parish church, and who continue to be members of that congregation, shall be entered on the roll of the said original church, though resident in that part of the parish which has been disjoined from it. And, lest any doubts should arise as to who are heads of families, it is hereby declared, that the term includes unmarried men and widowers, as well as married men, provided they occupy houses of which they are proprietors or tenants, and eldest sons when their fathers are deceased, provided they are of the age of twenty-one years or upwards, and reside in the same house with their mothers, they being always in full communion with the Church.

5. That the roll so made up shall be open to inspection, in the hands of the session-clerk, by any parishioner or member of the congregation, for the space of one week, of which notice shall be given from the pulpit, and thereafter shall be authenticated by the moderator and session-clerk, and then transmitted to the Presbytery ; and after being inspected by the Presbytery, and countersigned on each page by the moderator, shall be returned to the kirk-session, and form part of its record for the foresaid purposes.

6. That the said roll shall be revised and re-adjusted, in conformity with rule *fourth*, immediately after the occasion of dispensing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the parish, which shall have last preceded the 22d of November in each year, and shall be open for inspection in the same manner as before, and shall be re-transmitted to the Presbytery before the expiry of the second week of December.

7. That the said list or roll, as last revised before the vacancy in the parish, or before any application, as aforesaid, for the appointment of an assistant and successor, where a roll has been duly made up, revised, and authenticated, after being examined and purged, as above provided, or the roll made up immediately after such vacancy or application, where none had been made before, shall be the only roll for determining the persons entitled to be reckoned in any dissents to be offered against the admission of any presentee to be minister, in the moderating in a call ; but it shall still be the duty of the Presbytery to remove from the said roll the names of all persons who may have died, removed from the parish, or who are under Church censures, previous to the time appointed for moderating in the call.

II. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN MODERATING IN THE CALL.

For Admitting Dissents.

1. That when a presentation shall be received by the moderator of a Presbytery, he shall, within two days after it comes to his hand, call a meeting of Presbytery, to take place not less than eight, nor more than twelve, days from the date of such intimation; provided that no meeting of Presbytery shall have been already fixed to take place within three weeks; and that if such meeting has been appointed, he shall merely give notice that the presentation has been received, and will be laid on the table at that meeting.

2. That when any Presbytery shall be prepared to appoint a day for moderating in a call to the person presented, they shall appoint one of their own number to preach in the church of the parish on a day not later than the second Sabbath thereafter; that he shall on that day intimate, from the pulpit, that the person presented will preach in that church on the first convenient Sabbath, so as it be not later than the third Sabbath after such intimation, and also on some other Sabbath; and that he shall, at the same time, intimate, that on another day to be fixed, not later than the next Friday after the day last appointed for the presentee to preach, the Presbytery will proceed, within the said church, to moderate in a call to such person to be minister of the said parish in the usual way; but that the Presbytery, if they deem it expedient, may appoint the presentee to preach oftener than twice, provided that the day for moderating in the call be not more than six weeks after that on which it was appointed.

3. That on the day appointed for moderating in the call the Presbytery shall, in the first instance, proceed in the same manner in which they were in use to proceed before the passing of the Act of Assembly, 1835, anent Calls.

4. That if there shall not be dissents by a major part of the persons standing on the roll, made up and regulated in manner herein before directed, and if no special objections be made, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement of the presentee according to the rules of the Church.

5. That if dissents are tendered by any of the persons whose names stand on the roll above referred to, such dissents shall either be personally delivered in writing by each of the persons dissenting separately, or taken down from his oral statement by the Moderator or Clerk of the Presbytery; but that no person shall be entitled so to dissent who shall have previously petitioned the patron for the appointment of the person presented, it being always open to him to state special objections at the proper time.

6. That if the dissents so lodged do not amount in number to the major part of the persons standing on the roll, and if there be no special objection requiring consideration stated, the Presbytery shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement according to the rules of the Church.

7. That if it shall be found that dissents have been lodged by an apparent majority of the persons on the said roll, the Presbytery shall adjourn the proceedings to another meeting, to be held at some place within the vacant parish, not less than ten free days, nor more than fourteen, thereafter; and that it shall be competent to the patron or presentee, or any person duly authorised to act in their behalf, or to any member of Presbytery, as soon as the day of the said adjourned meeting shall be appointed, to require, by a notice given *apud acta*, all or any of the persons dissenting, to appear at the meeting so appointed, and then and there to declare, in terms of the Act of Assembly, 1835, viz.:—"That he is actuated by no factious or malicious motives, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interest of himself or the congregation;" and that if any person having so dissented shall fail to attend at the said meeting, or shall refuse to declare in the terms required, the name of such person shall be struck off the list of persons dissenting: And, in order that the notice thus appointed to be given *apud acta* may be effectual, the Presbytery shall, in the commencement of the proceedings, give intimation that all persons who may intend to dissent must remain till the termination of the proceedings of the day; and that, whether they remain or not, the notice, if ultimately given, shall be held as having been duly given *apud acta*. Provided also, that if, from any cause, the proceedings of the said first meeting for moderating the call shall not be completed on that day, the notice *apud acta* shall still be competent and effectual as soon as the Presbytery shall appoint the second day of meeting.

8. That it shall not be competent to receive any *dissents*, except such as shall be duly given in at the meeting for moderating in the call, as above provided; but it shall be competent to any person who may have lodged a dissent at that meeting, to withdraw such dissent at any time before the Presbytery shall have given judgment on the effect of the dissents.

9. That in case the Presbytery shall, at the said second meeting, at last find that there is not a majority of persons on the roll dissenting, and if no special objections be stated, they shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement according to the rules of the Church : But if the Presbytery shall find that there is a major part of the persons on the roll dissenting, they shall reject the person presented, so far as regards the particular presentation, and the occasion of that vacancy in the parish ; and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate this their determination to the patron, the presentee, and the elders of the parish.

For receiving Special Objections.

10. That if, at the meeting for moderating in the call, dissents by a majority on the roll shall not be stated, and if any special objections to the settlement of the person presented, of whatever nature such objections may be, shall then be stated to the Presbytery by any person entitled to object by the general laws of the Church ; and if such objections appear to be deserving of deliberate consideration or investigation, the Presbytery shall delay the farther proceedings in the settlement till another meeting, to be then appointed, not later than eight days thereafter, and give notice *apud acta* to all parties concerned then to attend, that they may be heard.

11. That if the special objections so stated affect the moral character or the doctrine of the presentee, so that, if they were established, he would be deprived of his licence, or of his situation in the Church, the objectors shall proceed by libel, and the Presbytery shall take the steps usual in such cases.

12. That if the special objections relate to the insufficiency or unfitness of the presentee for the particular charge to which he has been appointed, the objectors shall not be required to become libellers, but shall simply deliver, in writing, their specific grounds for objecting to the settlement, and shall have full liberty to substantiate the same ; upon all which the presentee shall have an opportunity to be fully heard, and shall have all competent means of defence. That the Presbytery shall then consider these special objections, and if it shall appear that they are not sufficient, or not well-founded, they shall proceed to the settlement of the presentee according to the rules of the Church : But if the Presbytery shall be satisfied that the objector or objectors have established that the presentee is not fitted, usefully and sufficiently, to discharge the pastoral duties in that parish, then they shall find that he is not qualified, and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate the same to the patron ; it being always in the power of the different parties to appeal from the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, if they shall see cause.

13. That the Presbytery shall not receive such special objections in any case until after it has been finally ascertained whether there are dissents by a majority of the persons on the roll ; but it shall always be competent, as soon as this is ascertained, to state special objections.

III. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE ULTIMATE PROCEEDINGS.

1. That if the Presbytery shall have rejected the presentee, and if the patron shall give a presentation to another person within the time limited by law, the proceedings shall again take place in the same manner as above laid down, and so on, in regard to successive presentations within the time.

2. That if no presentation shall be given within the limited time to a person from whose settlement a majority on the roll do not dissent, or who shall not be excluded in consequence of special objections, the Presbytery shall then supply the vacancy, *tanquam jure devoluto*.

3. That cases of settlement by the Presbytery *jure devoluto* shall not fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly, but shall be proceeded in according to the general laws of the Church applicable to such cases. But every person who shall have been previously rejected in that parish, shall be considered as disqualified to be inducted into that parish on the occasion of that vacancy.

4. That, in case any appeal shall be taken against any judgment or proceeding of the Presbytery, previous to the time when they are prepared either to proceed to the settlement, or to declare the presentee to be disqualified and reject the presentation, such appeal shall not sist procedure ; but the Presbytery, if they resolve to proceed to the settlement, shall delay doing so till the appeal be disposed of ; and if they reject the presentee, it shall be still competent to him to discuss the merits of any appeal which may have been duly entered.

IV. TIME EXTENDED IN DISTANT SYNODS, &c.

Application of this Act, and renewal of former Acts.

1. That in the districts of Orkney and Zetland, the Synod of Glenelg, and the Synod of Argyle, the number of days appointed by this Act with regard to meetings, and for other purposes, may, if it be thought expedient by the Presbytery, be made double the number above provided, or any other number not less than that prescribed in the above regulations.

2. That the regulations in this Act shall be applied to all cases of vacancies in which the Presbytery has not already appointed a day for moderating in the call; but the General Assembly hereby renew and continue the Interim Act with regulations, enacted and transmitted by last Assembly, in regard to all cases in which the day for moderating in the call may have been already appointed, and also the Interim Act of Assembly, 1835, as to all cases previously falling under it; declaring these Acts to be still in force as to all such cases respectively, but no others.

3. That the Presbyteries of the Church are hereby enjoined to use all diligence to see that the regulations hereby laid down are duly observed and followed out; and also to use their utmost endeavours to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and be at pains to avoid every thing which may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person, who may be proposed to be their minister.

The General Assembly transmit the above Overture and Regulations to Presbyteries for their consideration; and, in the mean time, they convert the same into an Interim Act.

The General Assembly, in transmitting this revised and amended Overture, &c. (Same as last year.)

VIII

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity.

The General Assembly, on the report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, pass into a Standing Law the Overture anent the Annual Examination of Students of Divinity, which has received the approbation of a majority of the Presbyteries.

Whereas it is of primary importance to the interest of religion in the Church, that those who are preparing for the office of the ministry should be in every respect well qualified for that office, and that the Church should have every possible evidence of their being so, before they are licensed to preach the Gospel as probationers; and whereas it would evidently tend to promote these important objects to place them, as much as possible, during the whole period of their theological studies, under the superintendence of the Presbyteries at whose hands they have the prospect of receiving licence; the General Assembly enact and ordain, that every Student of Divinity be examined by the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides, not only previous to his being first enrolled as a Student of Divinity, and again, in certain cases, in the third year of his attendance at the Hall, but that he be examined every year; and that he be required to produce to the Professor of Divinity every session of his attendance at the Hall, a certificate from the Presbytery of his having been examined by them on the progress made by him in his studies, and of the Presbytery's satisfaction with the same, as well as a certificate of his good moral character from the minister of the parish, before he can be enrolled.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act for the Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards of the Church.

The General Assembly, with the consent of the Presbyteries of the Church, as re-

ported by the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, enacts and ordains as follows:—

Whereas it is of great importance that all who are about to enter upon a course of study, with a view to the exercise of the holy ministry, should possess a good general knowledge of the truths of Scripture; and whereas the Act of Assembly, 1827, by which students are appointed to be examined by their respective Presbyteries, previous to their enrolment as Students of Divinity, merely specifies “literature, science, and philosophy, particularly Greek and Latin,” as the subjects of examination; it is enacted and ordained by the General Assembly, that all students, previous to their first enrolment at the Divinity Hall, shall likewise be examined by their respective Presbyteries upon their knowledge of the Christian religion, as it is exhibited in the Catechetical Standards of the Church; and shall produce to the Professors of Divinity under whom their studies are to be conducted, certificates from their Presbyteries, bearing that they have passed such examination in a satisfactory manner,

X.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837,—Overture on New Churches.
(Overture of last year amended and re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Overture on the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology.
(Re-transmitted.)

XII.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act requiring Synod Clerks to send up their Books.

The General Assembly enjoin the clerks of the several Synods, whose books have not been produced to this Assembly, to send them up to the Commission in August; and the Assembly give power to the Commission to revise and attest the said books.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, considering the obligation which lies on this Church to promote, to the utmost extent of the means wherewith God hath entrusted them, the progress of the Gospel of Christ among their own people, their brethren in the colonies, and the heathen throughout the world; and considering farther, how greatly their efforts have been impeded from a want of due arrangements for properly collecting the contributions of their several congregations, and confiding in their liberality and Christian zeal, were fit occasions regularly presented to them for contributing to the advancement of the four great Schemes now prosecuted by the Church, earnestly recommend to all the ministers of this Church to make collections on behalf of each of these objects, viz., (1.) The Church Extension Scheme; (2.) Colonial Churches; (3.) Education; (4.) Foreign Missions. And the Assembly direct, that, within eight days after each collection, every minister shall transmit to the clerk of his Presbytery a return of the amount of the collection in his parish, specifying whether it is the fruit of a collection for one of the said ob-

jects alone, or for two or more, and which of the said objects; and that the said clerk shall communicate to the committees of Assembly for the several Schemes a statement of the whole returns within his Presbytery; and that the said committees shall annually report, jointly to the Assembly, the collections of the several Presbyteries for each of the said objects: And the Assembly appoint every minister, on the Sabbath immediately preceding that on which each collection is to be made, to give due intimation thereof from the pulpit, accompanied with such information on the object of the collection as he may deem fitting: Farther, the General Assembly strongly recommend, that in all parishes, but especially in those in which circumstances may render a separate collection for each of the four objects inexpedient, parochial subscriptions, by means of parochial associations or otherwise, be promoted and encouraged, the funds collected to be appropriated to the several objects, in such proportions as the contributors shall appoint, and failing any appointment by them, as shall be directed by the minister and session; and that all Presbyteries of the Church adopt the measure already beneficially carried into execution in several parts of the country, and of which the Assembly highly approve, of appointing a yearly meeting of Presbytery, of which due intimation shall be given in all the parish churches within its bounds, and which the public shall be invited to attend, in order to afford to every minister of the Presbytery an opportunity of stating what has been done within his parish in furtherance of the said objects, and to give to the persons present, by means of addresses, by one or two of the members specially appointed for that purpose, such information as to the progress of Christianity, at home and abroad, as may be best calculated to arouse the benevolence of the Christian public, and to maintain their interest in the prosperity of the said objects. And the Assembly earnestly urge on their faithful people seriously to consider the duty of contributing liberally towards the advancement of Christ's cause, according to the ability wherewith God has blessed them: And, finally, the General Assembly appoint the minister of every parish within the bounds of this Church to read this Act from the pulpit on the first Sabbath of July next to come, or where there is no service on that day, or where it is the communion Sabbath, on the first Sabbath thereafter.

XIV.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Overture, &c.
(Re-transmitted.)

XV.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act annexing the new Church of Fullarton, Half-way Irvine, to the Presbytery of Irvine.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee on New Churches, annex to the Presbytery of Irvine the parish, *quoad sacra*, called Fullarton, Half-way Irvine.

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 29, 1837.—Act appointing the Diet of the next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 17th of May 1838.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by
JOHN LEE, Cl. Eccl. Scot.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 17, 1838.

I.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1838.—The Queen's Commission to Lord Belhaven.

VICTORIA, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 17, 1838.—Her Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.

VICTORIA, R.

Right Reverend and Well-beloved, we greet you well.—Relying on the numerous proofs which you have already exhibited of your adherence to the succession of the Crown in our family, and the general interests and advancement of the Presbyterian religion, we most willingly renew to you the solemn obligations by which we bound ourselves, on our succession to our throne, to maintain the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

Questions of deep importance will probably engage the attention of your venerable body at your ensuing meeting, and we would earnestly remind you, that the diffusion of religious peace will be best promoted, and the respect of our Scottish people most firmly secured to your proceedings, by their discussion in that tone of calmness and moderation which befits the members of a religious assembly.

We entrust into your hands with confidence, arising from past experience, the care of the moral and religious instruction of our people, which we are always anxious to promote; and we feel assured that neither in your deliberations in Assembly, nor in your separate localities, will this great duty ever be lost sight of.

We are likewise persuaded that no pains will be spared to inculcate on your respective flocks the duty of subordination to their temporal rulers, and the necessity of obedience to their lawful magistrates.

Being well satisfied with the loyalty, integrity, and zeal for our service, of our right trusty and well-beloved Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven, we have appointed him to represent our Royal person in this Assembly.

You have already experienced his ability to discharge the important trust, and we are persuaded that the anxiety to promote the interests of the Church of Scotland which you have observed in him, cannot fail to render the choice of him most acceptable to you.

Not doubting that charity and brotherly love will pervade your deliberations, we commend you to the guidance of Almighty God; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 7th day of May 1838, in the first year of our reign.

By her Majesty's Command,

J. RUSSELL.

III.

Sess. 3, May 19, 1838.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most gracious letter has been received by us with sentiments of lively satisfaction and gratitude. Firmly attached to the Protestant faith, we have

ever adhered to your Illustrious Family; and we rejoice to know that your Majesty recognises the attachment which your loyal subjects feel towards your Royal House, as intimately connected with their attachment to the Protestant faith; and that your Majesty has willingly renewed the solemn obligation to maintain the Church of Scotland in all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

The questions which will engage our attention in this Assembly are of deep importance to the people of Scotland, and we trust that, in our discussions, our calmness and moderation shall be known and manifest to all men, and that our decisions may thereby promote the peace of society, and secure the respect of the people committed to our charge.

Having been entrusted with the spiritual interests of the people of Scotland, we receive with heartfelt joy the expression of your Majesty's anxiety to promote their moral and religious instruction, and of your confidence, from past experience, in the manner in which we shall acquit ourselves of that sacred trust, which we are bound by our ordination vows to fulfil; and it is our earnest prayer that we may never, either in our public deliberations, or in the discharge of our duties in our separate localities, lose sight of that great object in the attainment of which, every inhabitant in this part of your Majesty's dominions may know and believe the truth as it is in Jesus.

Your Majesty may rest assured that no pains will be spared by us to inculcate on our respective flocks submission to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and to recommend to them, under the happy form of government with which they have been blessed, to lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.

The appointment of Lord Belhaven to represent your Royal person in this Assembly is most acceptable to us. Our knowledge of the purity of his character, and our past experience of the ability, and of the kindness and urbanity with which he has discharged the duties of his high office, have gained for him the respect and the attachment of the members of our Church.

We have received with sincere gratitude your Majesty's donation of £.2000 in aid of the education of the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and it shall be our anxious desire to apply this sum in such a manner as may best promote the religious and moral ends for which it has been bestowed.

In all our deliberations, it is our fervent prayer, that Almighty God may guide us, and that He may give us that wisdom which cometh from above, so that brotherly love may continue among us.

That He, by whom Kings reign, and who in His mercy has raised your Majesty to rule over this great people, may long preserve you to be a blessing to this nation;—that He may give you to enjoy all comfort in the duties of your exalted station;—and that He may endue you with grace to be found faithful in the high trust which He has committed to you;—and that, being found faithful, you may be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and may finally receive a crown of life in the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, is the earnest and devout prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most dutiful, and most loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

WILLIAM MUIR, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 6, May 23, 1838.—The General Assembly's Address to the Queen on her Accession to the Throne of these Realms.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The loyal and dutiful Address of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the

Church of Scotland, representing the several Presbyteries, Universities, and Royal Burghs, in this first General Assembly since your Majesty's accession, eagerly seize this occasion now presented to us, of expressing our condolence with your Majesty, and the Royal Family, on the death of our late beloved Sovereign, and offering our cordial congratulations on your Majesty's elevation to the throne of your ancestors.

Approving of the promptitude with which the Commission of the last General Assembly instructed a deputation of their number to convey to your Majesty their assurances of devoted attachment, and concurring entirely in the sentiments expressed by them, we have felt highly gratified by their report of your Majesty's favourable reception of that act of homage performed by the representatives of this National Church.

In looking back to the peaceful reign which was closed last year, we feel ourselves bound to express our thankfulness to the Supreme Ruler, in whose hand are the hearts of kings, and by whose power our late illustrious Monarch was enabled to fulfil the duties of his lofty station with such fidelity and mildness, as to secure the affections of all classes of his subjects, whose unfeigned grief at his departure was a strong testimony of the respectful feelings with which they had contemplated his amiable character and tranquil administration.

It has afforded us most sincere gratification to perceive how cordially the inhabitants of the United Kingdom have hailed your Majesty's assumption of the regal power, and how universal has been the admiration of the mature dignity and gracefulness with which, in early youth, the functions of government have been sustained by a sovereign Princess, who possesses so many hereditary as well as personal claims on their fealty.

It is our earnest hope that, through the Divine grace, your Majesty will be so guided and strengthened, under the solitudes of greatness, that the fulfilment of the most arduous duties may prove a source of unfailing satisfaction to your own heart, and of the most substantial benefits to your subjects.

It has been most pleasing to us to learn how cheerfully the constitutional pledge, required by the Act of Union, was proffered by your Majesty, to maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the true Protestant religion, with the government, worship, discipline, rights, and privileges, of the Church of Scotland, as established by the laws of the land; laws which were framed for the purpose of securing to this National Establishment the same privileges which are enjoyed by any other branch of the Protestant Church in the British dominions. The attachment of the people of Scotland to the Family from which your Majesty is descended was founded originally on their known zeal for the cause of the Reformation; and they have ever regarded the stability of this august House as, under Providence, one of the bulwarks of the Protestant faith, and of the inestimable benefits of civil and religious freedom.

Actuated by these views and principles, we account it a sacred duty to encourage and exhort the people under our charge to maintain their loyalty to your Majesty unshaken, and to render that willing obedience to the laws which the precepts of the Gospel require, not only for wrath but for conscience sake.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may multiply to your Majesty all temporal blessings, and enrich you with the treasures of grace;—that He may establish your throne in righteousness, and teach your senators wisdom;—that there may be peace and truth in your days;—and that, when our posterity shall walk about Sion, remembering her towers and considering her palaces, they may have cause to speak of the wisdom and knowledge which were the stability of the times, when a Protestant Queen, who had been taught to fear the Lord from her youth, was a nursing mother to the Churches, which putting on charity, the bond of perfectness, and keeping the unity of the Spirit, had rest and were multiplied; and above all, that when the lustre of temporal power shall have faded away, you may receive an inheritance with those that are sanctified, in that kingdom which shall not be moved, is the hearts' desire and prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

WILLIAM MUIR, *Moderator*.

V.

Sess. 6, May 23, 1838.—The General Assembly's Address to the Queen Dowager on the Death of his late Majesty.

To her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Dowager,

We, the ministers and elders of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, calling to mind the cordiality with which a former Assembly congratulated your Majesty on the occasion of your being raised to the eminent distinction of sharing the honours of the British throne, cannot now refrain from the expression of our heartfelt sympathy and condolence, on the afflicting reverse which has deprived your Majesty of an affectionate husband, and the nation of a patriotic Monarch, whose heart was devoted to the welfare of his people.

We trust that your Majesty, under the pressure of the heavy bereavement with which you have been visited, has experienced, in abundant measure, the efficacy of the consolations of our holy faith; and that, while mourning over a loss which time cannot supply, your heart has been taught to rejoice in the victory over the grave, secured to all the faithful by that Divine Prince and Saviour, who, by taking away sin, the sting of death, has abolished and destroyed the power of the last enemy, and brought life and immortality to light.

That it may please the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and the Judge of the widow, from his holy habitation to pour out on your Majesty the choicest gifts of his Holy Spirit, and shed abroad in your heart that love which passeth knowledge, enabling you, amid the trials of life, to rejoice in the hope of the glory which is yet to be revealed, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where all who have died in faith shall be kings and priests unto God, and shall reign for ever and ever, are the earnest prayers of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most obedient, and most devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and by our appointment,

WILLIAM MUIR, *Moderator*.

VI.

Sess. 8, May 25, 1838.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 8, May 25, 1838.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing her Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VIII.

*Sess. 9, May 26, 1838.—Act on the Conversion of the Jews.**

The General Assembly, having heard the Report of the Committee on the Conversion of the Jews to the faith of Christ, approve of the same, acknowledge the high importance of using means for the conversion of God's ancient people, and recommend the object to the attention of the Church; and that the ministers, in their preaching and public prayers, more frequently avail themselves of opportunities of noticing the claims of the Jews; and without recommending a general collection, appoint the following ministers and elders, viz., the Moderator, &c.; to be a committee, of which Dr Macgill shall be convener, with power to appoint sub-committees; the said committee to receive, and prudently expend, any contributions which may voluntarily be made by individuals, associations, or parishes, towards this object. Appoint the committee to collect information respecting the Jews, their numbers, condition, and character,—what means have hitherto been employed by the Christian Church for their spiritual good, and with what success,—whether there are any openings for a mission to their nation, and where these are most promising,—and, generally, with full power to take all prudent measures, both at home and abroad, for the advancement of the cause, and report to next General Assembly.

IX.

Sess. 7, May 24, 1838.—Act in favour of India Missions.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and the following elders, who are members of Assembly, viz., James Stark, Esq., &c.; to be a committee for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and for managing the funds subscribed and given for that purpose, in any manner of way, with the whole powers conferred by former Acts of Assembly; with power also to appoint a sub-committee of their number in Edinburgh, consisting of nine, for more effectually furthering the grand end in view. Of the general committee nine shall be a quorum, and of the sub-committee three are hereby declared a quorum. The general committee shall hold stated monthly meetings, for dispatch of business, on the first Monday of every month, at two o'clock, with power always to adjourn, as shall be needful, and to meet on all occasions when needful business shall demand. And the said general committee are hereby enjoined and required, by themselves, and through their sub-committees, to attend to the instructions and regulations formerly approved by the General Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel abroad, with power to make and carry into effect such farther regulations, and to adopt such measures as to them may seem most beneficial; such farther regulations, and the measures adopted, to be submitted to next Assembly. And the said general committee are hereby appointed to report their diligence, and that of their sub-committees, in calling forth the benevolence and support of the Christian public in Scotland, their prudence in the expenditure of the funds obtained, and generally their management, and the success and extent of their operations in foreign parts. The General Assembly renew their former recommendations to the ministers throughout the Church, that they continue their exertions, and put forth farther exertions, in aid of the funds of the mission, and earnestly recommend that in every parish there be a collection yearly on behalf of this most important cause.

* "The Conversion of the Jews" was adopted as a *fifth* Scheme of the Church in 1840.—*Ed.* 1843.

X.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Act recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, considering the obligation which lies on this Church to promote, to the utmost extent of the means with which God hath entrusted them, the progress of the Gospel of Christ among their own people, their brethren in the colonies, and the heathen throughout the world; and considering farther, how greatly their efforts have been impeded from a want of due arrangements for properly collecting the contributions of their several congregations, and confiding in their liberality and Christian zeal, were fit occasions regularly presented to them for contributing to the advancement of the four great Schemes now prosecuted by the Church, earnestly recommend to all the ministers of this Church to make collections on behalf of each of these objects, viz. ; (1.) Colonial Churches ; (2.) Education ; (3.) Foreign Missions ; (4.) The Church Extension Scheme ; and the Assembly direct, that the committees of Assembly for the several Schemes shall make up a joint state of the whole collections of the several Presbyteries for each of the said objects, up to the first day of June in each year, and that each committee shall publish the same in an appendix to their annual reports. And the Assembly appoint every minister, on the Sabbath immediately preceding that on which each collection is to be made, to give due intimation thereof from the pulpit, accompanied with such information on the object of the collection as he may deem fitting : Farther, the General Assembly strongly recommend that in all parishes, but especially in those in which circumstances may render a separate collection for each of the four objects inexpedient, parochial subscriptions, by means of parochial associations or otherwise, be promoted and encouraged, the funds collected to be appropriated to the several objects, in such proportions as the contributors shall appoint, and failing any appointment by them, as shall be directed by the minister and session ; and that all Presbyteries of the Church adopt the measure already beneficially carried into execution in several parts of the country, and of which the Assembly highly approve, of appointing a yearly meeting of Presbytery, of which due intimation shall be given in all the parish churches within its bounds, and which the public shall be invited to attend, in order to afford to every minister of the Presbytery an opportunity of stating what has been done within his parish in furtherance of the said objects, and to give to the persons present, by means of addresses by one or two of the members specially appointed for that purpose, such information as to the progress of Christianity at home and abroad, as may be best calculated to arouse the benevolence of the Christian public, and to maintain their interest in the prosperity of the said objects ; and, particularly, the General Assembly appoint the several Presbyteries to require an account of the diligence of all the ministers within their bounds in this matter, and to record the report of every minister in their Presbytery-books ; and likewise ordain the several Synods to take a particular account of the diligence of their respective Presbyteries, and to record it in their Synod-books. And the Assembly earnestly urge on their faithful people seriously to consider the duty of contributing liberally towards the advancement of Christ's cause, according to the ability wherewith God has blessed them.

The General Assembly appoint the minister of every parish within the bounds of this Church to read this Act from the pulpit on the first Sabbath of July next to come, or where there is no service on that day, or where it is the communion Sabbath, on the first Sabbath thereafter.

XI.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Act anent the Election of Commissioners to the General Assembly from the Presbyteries of the Northern and Western Islands of Scotland.

The General Assembly enacts and ordains, That, in respect of the situation of

the Northern and Western Islands frequently rendering it difficult or impossible for the Presbyteries in these Islands to assemble on particular days during the months of winter and spring, it shall be competent for these Presbyteries to elect their Commissioners to the General Assembly at any time before the first day of May in each year, due notice of the intention to elect having been given fifteen days preceding.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Act anent the Appointment and Ordination of Professors of Theology.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, having found that the Overture anent the appointment and ordination of Professors of Theology has received the approbation of a majority of the Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact the said Overture into a Standing Law of the Church, as follows:—

Whereas, by the law and practice of this National Church, Professors of Theology are declared to be ordinary officers in the Church, and have hitherto been constituent members of the ecclesiastical judicatories of the bounds within which the universities of which they are members are severally included; and whereas it is manifestly expedient, as well as conformable to the principles of this Church, as expressed in the form of Church government approved by the General Assembly in 1645, that every one who has the charge of giving instructions in any of the branches of theological learning to students of divinity, should himself have passed through a complete course of theological study, and have been not only licensed to preach, but actually ordained as a minister of the Word; and whereas ordination must be the act of the Presbytery; the General Assembly enact and ordain, That if at any time hereafter a preacher of the Gospel shall be nominated a Professor of Divinity, or Ecclesiastical History, or Biblical Criticism, or Hebrew, in any of the Universities of Scotland, who has not been previously ordained as a minister of a charge in communion with the Church of Scotland, the Presbytery within the bounds of which the University lies shall be bound to take him on trials, for the purpose of ascertaining the proportion of his gifts to the station which he is to occupy, in the same manner as if he had been appointed to the charge of a congregation within their bounds, in order that, after being found qualified for the particular office, he may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel, previously to his induction to his office in the university.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Act anent the Standing Orders of the Church.

On the Report of the Committee on Standing Orders, the General Assembly agree to the following Standing Orders; and appoint them to be printed among the public Acts of the Church, along with all other Standing Orders now in force:—

1. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland direct and ordain, That, hereafter, all applications for the erection of New Churches, and the relative documents, after passing through the respective Presbyteries, shall, along with the feudal titles of the site, or drafts thereof, be transmitted one month before the meeting of each Assembly to the Standing Committee for Church Extension, or such other committee as the preceding Assembly may have specially appointed for receiving the same; and that such committee shall revise the proposed constitutions and titles, and report to the Assembly their opinion as to any alterations they may recommend to be made therein,—the said committee giving to all parties who may have appeared before the respective Presbyteries eight days' notice of the day fixed for the consideration of their case, in order that they may attend for their interest; certifying all parties applying for the erection of new churches, that if they fail

so to transmit for revisal the documents aforesaid, their applications will not be entertained by the Assembly: Provided always, that where the said documents have been transmitted, they must also be thereafter regularly passed to the Assembly, through their Committee of Bills, in common form; and that all parties who have made compearance in the Presbytery shall be entitled, as at present, to be heard before the Assembly to which the application is so passed, or any committee to be appointed by them, on their objections to the erection of the proposed church, or to the report of the Church Extension or other specially appointed committee, as aforesaid.

2. That all papers appointed by former Standing Orders to be printed shall be lodged with the agent four days before the meeting of the Assembly, excepting when they relate to matters arising after that date, otherwise they shall not be received nor founded on in the Assembly.

3. That no report of any committee shall be read to the Assembly till the principal copy of the same shall have been lodged with the clerk.

4. That the clerk shall not give back or lend out the principal copy of any report to any person whatever.

5. That all reports to the Assembly shall be written upon foolscap paper, so as to admit of their being bound up in volumes; after which it shall not be necessary to engross them in the record.

STANDING ORDERS FORMERLY AGREED TO.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1832.

The General Assembly called for the report of the commission on the Form of Process, which was given in by the Procurator. The General Assembly agree to convert the first eight resolutions in page 3 of the Report into Standing Orders of this House.

1. That the Committee of Overtures shall be appointed to meet on the evening of the first Thursday of the Assembly, immediately after the rising of the Committee for Revising Commissions, and again on the following morning at ten o'clock.

2. That there shall be two sessions held on the first Friday of the Assembly, the one thereof at twelve o'clock noon, to be spent in prayer, as at present; the other as soon thereafter as the Assembly may choose to appoint, for the purpose of hearing the reports of the Committees on Bills and Overtures, and for the arrangement and dispatch of business generally. (*These two articles have since been rescinded.*)

3. That the practice of reading the Answer to the King's Letter, or any address, paragraph by paragraph, in the Assembly itself, be dispensed with in future, reserving the right of members to make such observations as may occur to them thereon as at present.

4. That on the second Thursday of its sitting, the Assembly shall determine when reports of committees not previously lodged and disposed of by special order, shall be taken up.

5. That rolls of the order of Causes, Overtures, Reports, and other matters of business, shall be printed for the use of the members of Assembly.

6. That in as far as may be possible, separate days shall be set apart for the hearing of causes, and consideration of overtures.

7. That when a Presbytery acquiesces in the sentence of a Synod, it shall not be entitled to appear as a separate party at the bar of the Assembly; but the members of Presbytery shall nevertheless be heard as members of Synod.

8. That in no case shall there be more than two speeches for each party at the bar, besides the reply to which the appellant or complainer shall be entitled. And when there are more than two parties, there shall only be one speaker, and one speech for each, besides the reply. It being understood, that *where there is more than one complainer*, each shall be considered as a different party, only in case of its appearing to the Assembly that the complaints rest upon distinctly separate grounds.

Sess. ult., June 2, 1834.

The General Assembly, having heard the report of the Procurator on the following Resolutions, which, in terms of the appointment of last Assembly, (May 27, 1833,) had been transmitted to the several Presbyteries of this Church, did, and hereby do, convert the same into Standing Orders of this House.

1. That all papers, whether forming part of the Record, or produced in evidence in any of the inferior courts, shall, at the time when they are lodged, be dated and numbered by

the clerk of such court, and marked with his initials ; and no paper not so authenticated shall be received in the Courts of Review, unless upon special cause shown.

2. That, in future, all overtures transmitted through the committee, and all petitions or other applications to the Assembly, transmitted through the Committee of Bills, shall be printed and laid on the Assembly's table in sufficient numbers for the use of members, on or before the first Monday of its sitting ; excepting in the case of matters which may come to the knowledge of the Assembly during its sitting,—in which case, the overtures, petitions, &c., shall be printed and laid on the table at least one day before they are discussed. (*See, as to this, No. 2, par. 1, page 1083, supra.*)

3. That the libel and defences, or, when the case commences without a libel, the petition or other initiatory step, and the answers thereto, with the sentences of the inferior courts, shall be considered as the record.

4. That in all references, complaints, and appeals, under the exception mentioned in article 8th, (*infra*), the same, together with the evidence adduced, shall be printed in sufficient numbers to afford a copy to every member of Assembly ; which copies shall be laid on the table of the Assembly in sufficient time to admit of the cause being taken up on one of the days during its sitting, otherwise the appeal or other application shall be held to have been fallen from. (*See, as to this, No. 2, par. 1, page 1083, supra.*)

5. That when the appeal, complaint, or reference, is made merely on a point of law or relevancy, it shall only be necessary to print such parts of the evidence, if any, as the party may think requisite for the determination of such point of law or relevancy ; but in such cases the papers shall be printed in such time as to enable the respondent to print any other parts of the evidence which he may deem material for the right understanding of the case. (*See, as to this, No. 2, par. 1, page 1083, supra.*)

6. That reasons of dissent or appeal, and the answers thereto, when made, as well as all other papers not included in the record, shall be produced to the Assembly, as heretofore, but shall not be held as included in the regulation as to printing.

7. That in *causes*, the expense of printing shall be borne by the appellant, when there is one. When the inferior court shall refer a cause to the Assembly, without pronouncing judgment, the expense shall be borne by the parties mutually, under the certification that the party refusing to pay his share thereof, before the time appointed for laying the same on the table, shall be considered as having deserted the cause, and shall not be entitled to be heard.

8. That when there is no appeal or reference, it shall be optional to individual members of inferior courts, who may find it their duty to bring the proceedings of these courts under the review of the Assembly by complaint, either to comply with the regulations as to printing, or to furnish a complete written copy of the whole papers and proceedings to the Clerk of the Assembly.

9. That in all other cases, such as petitions, &c., the expense shall be borne by the party bringing the matter under the notice of the Assembly.

10. That causes arising out of trials for licence or ordination, and matters relating to church ordinances, as also references on matters which do not affect the interests of the parties in the cause, shall be excepted from this rule, excepting when the parties may think proper to print of their own accord.

11. That a copy of every printed paper shall be kept by the Clerk of Assembly, to be bound up and kept in the Records of Assembly, with a copy of the judgment annexed.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1835.

The Procurator, as Convener of the Committee on the Form of Process, submitted a series of Resolutions on the subject of making motions and putting the vote, and also on the printing of papers ; and the Assembly agreed to convert these into Standing Orders of the House.

1. On Motions and Votes.

1. A motion, whether original or amended, shall be given in to the Clerk in writing, as soon as it shall have been made to the House, and immediately read to the House by the Moderator.

2. When a motion is duly seconded, and in possession of the House, it shall not be competent to make any alteration upon it, excepting in the shape of an amendment, or second or third motion, as the case may be regularly proposed to the House, unless it shall be consented to by the mover and seconder of any other motion or amendment then before the House.

3. The person who makes the first motion shall have a right to reply ; after which the debate shall be held to be definitively closed ; and no other person shall be entitled to speak, excepting with regard to the manner of putting the vote.

4. All motions except the first shall be considered as amendments on the first, and disposed of accordingly.

5. When there are only two motions before the House, the question put to the vote shall be, Motion or Amendment.

6. When there are three motions, the first question shall be, whether the second or third motion shall be put as the amendment against the first ; and the second question shall be, whether the first motion, or the amendment so fixed, shall be the determination of the House.

7. When there are more than three motions, the first question shall be, whether that last proposed shall be put as the amendment, and so on till only three remain, when the procedure shall be as prescribed in Article 6.

8. In causes, it shall not be competent to move an amendment to the motion, unless it be of such a nature as to decide the case, or to forward it in its progress.

2. On the Printing of Papers.

1. That all papers laid on the table of the Assembly shall be printed in the quarto form used in the Court of Session.

2. That it shall not be necessary to print petitions for the opinion of the Procurator, or for aid ; or any other merely formal applications, which do not contain any statement on their merits.

3. That the extracts from the minutes of the inferior courts shall always be printed entire.

XIV.

Sess. 6, May 23, 1838.—Resolution anent the Independent Jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland.

The General Assembly, having heard and considered the Overtures on the Independent Jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, agreed, by a majority, to the following resolution :—

“ That the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, while they unqualifiedly acknowledge the exclusive jurisdiction of the Civil Courts in regard to the civil rights and emoluments secured by law to the Church, and ministers thereof, and will ever give and inculcate implicit obedience to their decisions thereanent, do resolve, That, as is declared in the Confession of Faith of this National Established Church, ‘ The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate ;’ and that in all matters touching the doctrine, government, and discipline of this Church, her judicatories possess an exclusive jurisdiction, founded on the Word of God, ‘ which power ecclesiastical’ (in the words of the Second Book of Discipline) ‘ flows immediately from God and the Mediator Jesus Christ, and is spiritual, not having a temporal head on earth, but only Christ, the only spiritual King and Governor of his Kirk ;’ and they do farther resolve, that this spiritual jurisdiction, and the supremacy and sole Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ, on which it depends, they will assert and at all hazards defend, by the help and blessing of that Great God, who, in the days of old, enabled their fathers, amid manifold persecutions, to maintain a testimony, even to the death, for Christ’s kingdom and crown ; and, finally, that they will firmly enforce submission to the same upon the office-bearers and members of this Church, by the execution of her laws, in the exercise of the ecclesiastical authority wherewith they are invested.”

XV.

Sess. 9, May 26, 1838.—Overture anent Re-union with Seceders.

(See Act 8th, Assembly, 1839.)

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Overture anent the Importance of Establishing and Endowing a Professorship of Biblical Criticism.

(See Act 9th, Assembly, 1839.)

XVII.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Overture anent the Qualification of Representative Elders.

(Re-transmitted.)

XVIII.

*Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.**

The General Assembly, without a vote, re-transmit the following Overture and Regulations to Presbyteries for their consideration; and, in the mean time, they convert the same into an Interim Act,—and direct the suggestions of Presbyteries to be transmitted to the committee on or before the 1st day of March 1839.

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, enacted, and ordained, in terms of their Act, passed into a law of the Church on the 29th May 1835, on the subject of the moderating in of calls; and whereas it is necessary, for regulating the forms of proceeding under that Act, that some precise and definite rules should be laid down, the General Assembly do, therefore, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries

* The following is the notice in the Abridgment of the transmission of this Overture :—

“ Mr Shaw Stewart gave in a Report on the Overture and Regulations on the Calling of Ministers. It was moved and seconded, That the Overture and Regulations be re-transmitted as amended, and that they be converted into an Interim Act. It was also moved, as an amendment, That the appendix, or appended declaratory admonition, shall be, in all future cases, taken and held by Presbyteries as a regulation, in so far as it relates to canvassing and caballing, to the effect that charges of this nature shall be held relevant to inter disqualification for the exercise of the privilege of dissenting without cause shown, that charges of opposing by dissent the admission of a presentee, for the purpose of obtaining the settlement of another, shall infer disqualification. This amendment was not pressed to a division. Mr Forbes dissented. It was moved, That the word ‘not’ shall be inserted before the word ‘fall,’ in third section of the third head of the Regulations. This motion having been seconded, was negatived without a vote. The Procurator, Dr George D. C. Buchanan, and Donald Horne, Esq., dissented. It was moved and seconded, That as it has been decided by the Court of Session, that the Act anent Calls is *ultra vires* of the General Assembly; the General Assembly shall not transmit anew to the Presbyteries of the Church the Regulations connected with it, nor re-appoint the Committee upon these regulations. This motion was negatived without a division. Whereupon, Dr Cook and Dr Bryce dissented in their own names, and in name of all those who might adhere to them; adhered Dr Brunton, Mr Paull, Tullynessle, Dr Bryce, Mr Vary, Mr William Martin, Dr Murray, Mr Gibbon, R. Smyth, Esq., Mr Andrew Bell, Mr William Allardice, Captain Dalrymple, Mr William Logie, R. Whigham, Esq., James Hope, jun., Esq., Mr John Cook, Mr Forbes, Boharm, Mr Z. M. Hamilton, Norman Lockhart, Esq., Mr John Wilson, Mr Angus Barton, Donald Horne, Esq., Mr William Dunbar, Mr William Paul, Sir David Maxwell, Mr William Pirie, R. Anstruther Taylor, Esq., Mr Richmond, Dr Aiton, Mr J. Little, Mr Archibald Browne, Mr Christopher Nicolson, Mr M. Tavish, William Murray, Esq., and Mr Andrew Murray. The motion for the re-transmission of the Overture as amended being then put, was agreed to by the Assembly without a vote. The Committee was then re-appointed, with additional members, to whom the suggestions of Presbyteries are to be transmitted on or before 1st March 1839.”—*Ed.* 1843.

of this Church, declare, enact, and ordain, that the following directions and regulations shall be observed :—

I. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN MAKING UP AND ADJUSTING THE ROLL TO BE USED IN THE
MODERATION OF CALLS.

1. That at the first meeting of any Presbytery, after a vacancy occurring in any parish, or on any application regularly brought before the Presbytery for the appointment of an assistant and successor, the Presbytery shall ascertain that a roll of the members of the kirk-session and male heads of families, being members of the congregation, and communicants in the church, has been completed in the manner herein after directed ; and that, if such a roll has been made, they shall proceed to purge the same, by striking off the names of all persons who shall be ascertained to be dead, or to have ceased to be members of the congregation, or to be under church censures.

2. That in case a roll has not been so completed, they shall, at that meeting, appoint one of their number to act as moderator, with the elders of the parish, to constitute a kirk-session, or, where there are no elders, two or more of their own number to act as a kirk-session, in making up a roll, in terms of the regulations hereby enacted, and shall ordain the said roll, duly attested, to be produced to them at their next meeting, or any special meeting to be appointed for that purpose.

3. That in no case shall the day for moderating in the call be appointed until the roll shall have been completed and purged, to the satisfaction of the Presbytery.

4. That in order to ascertain definitively the persons entitled, at any particular time, to give in dissents, every kirk-session which has not already made up a roll, in conformity to the enactment of last General Assembly, shall, within three months of the rising of this present General Assembly, prepare a roll of the members of the kirk-session, and of the male heads of families who are members of the congregation, and, in country parishes, resident within the parish, and who are, at the date thereof, and have been for at least twelve months previous thereto, in full communion with the church ; but declaring, that, in the special case where new churches have been erected ecclesiastically, persons who are heritors or tenants, having a legal right to sittings in the original parish church, and who continue to be members of that congregation, shall be entered on the roll of the said original church, though resident in that part of the parish which has been disjoined from it. And, lest any doubt should arise as to who are heads of families, it is hereby declared, that the term includes unmarried men and widowers, as well as married men, provided they occupy houses of which they are proprietors or tenants, and the eldest of the sons who reside in the same house with their mothers, when their fathers are deceased, provided they are of the age of twenty-one years or upwards, they being always in full communion with the church.

5. That the roll so prepared shall be open to inspection, in the hands of the session-clerk, by any parishioner or member of the congregation, for the space of one week, of which notice shall be given from the pulpit, and thereafter, with any corrections or additions which may have been made upon it by the kirk-session, it shall be authenticated by the moderator and session-clerk, and then transmitted to the Presbytery ; and after being inspected by the Presbytery, and countersigned on each page by the moderator, shall be returned to the kirk-session, and form part of its record for the foresaid purposes.

6. That the said roll shall be revised and re-adjusted, in conformity to rule *fourth*, immediately after the occasion of dispensing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the parish which shall have last preceded the 22d of November in each year, and shall be open for inspection in the same manner as before, and shall be re-transmitted to the Presbytery before the expiry of the second week of December.

7. That the said list or roll, as last revised before the vacancy in the parish, or before any application, as aforesaid, for the appointment of an assistant and successor, where a roll has been duly made up, revised, and authenticated, after being examined and purged as above provided, or the roll made up immediately after such vacancy or application, where none had been made before, shall be the only roll for determining the persons entitled to be reckoned in any dissents to be offered against the admission of any presentee to be minister, in the moderating in a call ; but it shall still be the duty of the Presbytery to remove from the said roll the names of all persons who may have died, removed from the parish, or who are under church censures, previous to the time appointed for moderating in the call.

II. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN MODERATING IN THE CALL.

1. That when a presentation shall be received by the moderator of a Presbytery, he shall,

within two days after it comes to his hand, call a meeting of Presbytery, to take place not less than eight, nor more than twelve, days from the date of such intimation ; provided that no meeting of Presbytery shall have been already fixed to take place within three weeks ; and he shall lay the presentation on the table at that meeting.

2. That when any Presbytery shall be prepared to appoint a day for moderating in a call to the person presented, they shall appoint one of their own number to preach in the church of the parish, on a day not later than the second Sabbath thereafter ; that he shall, on that day, intimate from the pulpit that the person presented will preach in that church on the first convenient Sabbath, so as it be not later than the third Sabbath after such intimation, and also on some other Sabbath ; and that he shall further, at the same time, intimate, that on another day to be fixed, not less than three, or more than six, days after the last day appointed for the presentee to preach, the Presbytery will proceed, within the said church, to moderate in a call to such person to be minister of the said parish in the usual way ; but the Presbytery, if they deem it expedient, may appoint the presentee to preach oftener than twice, provided that the day for moderating in the call be not more than six weeks after that on which it was appointed.

3. That on the day appointed for moderating in the call, the Presbytery shall, in the first instance, proceed in the same manner in which they were in use to proceed before the passing of the Act of Assembly, 1835, anent Calls.

4. That if dissents are tendered by any of the male heads of families, whose names stand on the roll above referred to, such dissents shall either be personally delivered in writing by each of the persons dissenting separately, or taken down from his oral statement by the moderator or clerk of the Presbytery ; but that no person shall be entitled so to dissent who shall have previously petitioned the patron for the appointment of the person presented, it being always open to him to state special objections at the proper time.

5. That if the Presbytery shall find that dissents have been lodged by an apparent majority of the persons on the said roll, it shall be competent to the patron or presentee, or any person duly authorised to act in their behalf, or to any member of Presbytery, to require all or any of the persons dissenting then and there to declare, in terms of the Act of Assembly, 1835, viz., " That he is actuated by no factious or malicious motives, but solely by a conscientious regard to the spiritual interest of himself or the congregation ; " and that, if any person having so dissented shall refuse to declare in the terms required, the name of such person shall be struck off the list of persons dissenting : And the Presbytery shall, in the commencement of the proceedings, give intimation that all persons who may intend to dissent must remain till the termination of the proceedings of the day. That it shall not be competent to receive any dissents, except such as shall be duly given in at the meeting for moderating in the call, as above provided.

6. That if the Presbytery shall find that there is not a majority of persons on the roll dissenting, and if no special objections be stated, they shall sustain the call, and proceed to the trials and settlement according to the rules of the Church : But if the Presbytery shall find that there is a major part of the persons on the roll dissenting, they shall reject the person presented, so far as regards the particular presentation, and the occasion of that vacancy in the parish ; and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate this their determination to the patron, the presentee, and the elders of the parish.

7. That if, at the meeting for moderating in the call, dissents by a majority on the roll shall not be stated, and if any special objections to the settlement of the person presented, of whatever nature such objections may be, shall then be stated to the Presbytery by any person entitled to object by the general laws of the Church ; and if such objections appear to be deserving of deliberate consideration or investigation, the Presbytery shall delay the farther proceedings in the settlement till another meeting, to be then appointed, not later than eight days thereafter, and give notice *apud acta* to all parties concerned then to attend, that they may be heard.

8. That if the special objections so stated affect the moral character or the doctrine of the presentee, so that, if they were established, he would be deprived of his licence or of his situation in the Church, the objectors shall proceed by libel, and the Presbytery shall take the steps usual in such cases.

9. That if the special objections relate to the insufficiency or unfitness of the presentee for the particular charge to which he has been appointed, the objectors shall not be required to become libellers, but shall simply deliver, in writing, their specific grounds for objecting to the settlement, and shall have full liberty to substantiate the same ; upon all which the presentee shall have an opportunity to be fully heard, and shall have all competent means of defence : That the Presbytery shall then consider these special objections, and, if it shall appear that they are not sufficient, or not well-founded, they shall proceed to the settlement

of the presentee, according to the rules of the Church : But if the Presbytery shall be satisfied that the objector or objectors have established that the presentee is not fitted usefully and sufficiently to discharge the pastoral duties in that parish, then they shall find that he is not qualified, and shall, within two days thereafter, intimate the same to the patron ; it being always in the power of the different parties to appeal from the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, if they shall see cause.

10. That the Presbytery shall not receive such special objections in any case, until after it has been finally ascertained whether there are dissents by a majority of the persons on the roll ; but it shall always be competent, as soon as this is ascertained, to state special objections.

III. RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE ULTIMATE PROCEEDINGS.

1. That if the Presbytery shall have rejected the presentee, and if the patron shall give a presentation to another person within the time limited by law, the proceedings shall again take place in the same manner as above laid down, and so on in regard to successive presentations within the time.

2. That if no presentation shall be given within the limited time, to a person from whose settlement a majority on the roll do not dissent, or who shall not be excluded in consequence of special objections, the Presbytery shall then supply the vacancy, *tantum jure devoluto*.

3. That cases of settlement by the Presbytery *jure devoluto* shall fall under the operation of the regulations in this and the relative Act of Assembly. But every person who shall have been previously rejected in that parish, shall be considered as disqualified to be inducted into that parish on the occasion of that vacancy.

4. That in case any appeal shall be taken against any judgment or proceeding of the Presbytery, previous to the time when they are prepared either to proceed to the settlement, or to declare the presentee to be disqualified, and reject the presentation, such appeal shall not sist procedure ; but the Presbytery, if they resolve to proceed to the settlement, shall delay doing so till the appeal be disposed of ; and if they reject the presentee, it shall be still competent to him to discuss the merits of any appeal which may have been duly entered.

IV. TIME EXTENDED IN DISTANT SYNODS, &c.

1. That in the districts of Orkney and Zetland, the Synod of Glenelg, and the Synod of Argyle, the number of days appointed by this Act, with regard to meetings, and for other purposes, shall be double the number above provided.

2. That the regulations in this Act shall be applied to all cases of vacancies in which the Presbytery has not already appointed a day for moderating in the call : But the General Assembly hereby renew and continue the Interim Act with regulations, enacted and transmitted by last Assembly, in regard to all cases in which the day for moderating in the call may have been already appointed, and also the Interim Act of Assembly, 1835, as to all cases previously falling under it, and also the Interim Act of Assembly, 1836, as to all cases previously falling under it ; declaring these Acts to be still in force as to all such cases respectively, but no others.

3. That the Presbyteries of the Church are hereby enjoined to use all diligence to see that the regulations hereby laid down are duly observed and followed out ; and also to use their utmost endeavours to bring about harmony and unanimity in congregations, and be at pains to avoid every thing which may excite or encourage unreasonable exceptions in people against a worthy person, who may be proposed to be their minister.

The General Assembly, in transmitting this revised and amended Overture, &c. (Same as last year.)

XIX.

Sess. ult., May 28, 1838.—Act appointing the Diet of next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 16th of May 1839.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

The following Pastoral Letter was issued by the Commission of 1838 :—

PASTORAL LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Edinburgh, June 1, 1838.

The Commission of the General Assembly unanimously agree, that, in terms of various Overtures transmitted to the Assembly, a Pastoral Address shall be framed in the name of the Commission, and transmitted to all the ministers of this Church, to be read to their several congregations :—

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—We account it a high privilege, and we trust you will not otherwise regard it, that an opportunity is granted us of communicating with you by a Pastoral Address. In this we follow an example, which, to the comforting of the Church, has recently, as well as during former times, been set before us. And, desirous of following that example, and in the same spirit, we would earnestly seize on the occasion for directing your thoughts to some things which we are persuaded nearly concern your own peace, the welfare of your families, the prosperity of the nation, and the good of our beloved Zion. What we state to you, indeed, may be well known by you already. Yet, “to write the same things to you to us is not grievous, but for you it is safe.” We that are “put into the ministry of the Word” are engaged to declare such things, “in season and out of season,” and “here a little and there a little.” And we must consider ourselves as “watchmen unto the house of Israel, who are to warn them from the Lord, by the word of his mouth.” This, even the Word of the Lord, is our authority. Unto *this* we would bring whatever message we give for trying the soundness and utility of our own teaching—and unto *this* you are to bring whatever directions you receive for ascertaining their truth and obligation. We ask no blind submission to our counsels. We make our appeal “to the law and to the testimony.” And it is only when we speak “the word from the Lord” that we hold up the solemn responsibility by which you are constrained to hear.

Let us, first of all, remind you of the signal mercies which God has bestowed on our land in bestowing on it the Protestant Faith. He chose our land out of heathenism. He formed in it the vineyard of his own planting. And, when the vine that had borne much pleasant fruit was overwhelmed with noxious weeds, “he looked down from heaven, and beheld, and visited this vine.” He took away the miserable corruptions of the Papacy from our land. He caused true religion to flourish in it with exceeding beauty and richness; and he graciously settled the Protestant faith in Scotland, by the institutions of our own Church—a Church, in her government, “founded on, and agreeable to, the Divine Word” in her discipline, fitted to guard the purity of communion—in her worship, simple and edifying—in her Confession and Catechisms, prepared both to defend and spread the truth—and in her salutary union with the State, receiving aid, without sacrificing one of her religious principles or ecclesiastical distinctions.

Let us next remind you, however, that while the impression made on us by these signal mercies of the Lord is grateful and pleasing, it still suggests what is humbling to us. Our religious privileges have not been improved, have not even been valued as they ought to have been. Neither public virtue in our land, nor family religion, nor personal godliness, have corresponded with the means and opportunities for promoting them. The charge of unprofitableness and aggravated sin, even under the highest incentives and occasions of improvement and righteousness, is a charge that must be laid against us. Truly, these words of confession, employed by the prophet Daniel, for himself and his people, may suitably be uttered by ourselves: “We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee; but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day.”

Let us remind you, farther, that while, for our personal salvation, “the long-suffering and mercy of God should lead to repentance,” the hope, too, of perpetuating our blessed privileges forms another motive to an immediate and universal turning unto the Lord. It is our devotedness, in a life of piety, to “the Author and Finisher of our faith,” that raises the best of human guards over the ordinances of our faith. It is fidelity of private and official duty in the members of the Church that best ensures protection from the Head of the Church, amid all occasions of anxiety for her safety. Occasions of anxiety, indeed, for her safety, may now be gathered from many of the circumstances of the times. Enemies to revealed truth are not inactive. Associations of unbelievers are publicly formed. Sceptical and blasphemous works and pamphlets are circulated. Encroachments on the sanctity of

the Lord's Day are, in many places, increasing. Men, whose opinions on religious subjects are professedly very different, are leagued in enmity against the Church. Lukewarmness in the service of Christ, and worldliness, are prevalent. And where "iniquity abounds, the love of many waxeth cold." But amid these causes of alarm for the safety of our Zion, be assured, brethren, that it is in the spreading of vital godliness among ourselves that her safety is chiefly to be found. Be assured, that whatever our Church were to possess, either of learning and eloquence in her ministers, or of countenance and support from statesmen, or of zeal and wealth among her people, for rearing places of worship within her bounds, or whatever besides, for "building up the walls of Zion, and strengthening the bars of her gates;" yet all would be vain, unless the privileges given by the Divine mercy were employed for promoting the Divine glory. Be assured that it is in an increase of family and personal religion, in the prevalence of Sabbath sanctification,—in the deepening of the stamp of holiness on the Church, so as to mark out her people for a "peculiar people, zealous of good works,"—it is in *these*, be assured, that our safety in the day of trial shall chiefly be found. These are earnestness and also means by which we may expect that, whatever be the flames that surround it, "the burning bush is not to be consumed."

For such reasons, brethren, we request you, along with us, to give thanks unto God for what signs have appeared among us that these things are on the increase. We request you to give thanks, too, for all such provisions for their spread, as the stated privileges of our Church supply. And we request you, moreover, to join with us in gratefully acknowledging those additional excitements to the spread of vital godliness among ourselves, which our Church is affording by her calls on us to forward the grand interests of the Saviour's kingdom. She calls on us to aid her in diffusing Scriptural education over our own country, and in sending Christianity to the heathen, and in extending ordinances of grace among parishes at home, where the population has outgrown the spiritual provision, and in transplanting to the Colonies, for the benefit of our emigrants, the religion and worship of their fathers. She calls on us, besides, to give our prayers, and, as opportunity arises, to exert zeal on behalf of the once favoured people of Israel, with whose name and ancient privileges, with whose outcast state and after restoration the final triumphs of the Gospel are themselves so mysteriously united. These, though pointing to foreign objects, are yet incentives to personal good; and while we counsel you to regard them as the precious occasions of furthering the welfare of others, we counsel you, at the same time, to regard them as the precious occasions of furthering the improvement of your own souls, and the stability of all your own Christian advantages. Remember what is written in Scripture, "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." And in these you prepare a blessing for your country and your Church, as well as for yourselves and your families.

But now, turning to yourselves, we exhort you, dearly beloved brethren, to employ with diligence the means of personal religion; and, by the daily reading and studying of the Word of God, and by the daily prayer and self-examination of a devout retirement, let increase of Christian seriousness in your hearts, and of Christian righteousness in your lives, be the chief objects at which you aim.

And, turning also to your families, we exhort you to employ with diligence the means of domestic religion; and by maintaining the daily worship of God,—by hallowing the Lord's Day, and showing, to the inmates of your home, that you "esteem the Sabbath a delight, holy, and honourable,"—by setting a godly example before the eyes of all around you,—by asserting and keeping up, in your whole circle, the purity and order, and very decorums of the Christian habits,—let *this* be your desire and endeavour, that your house be rendered "a Bethel," a dwelling-place of Jehovah, and thus a fit preparative both for the sanctuary on earth, and for the heavenly temple.

And ye, who are parents, be entreated by us, on behalf of the religious and holy upbringing of your children. Follow no plan of educating them, in which the Word of God is either forbidden, or employed for historical instruction merely, to an omission of the peculiar doctrines of its salvation. Consider that, even where a direct assailing of the Gospel is abstained from, irreligion is produced where a direct communicating of the Gospel is not made. While you are to desire for your children the acquisitions of secular knowledge, let none of *these*, however valuable, form a substitute for the attainments of Divine knowledge;—and never forget that the supreme object in a Christian education is the training of souls as the offspring of God, as the purchase of the Saviour's blood, and the heirs of eternal life.

Be it your care, then, to "bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Introduce them early to the knowledge of the Bible. Endeavour to impress them with reverence for it. Secure their attendance on the House of God, that they may hear the faithful exposition of it. Teach them prayer for the Holy Spirit, that He may cause

them to feel the power of Scripture truth. And thus, praying with them, as well as on their behalf, it shall come to pass that *their* supplications at the throne of grace being united with *yours*, the blessing promised to "the families that call on the name of the Lord" shall descend richly on you and on them.

Nor can we here omit to remind you, that, along with the Bible, your supreme guide in the religious training of your children, you are favoured, as a subordinate guide, with the Shorter Catechism of the Church. And we most earnestly beseech you to value it highly, and to use it diligently for that purpose. Great is the benefit which, under the blessing of God, has been derived from employing this Catechism, in the religious instruction of youth. Much of the sound religious knowledge that prevails in our native land may be traced to it. Never was a summary of Christian doctrine and duty compiled, that, for correct, and clear, and impressive statement of divine truth, equals it, or comes near it. Arranged with exactest method,—expressed in a style peculiarly definite,—comprehensive in its bearings, however brief in its details,—stating the Scripture mysteries, without any vain attempts to solve them,—illustrating the Scripture precepts, by concise and forcible views of moral obligation,—and enriched throughout with Bible proofs of every answer,—the Shorter Catechism is an incomparable religious manual, and well worthy of being used, constantly and prayerfully used, in your families. By your explaining those terms in it, which comprise so much of important meaning within so small a compass,—by breaking down the answers into their portions, and opening up the scope and tendency of each,—by putting questions of your own on them, and raising new inquiries, according to the replies that are given you,—by showing the connection that subsists between the several parts of the Catechism,—and especially by impressing the Scripture proofs, in their suitableness for confirming its statement of doctrines and duties, you will find that, as subordinate to the Bible, this offers you a "form of sound words," the use of which, through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, shall render your children wise unto salvation.

But, dearly beloved brethren, the time should fail us, did we try to say all that, in the fulness of hearts, earnest for your welfare, we would think of addressing to you. We just entreat you, therefore, out of concern, not only for yourselves and families, but also for your country and your Church, that you give serious attention to the things, such as have now been spoken. And let us assure you, that if, in answer to prayer, the influences of "pure and undefiled religion" be more and more widely spread, through the personal experience of the several flocks under our charge, we shall then anticipate, with joy, the stability, even to remotest generations, of our endeared privileges. Such were, indeed, a token from God that "He is in the midst of our Zion:" such were an earnest from Him that our Zion "is not to be moved;" such were, as the light and glory over the ark of the covenant, at once a sign of Jehovah's presence, and the proof that his covenant shall not be broken.

And, in desiring this earnestly for you and for yours, "we now commend you unto God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Subscribed, in name of the Commission of the General Assembly, by

WILLIAM MUIR, *Moderator*.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 16, 1839.

I.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1839.—The Queen's Commission to Lord Belhaven.
VICTORIA, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 16, 1839.—Her Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.
VICTORIA, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 18, 1839.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 10, May 24, 1839.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

V.

Sess. 10, May 24, 1839.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing her Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. 8, May 23, 1839.—Act in favour of India Missions.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and the following elders, who are members of Assembly, viz., James Stark, Esq., &c.; to be a committee for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, and for managing the funds subscribed and given for that purpose, in any manner of way; with power also to appoint a sub-committee of their number in Edinburgh, consisting of nine, for more effectually furthering the grand object in view. Of the general committee nine shall be a quorum, and of the sub-committee three are hereby declared a quorum. The general committee shall hold stated monthly meetings for dispatch of business, with power to meet on all occasions when business shall demand. And the said general committee are hereby enjoined and required, by themselves, and through their sub-committees, to attend to the instructions and regulations formerly approved of by the General Assembly for the propagation of the Gospel abroad, with power to make and carry into effect such farther regulations, and to adopt such measures as to them may seem most beneficial; such farther regulations, and the measures adopted, to be submitted to next Assembly. And the said general committee are hereby appointed to report their diligence and that of their sub-committees, in calling forth the benevolence and support of the Christian public, their prudence in the expenditure of the funds obtained, and generally their management, and the success and extent of their operations in foreign parts. The General Assembly renew their former recommendations to the ministers throughout the Church, that they continue their exertions, and put forth farther exertions in aid of the funds of the mission, and earnestly recommend that in every parish there be a collection yearly on behalf of this most important cause.

VII.

Sess. 10, May 24, 1839.—Act anent the Representation of Presbyteries.

The General Assembly, having taken into consideration the Overture from the

Presbytery of Glasgow, on the Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly, and having heard an application from the Commissioners of the Presbytery of Edinburgh to the same effect, did, and hereby do, enact and declare as follows:—

“Whereas, by the 5th Act of Assembly, 1694, and the 6th Act of Assembly, 1712, and the 19th Act of Assembly, 1835, appointing the number of representatives for Presbyteries, a proportion is observed between the number of ministerial charges in each Presbytery and the number of its representatives, yet the regulations contained in the said Acts are no farther expressed than to allow eight ministers and four ruling elders as the representatives of each Presbytery whose members exceed forty-two; the General Assembly, according to the design of said Acts, enact and declare, that in future every Presbytery, the ministerial charges in which shall exceed forty-eight, shall send to the Assembly nine ministers and four ruling elders; and every Presbytery whose ministerial charges shall exceed fifty-four, shall send ten ministers and five ruling elders: And further, that in every case in which a Principal or a Professor of Divinity in a University shall be entitled, in virtue of his office in such University, to a seat in the Presbytery of the bounds, (the said Principal or Professor not holding at the same time a cure of souls within the Presbytery,) the office of such Principal or Professor shall be held, as far as regards the number of representatives to be elected by the Presbytery, to be a ministerial charge. The General Assembly, at the same time, instruct the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow to take into their early consideration the propriety of adopting measures for their speedy division respectively into Presbyteries, of an extent fitted for the most effectual execution of the peculiar duties of these Courts.”

VIII.

Sess. 11, May 25, 1839.—Act anent Re-union with Seceders.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, having found that the Overture anent Re-union with Seceders has received the approbation of a majority of the Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact the said Overture into a Standing Law of the Church, as follows:—

Whereas proposals have been made by the Associate Synod for a re-union with the Church of Scotland, and a considerable number of overtures have been sent at the same time to the General Assembly from the Synods and Presbyteries of the Church favourable to that object; and it has been ascertained by a Committee of the General Assembly, that the course of study required for a long time past of students in divinity in connection with said Synod is quite satisfactory, and that their ministers and elders do firmly adhere to the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and other Standards of our Church; and whereas the members of the Associate Synod do heartily concur with us in holding the great principle of an Ecclesiastical Establishment, and the duty of acknowledging God in our national as well as our individual capacity; and we, on the other hand, do heartily concur with the members of the Associate Synod in confessing the great obligations under which we lie to our forefathers in the year 1638, and several years of that century immediately following, and the duty, in particular circumstances, of uniting together in public solemn engagement in defence of the Church, and its doctrine, discipline, and form of worship and government; and whereas our brethren of the Associate Synod have declared their willingness, in the event of a re-union, to submit to all the laws and judicatories of this Church, reserving only to themselves the right which the members of the Established Church enjoy of endeavouring to correct in a lawful manner what may appear to them to be faulty in its constitution and government.

The General Assembly, with the consent of the Presbyteries of this Church, enact and ordain, that all the ministers of the Associate Synod, and their congregations, in Scotland, desirous of being admitted into connection and full communion with the Church of Scotland, be received accordingly, and that the following rules be strictly observed by the Presbyteries of this Church relative to this subject:—

1. Ministers of the Associate Synod and their congregations shall be received into connection with the Presbyteries in whose bounds their churches are situated, on their laying before the said Presbyteries respectively a representation or memorial, subscribed in name of the kirk-sessions of said congregations, by their moderator, or other person appointed by them; and if there be managers of said congregations, by the preses of said managers, or other person in their name and by their authority, as also by the preses of a meeting of the members of the congregation, setting forth the desire of said ministers and congregations to be received into connection with the Church of Scotland. On such representation or memorial being presented, the Presbytery shall, subject to the condition after specified, receive and admit the memorialists; and in the event of the Presbytery's refusing to do so, it shall be competent to the memorialists to appeal to the General Assembly.

2. On the reception of a minister and congregation of the Associate Synod into connection with a Presbytery of this Church, the managers of said congregation, or the kirk-session and deacons, if managers, shall forthwith take the steps necessary for procuring a constitution for the newly admitted church, and having a territorial district assigned thereto.

3. Every minister of the Associate Synod, at his admission as a member of Presbytery, and every ruling elder of said Synod, before taking his seat as a member of Presbytery, or Synod, or General Assembly, shall subscribe the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Formula of the Church of Scotland, and shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of ordained ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland.

4. The integrity of the kirk-sessions and existing congregations of the Associate Synod admitted into the Church of Scotland, and the right of said kirk-sessions to grant sealing ordinances to the present members of their said congregations, though not residing within the bounds of the parish which may be allotted to them, shall be distinctly and practically recognised by the other kirk-sessions and the Presbyteries of this Church;—provided always, that this provision shall in no respect apply to non-residents who are not at the date of this Act members of the existing congregations as aforesaid.

5. Presbyteries shall not, at or after the admission of ministers of the Associate Synod and their congregations into connection with the Church of Scotland, require any provision to be made for the said ministers by the managers of said congregations different from existing arrangements; but the laws now in force in this Church or hereafter to be enacted, shall be observed with regard to all future intrants.

6. The licentiates or probationers of the Associate Synod shall be received and treated as other probationers within the bounds of the Presbytery, on their making application to the Presbytery to that effect, and on their subscribing the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Formula of the Church of Scotland, and shall be held equally capable with them of receiving a presentation, or of being elected and called to a vacant congregation within the bounds of this Church.

7. The students of divinity of the Associate Synod at the time of the passing of this Act shall, on producing certificates of their having finished their theological course, under the Professor of the Associate Synod, be taken on trials for licence by the Presbytery of the bounds. Those of the existing students of said Synod who have commenced, but have not finished their theological studies, shall complete their *curriculum* with him or in the Divinity Halls of the Scottish Universities; and their sessions of regular attendance on the lectures of the Professor of Theology of the Associate Synod shall be counted as sessions of regular attendance in the Divinity Hall.

8. Ministers and their congregations out of Scotland, belonging to the Associate Synod, and expressing their desire of being recognised by the Church of Scotland as connected with her, shall be held as standing in the same relative position as ministers and congregations in England, Ireland, and the Colonies, whose connection with this Church has been acknowledged.

IX.

Sess. 11, May 25, 1839.—Act anent the Establishment and Endowment of a Professorship of Biblical Criticism.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, having found that the Overture anent the Establishment and Endowment of a Professorship of Biblical Criticism has received the approbation of a majority of the Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact the said overture into a Standing Law of the Church, as follows:—

“Whereas it is of the highest consequence to the character, influence, and efficiency of the ministers of this Church, that no branch of theological study shall be neglected or superficially cultivated; and whereas there is not at present any sufficient security or provision for having the study of Biblical Criticism conducted as an essential part of the theological course in any of our universities, the General Assembly direct that all practicable efforts shall be made for establishing a Professorship of that department of sacred learning in every one of the Universities of Scotland, and for having such professorship so adequately endowed, and the course of study generally so adjusted and arranged, that no increased expense shall be occasioned to students; and, farther, the General Assembly enact and ordain, that, after the institution and endowment of such additional chair for giving instructions in Biblical Criticism, all students of divinity in every university shall be required to give regular attendance on the lectures and other exercises during two years of their attendance at the Divinity Hall.”

X.

Sess. 11, May 25, 1839.—Act recommending Collections for the Four Schemes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, considering the obligation which lies on this Church to promote, to the utmost extent of the means with which God hath entrusted them, the progress of the Gospel of Christ among their own people, their brethren in the Colonies, and the heathen throughout the world; and considering, farther, how greatly their efforts have been impeded from a want of due arrangements for properly collecting the contributions of their several congregations, and confiding in their liberality and Christian zeal, were fit occasions regularly presented to them for contributing to the advancement of the four great Schemes now prosecuted by the Church, earnestly recommend to all the ministers of this Church, to make collections every year on behalf of each of these objects, viz., (1.) Education; (2.) Foreign Missions; (3.) Church Extension; (4.) Colonial Churches; upon the following Sabbaths, viz., upon the second Sabbath of July, the second Sabbath of October, the second Sabbath of January, and the second Sabbath of April, commencing this present year with the collection for the Education Committee on the second Sabbath of July; the collections for the other Schemes following in the order above written, viz., for Foreign Missions, on the second Sabbath of October; for Church Extension, on the second Sabbath of January; and for Colonial Churches, on the second Sabbath of April; and in future years in the same order, but commencing on the second Sabbath of July in each year with the Scheme next in order to that for which the collection had been made in the year preceding; as, for instance, in the year 1840, with Foreign Missions, and so on, through the year, and from year to year; provided always, that whenever the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper happens to fall on any of the said Sabbaths, the collection shall be made on the Sabbath immediately preceding. And the Assembly direct that the Committees of Assembly for the several Schemes shall make up a joint state, &c. (The Act then proceeds in similar terms to that of last year.)

XI.

Sess. 11, May 25, 1839.—Act on the Conversion of the Jews.

The General Assembly, having heard the Report of the Committee for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, approve of the same, and appoint the following ministers and elders, viz.; the ministers of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Moderator, &c.; to be a committee for the above-mentioned object, of which Dr Macgill shall be convener, with former powers, and with power to adopt such measures as to them may seem necessary; and especially with power to take steps for sending a missionary

or missionaries to the stations most promising: And the General Assembly recommend that collections be made throughout the Church for this very interesting object; and renew their recommendation to ministers to remember the cause of God's ancient people in the services of the sanctuary, and that special prayer be made for the Divine blessing on the steps now taken by the Church of Scotland.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1839.—Act anent the Qualification of Representative Elders.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, having found that the Overture anent the Qualification of Representative Elders has received the approbation of a majority of Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact the said Overture into a Standing Law of the Church, as follows:—

“The General Assembly, with consent of the Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact and ordain, That no ruling elder shall be deemed qualified to be chosen, or to sit as a commissioner in any Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, of this Church, who is not *bona fide* an acting elder in the congregation in which he holds office; and that in all commissions in favour of ruling elders, as commissioners to Presbyteries and Synods, it shall be certified by the kirk-session that the commissioner is *bona fide* an acting elder of their congregation; and that alongst with every commission in favour of a ruling elder as commissioner to the General Assembly, there be produced a certificate to the said effect by the kirk-session of which he is a member, otherwise the commission to be rejected: Declaring always, that the provisions of this Act shall not be construed to extend to the case of teaching elders, or theological professors in universities, inasmuch as their proper and peculiar function consists not in ruling in a particular congregation, but in teaching.”

XIII.

*Sess. ult., May 27, 1839.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.**

(Re-transmitted.)

XIV.

Sess. 11, May 25, 1839.—Injunction to Synods for visiting Presbytery Books.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, call the attention of Synods to the injunctions contained in the Acts of Assembly, 1713, 1723, and 1838, (regarding the

* This Overture and Interim Act is in the same terms as that of last year, and the following notice respecting its re-transmission appears in the Abridgment:—

“The General Assembly called for the Report on the Regulations as to Calls, which was given in by Mr Shaw Stewart, and read. It was moved, That the Report of the Committee be approved of, and that the Regulations be transmitted to Presbyteries for their consideration, and again passed into an Interim Act. It was also moved, That the General Assembly disapprove of the Report, refuse to re-transmit the Regulations anent Calls, and to re-enact them as an Interim Act. The first motion having been withdrawn, it was also moved and seconded, That the General Assembly having declared, by its resolution on Wednesday last, that it is deeply impressed with the unhappy consequences which must arise from any collision between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and holding it to be their duty to use every means in their power, not involving any dereliction of the principles and fundamental laws of their constitution, to prevent such results, and having appointed a Committee for the purpose of considering in what way the privileges of the National Establishment, and the harmony between Church and State may remain unimpaired, with instructions to confer with the government of the country if they should see cause; and now feeling that it is inexpedient to take any step which may tend to embarrass the proceeding of the Committee then appointed, while they re-transmit the Regulations, and re-enact them into an Interim Act, direct the Presbyteries to report all disputed cases to the next General Assembly. The vote being taken, it carried Second Motion, by a majority of 137 to 89. This deliverance having been intimated, Dr Bryce, Dr Cook, and other members, dissented, for reasons to be given in.”—*Ed.* 1843.

Collections for the Four Schemes,) as of great importance to the superintendence exercised by the superior over the inferior courts of this Church; and they further enjoin all Synods to be very particular in visiting the records of all the Presbyteries within their bounds, and in seeing that each Presbytery discharge its duties to its members and its parishes, by a strict enforcement of the provisions of these Acts.

XV.

Sess. ult., May 27, 1839.—Act appointing the Diet of next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 21st of May 1840.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 21, 1840.

I.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1840.—The Queen's Commission to Lord Belhaven.
VICTORIA, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 21, 1840.—Her Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.
VICTORIA, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 4, May 25, 1840.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 25, 1840.—The General Assembly's Congratulatory Address to the Queen on her Majesty's Marriage.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in this General Assembly, gladly avail ourselves of this first

opportunity of congratulating your Majesty on the auspicious occasion of your nuptials with a Prince adorned by eminent personal qualities, and recommended to the confidence of this Protestant nation, by his descent from a family signalized in the history of Europe by early and steadfast attachment to the cause of the Reformation.

We humbly and heartily assure your Majesty of the affectionate interest with which we and the people of whom we have the spiritual oversight, contemplate an event, which is calculated to lighten the multiplied cares of royalty by the soothing influence of domestic kindness, and which, at the same time, affords us the pleasing prospect of the blessings which, through the favour of Divine Providence, we hope will continue to be enjoyed by this nation, in living under the mild sway of a race of princes descended from your Majesty, who, inheriting all the excellencies which have endeared their illustrious ancestors to our fathers and to us, will find their own happiness and honour identified with the wisdom and worth, the peace and safety of their subjects.

That it may please the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to guide and to guard your Majesty—to prolong and to increase the felicities of the conjugal relation—to establish your throne in righteousness, and to uphold it by mercy—to satisfy your heart with the treasures of his grace, and the joy of his salvation—to confer on you the high privilege of being indeed the minister of God for good to the Church, and at last to make you and your Royal Consort partakers of a crown of life in the heavens, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANGUS MAKELLAR, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 4, May 25, 1840.—The General Assembly's Address to his Royal Highness Prince Albert of Saxe Cobourg and Gotha.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in this General Assembly, approving of the conduct of the Commission of the last Assembly, in the early and cordial welcome which they offered to your Royal Highness, avail ourselves gladly of this opportunity of adding our heartfelt expressions of respectful attachment to a Prince descended from a family signalized by zeal for truth and liberty, personally distinguished by high endowments, and most honourable character, and now peculiarly endeared to us as the husband of the august and gracious Queen who wears the Imperial Crown of the United Kingdom.

We devoutly pray to the Supreme Governor among the nations that the conjugal alliance which, to the universal joy of the nation, has been so felicitously formed, may continue to yield pure and permanent comfort to her Majesty and your Royal Highness;—that from this happy union may spring a line of princes trained up in the fear of God, in the love of righteousness, peace, and truth, and in every excellence which can give lustre to greatness, so that, through the favour of God, they may enjoy the distinguished happiness of transmitting the blessings of our unrivalled constitution to many future generations; and, finally, that you may, at the close of this temporal life, be admitted to immortal felicity and glory in the world to come.

Given at Edinburgh, this 25th day of May 1840, by your Royal Highness's most faithful, obedient, and devoted servants, the Ministers and Elders met in this General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANGUS MAKELLAR, *Moderator*.

VI.

Sess. 4, May 25, 1840.—The General Assembly's Address to her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent.

May it please your Royal Highness,

We, her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, approving of the sentiments expressed by the Commission of the last General Assembly, in addressing your Royal Highness on her Majesty's nuptials, beg leave to add our warm congratulations on the same happy occasion, so interesting to your maternal heart, and so universally gratifying to the people throughout the whole extent of the British Empire.

We feel grateful to your Royal Highness for the assiduity and fidelity with which you devoted your attention to the tuition of our youthful Sovereign during the years of her minority, and it is our earnest hope that you will long live to enjoy the abundant fulfilment of your heart's desire and prayers, while you have the satisfaction of witnessing the growing graces, and the domestic felicity of a beloved daughter, sustaining the high functions of government with such dignity and wisdom as to advance the national honour, and to conciliate and secure the devoted allegiance of a confiding people.

That Almighty God, the Father of mercies, may communicate to your Royal Highness the choicest gifts of Providence and grace;—that you may long observe the happy results of your tender and skilful guardianship of our gracious Queen, in the not less wise and affectionate care extended by her to the offspring which we hope will be granted to her, as the heritage of the Lord;—and that, through the merits of the Redeemer, you, and those who are dearest to you, may at last be gathered at the right hand of the throne of the great Judge of heaven and earth, is the earnest prayer of,

Your Royal Highness's most obedient, faithful, and devoted servants,
the Ministers and Elders of the General Assembly of the Church
of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

ANGUS MAKELLAR, *Moderator*.

VII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

(The instructions given by the General Assembly, 1717, to their Commission, and annually renewed since that time, are added.)

VIII.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing her Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

IX.

Sess. 2, May 22, 1840.—Act on the Conversion of the Jews.

The General Assembly, having heard the Report of the Committee for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, approve of the same; and having also heard two members of the deputation with reference to their Report, the Assembly unanimously express their gratitude to all the members of the deputation, through the Moderator, and their sympathy in the present circumstances of Dr Black. The General Assembly appoint the following ministers and elders, viz., the ministers of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, &c.; to be a committee for the above mentioned object, of which Dr Macgill shall be convener, with former powers, and especially with power to adopt such measures as to them may seem necessary; and, particularly, with power to take steps for preparing and sending missionaries to the stations most promising; and the General Assembly recommend that collections be made throughout the Church for this object, in the same way as for the other Schemes of the Church; and renew their recommendation to ministers to remember the cause of God's ancient people in the services of the sanctuary.

X.

Sess. 4, May 25, 1840.—Act in favour of India Missions.

After hearing the Report, the General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and of the Presbytery of Glasgow, and the following members of Assembly, viz.:—Dr Mackay, &c.; to be a committee for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and for raising and managing the funds contributed for that purpose; with power to appoint sub-committees for furthering the objects in view. The general committee shall hold stated monthly meetings for dispatch of business, with power to meet on all necessary occasions. And the committee are enjoined to attend to the instructions approved of by former Assemblies, with power to adopt and carry into effect such farther measures as to them may seem beneficial. The General Assembly, deeply anxious that the funds placed at the disposal of the committee should be increased in amount, to meet the increasing expenditure, earnestly recommend the formation of parochial and district associations, for the raising of funds and the dissemination of missionary intelligence. And the Assembly renew their recommendation, that in every parish there may be made an yearly public collection in the parish church on behalf of this cause, on the day to be fixed by the Assembly in its arrangement regarding collections for the different Schemes of the Church. And the General Assembly earnestly recommend that each minister, in his public prayers, implore the blessing of God on the exertions of the committee, on the labours of the missionaries, and also on those who, through their instrumentality, may be brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

XL

Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Act Recommending Collections for the Five Schemes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, considering the obligation which lies on this Church to promote, to the utmost extent of the means with which God hath entrusted them, the progress of the Gospel of Christ among their own people, their brethren in the Colonies, and the heathen throughout the world; and considering farther, how greatly their efforts have been impeded from a want of due arrangements for properly collecting the contributions of their several congregations, and confiding in their liberality and Christian zeal, were fit occasions regularly presented to them for contributing to the advancement of the five great Schemes now prosecuted by the Church, earnestly recommend to all the ministers of this Church to make collections every year on behalf of each of these objects, viz.—(1.) Foreign Missions; (2.) Church Extension; (3.) Colonial Churches; (4.) Conversion of the Jews; (5.) Education; upon the following Sabbaths, viz.—upon the second Sabbath of July, the second Sabbath of October, the second Sabbath of January, the second Sabbath of March, and the second Sabbath of May, commencing this present year with the collection for Foreign Missions on the second Sabbath of July; the collections for the other Schemes following in the order above written, viz.—for Church Extension on the second Sabbath of October; for Colonial Churches, on the second Sabbath of January; for Conversion of the Jews, on the second Sabbath of March; and for Education, on the second Sabbath of May; and in future years in the same order, but commencing on the second Sabbath of July in each year, with the Scheme next in order to that for which the collection had been made in the year preceding; as, for instance, in the year 1841, with Church Extension, and so on through the year, and from year to year; provided always, that whenever the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper happens to fall on any of the said Sabbaths, the collection shall be made on the Sabbath immediately preceding: And the Assembly direct that the committees of Assembly for the several Schemes shall make up a joint state, &c. (The Act then proceeds in similar terms to that of last year.)

XII

Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Act appointing a Special Commission to co-operate with the Presbytery of Strathbogie in providing for the Preaching of the Gospel, and the Administration of the Ordinances of Religion, and the Exercise of Discipline in the Parishes of the Seven Suspended Ministers of that Presbytery.

The General Assembly, having taken into consideration the state of the Parishes of the ministers of the Presbytery of Strathbogie, suspended by sentence of this date, and the necessity of providing for the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the ordinances of religion, and the exercise of discipline therein, resolve to appoint a Special Commission to co-operate with the Presbytery of Strathbogie in providing the same; and they accordingly did, and hereby do, appoint the Moderator, Dr Dickson, Mr John Paul, Mr James Thomson, Mr Bannerman, Mr Scott, (Dalmeny,) Dr Welsh, Dr Chalmers, Principal Dewar, Mr M'Lagan, Dr Paterson, Dr Henderson, Mr Thorburn, Dr M'Farlan, Mr L. Balfour, Mr Grierson, R. Bruce, Esq. of Kennet, the Procurator, George Buchan, Esq. of Kelloe, A. E. Monteith, Esq., A. Dunlop, Esq., J. G. Wood, Esq., P. Dalmahoy, Esq., W. H. Craufurd, Esq., Mr Duncan M'Farlane,—seven, of whom five shall be ministers, to be a quorum,—commissioners for the purpose aforesaid; and they empower and instruct the Presbytery of Strathbogie, with advice and consent of the said Special Commission, to appoint ministers or probationers to preach and administer the ordinances of religion in the parishes of the said ministers during their suspension, and to give special directions thereanent. And in the event of any circumstances occurring which

may appear to the said Special Commission to render it necessary, the General Assembly empower them, of themselves, to do and perform what the Presbytery is hereby authorised to perform, with their advice and consent; Dr Dickson to be convener.

XIII.

*Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.**

(Re-transmitted.)

XIV.

Sess. ult., June 1, 1840.—Act appointing the Diet of next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 20th of May 1841.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

* This Overture and Interim Act is the same as that of last year. The following notice respecting its re-transmission appears in the Abridgment of the Proceedings:—

“The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on the Overtures and Regulations as to Calls, which, in the absence of the Convener, Mr Shaw Stewart, was given in by Mr Dunlop. It was moved and seconded, That the General Assembly re-transmit the Regulations relative to the Act on Calls, again enact them as an Interim Act, and renew the instruction of last year to Presbyteries to report to next Assembly all cases in which an apparent majority of dissents shall be tendered, unless the dissent shall be acquiesced in by the parties; the General Assembly, in thus suspending all disputed cases, being earnestly desirous to avoid, as far as possible, all further collision with the Civil Courts, and to reserve to the Church the power of finally deciding all such cases, in harmony with any law regarding the temporalities which may pass the Legislature during the current year, and which shall, at the same time, be in accordance with the fundamental principles of this Church. Under the above instruction to Presbyteries, the settlement of ministers will continue to be conducted according to the existing Act on Calls, and those cases in which all parties acquiesce in its operation will be carried out to a final conclusion under the same; but the General Assembly find themselves precluded, in present circumstances, from adopting any other permanent rule upon the subject, when there appears no other arrangement consistent with the fundamental principles of the Church, which the Assembly can substitute in its room, that may not be found equally open to challenge by the Civil Courts. It was also moved and seconded, that as the Act anent Calls, called the Veto Act, has been declared illegal by the Supreme Civil Judicatory, the General Assembly declare that the said Act is null and void, with the Regulations accessory to, and dependent upon it, and refuse to re-enact and re-transmit the same. A third motion was made and seconded, That the General Assembly, taking into consideration the difficulties to which not only the Presbyteries of the Church, but the individual members thereof, may be subjected through the attempt to carry into operation the Regulations, and being desirous to remove every impediment in the way of an adjustment of the present difficulties, in accordance with the repeatedly expressed mind of the Church, suspend the Act on Calls till the next General Assembly and, in the mean time, instruct Presbyteries to proceed to the settlement of ministers according to the rules of the Church; it being distinctly enjoined, that the communicants shall, on the day fixed for the moderation of the call, have full opportunity afforded them to express their dissent; that the dissentients be required to assign, for the information and consideration of the Presbytery, the grounds of their objections to the presentee; and that the Presbytery shall, on a review of the whole circumstances of the case, decide on the fitness or unfitness of the presentee for the particular parish. The second and third motions were negatived without a division,—whereupon the General Assembly found in terms of the first motion.”—*Ed.* 1843.

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT
EDINBURGH, MAY 20, 1841.

I.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1841.—The Queen's Commission to Lord Belhaven.
VICTORIA, &c.

II.

Sess. 1, May 20, 1841.—Her Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.
VICTORIA, R., &c.

III.

Sess. 3, May 22, 1841.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.
May it please your Majesty, &c.

IV.

Sess. 4, May 24, 1841.—The General Assembly's Address of Congratulation to the Queen on the Birth of the Princess-Royal.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders met in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, gladly avail ourselves of this earliest opportunity of expressing to your Majesty our cordial congratulations on the birth of the Princess-Royal—an event which has diffused universal joy throughout the nation, as tending at once to increase your Majesty's domestic comfort, to maintain the stability of the British throne, and to secure the great interests, civil and sacred, which, by the favour of Divine Providence, have been long incorporated with our happy constitution.

It is our earnest prayer that your Majesty, with your Royal Consort and the infant Princess, may be enriched with the grace of God which bringeth salvation, that peace and truth may be multiplied to your souls, and that, after many years of felicity and honour, you may be exalted to an inheritance of glory and blessedness in heaven.

Given at Edinburgh, this 24th day of May 1841, by your Majesty's most faithful, obedient, and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

ROBERT GORDON, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly, &c.

VI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing her Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly, &c.

VII.

Sess. 2, May 21, 1841.—Act on the Conversion of the Jews.

The General Assembly having heard the Report of the Committee for the Conversion of the Jews, approve of the same; agree to the appointment of Dr Keith, convener of the committee, and sanction the address proposed to be sent to the Jewish people. The General Assembly farther appoint the following ministers and elders, viz. the ministers of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, &c.; to be a committee, of which Dr Keith shall be convener, with former powers, and with power to appoint sub-committees; and, particularly, with power to take all necessary steps for preparing and sending missionaries to the stations most promising; and the Assembly, considering the acceptance with which this Scheme has been received, and the blessing which has hitherto attended it, record their gratitude to Almighty God, and renew their recommendation, that collections be made throughout the Church for this very interesting object, and that all ministers remember the cause of God's ancient people in the services of the sanctuary; and that special prayer be made for the Divine blessing on the steps now taken by the Church of Scotland.

VIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Overture anent Attendance on the Latin Class.

The General Assembly, considering the importance of classical learning, agree to transmit the following overture for the consideration of Presbyteries:—

Whereas the Church of Scotland has, ever since the Reformation, considered the learned languages as an essential part of the education of those intended for the ministry, but has hitherto required evidence only as to attainments in Greek and Hebrew, although it is of much moment that a thorough acquaintance with Latin should also be obtained, the General Assembly enact, that no student shall be admitted into any of the Divinity Halls unless he shall produce to the Professor or Professors of Divinity, and to the Presbytery within whose bounds he resides, a certificate of having attended the Latin class in some University for at least one session, and made satisfactory proficiency as a Latin scholar.

IX.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Act Appointing a Day of Humiliation, Thanksgiving, and Prayer.

The General Assembly, having considered the overtures for a day of humiliation in connection with the present circumstances of the Church, and also of thanksgiving for mercies received, did, and hereby do, appoint Thursday, the 22d day of July next, to be set apart for a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the sins and shortcomings of the people and Church,—thanksgivings for mercies vouchsafed,—and prayer and supplication for the Divine blessing on the ordinances of grace, and for restoration of peace in the Church; and did, and hereby do, nominate the Mo-

derator, Principal Lee, Dr Hill, Dr Makellar, and Mr Candlish, a committee to prepare a Pastoral Address relative to this matter ; Mr Candlish to be convener.

(The following is the Pastoral Address prepared and issued by the Committee:)

PASTORAL ADDRESS.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. It hath seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to invite and call all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, to join with us in devoting to the solemn exercises of humiliation, of thanksgiving, and of prayer, a convenient day, which, in virtue of the authority committed to us by our King and Head, we have set apart for that holy end. And in the near prospect of that day, we do earnestly and affectionately exhort you all to give yourselves much to meditation, to the searching of your own hearts, and the consideration of the ways of the Lord ; that by the working of his good Spirit in you, you may be humbled under His mighty hand,—acknowledging, at the same time, with all thankfulness, that, in the midst of deserved wrath, he hath remembered mercy,—and that you may be moved to cry unto the Lord, when the fast is sanctified, and the solemn assembly called ; when the elders and all the people are gathered into the house of the Lord your God.

That the Lord hath a controversy with us on account of our sins, even those who are least accustomed to discern the signs of the times must plainly see ; and it becometh us to confess that he is righteous, while we, with our fathers, have done iniquity. We may not be able to detect, with infallible certainty, the immediate causes of the Lord's controversy with us, having no express revelation regarding it, such as, in the days of the prophets, was wont to be vouchsafed by their mouth to the ancient Church, when suffering under the just anger of the Lord. Nevertheless, by the help of the unchanging Word of God—meeting with the testimony of conscience, and the course of Providence—we may obtain a measure of light sufficient to guide us amid manifold perplexities, and, in the day of our trial, to teach us heavenly wisdom.

In this inquiry we must judge, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. The troubles and perils of an external nature in which our beloved Church is involved, being connected, in respect of time, and partly also in the way of natural consequence, with particular measures adopted, or with a particular line of conduct followed,—this might seem to be the mark and token of God's disapprobation of what has been done, and of his holy displeasure against his Church on account of it. Mere human and earthly wisdom might so interpret the ways of the Lord. But not such is the interpretation warranted by his Word, and by the recorded experience of his Church in all former ages. On the contrary, we are taught to believe that severe chastisements may fall on God's people, not in the day of their backsliding and death, but in the day of their revival ; and that while, undoubtedly, as to the purpose of God, they suffer for their sins, in so far as second causes are concerned, they may suffer for well-doing. There may be a false peace, and a respite from suffering more ominous than the heaviest blow. "Why should ye be stricken any more?" is God's terrible word to a people revolting more and more. To what purpose should the rod be applied, when there is no sound part on which it may take effect? But if any, having once departed from their first love, are now repenting and doing their first works, it may be good for them to be afflicted ; and with returning grace, fatherly discipline may be joined, that former sins may be remembered, and the renewed soul may be humbled and purged. We presume not to say how far this may be so, in reference to our beloved Church and her present trials. We judge not her recent actings by their apparent consequences ; nor can we determine, by that test, how far the things which have been done have been pleasing to her great Head. To the law and to the testimony is the only appeal. But thus far we may venture to affirm, that if at any time the Church of God, or any branch of it, be found in the attitude of redressing tolerated wrong, and discharging neglected duty, repairing the breaches of former generations, and girding the loins for earnest labour in the Lord's cause ; and if, in the very doing of this good work, and even in consequence of its being done, trouble and danger come,—so far from thinking that any strange thing has befallen them, they who thus suffer are still called upon to testify that the Lord is righteous, and that all his ways are just and true. Especially may this testimony be borne by the Church of our fathers, which once and again has been taught to know that a time of reformation and revival may very shortly go before a time of trial, and that, in the providence of Him whose ways are not as our ways, this may tend the more, in the end, to His own glory, and the peace and prosperity of His believing people.

At the same time, while thus we are fully persuaded that as we may not pronounce

others, when they suffer, to be sinners more than ourselves, so neither are we to regard our own suffering as a conclusive proof that in any particular point we have been doing wrong ; we would ever bear in mind, that it should, at all events, move us to a diligent search after sin. That the steps recently taken by the Church, seeking, in all good faith, to be guided by the will of the Lord Jesus, should have issued in results so distressing, and, in many instances, so little to be expected, is not an evidence of what has been done being sinful. But assuredly it is a demonstration that the Lord sees much sin in us. Why is there not more agreement of mind and heart in the Church herself, in reference to the measures which are occasioning so much alarm,—more seeing eye to eye,—more of the consent and concord of brethren dwelling together in unity ? Why, instead of conciliating, as might have been anticipated, have these measures estranged and alienated the more our brethren, whose forefathers left us on this very quarrel, and handed down a solemn testimony against the opposite actings of the Church, which they ever denounced as her most grievous sins and defections ? And why, instead of increased stability and security imparted to our possession of our temporal privileges and advantages, do we find them all put in imminent jeopardy, many great and powerful foes ranged against us, and new difficulties from day to day arising, amid which we are more and more every day shut up to the necessity of crying, “ Help, Lord ; for vain is the help of man ? ”

These things are manifest evidences of there being some accursed thing in the midst of us,—some root of bitterness,—some blot cleaving to our hands,—some unsteadfastness in the covenant of the Lord,—on account of which he is prolonging his controversy with us. And they loudly call for the searching of our ways, and the humbling of our hearts before him.

Especially, and above all, is this seen to be required, when we consider, not the outward estate of our Church merely, but her inward, spiritual condition, and how it fares with the cause and the work of the Lord throughout our favoured land.

We have reason, indeed, to bless God, who hath given us not a few tokens for good,—in the increase of the faithful and lively preaching of the Gospel among us, and in the awakening of a more zealous interest and concern for the glory of God and the conversion of souls. We thankfully acknowledge the sovereign grace of our Lord, who has enabled so many of his servants, in our day, to declare fully and affectionately the whole counsel of his peace, and who has put it into our hearts to care for the multitudes at home and abroad, whether our brethren or strangers, whether Jews or Gentiles, who are far from God, and perishing for lack of knowledge.

But, alas, for the result of this love and of these labours ! In a certain measure, we doubt not, the Spirit has been poured out from on high. There have been portions of the vineyard refreshed and gladdened by the heavenly rain, and souls have been won to Christ. Far be it from us to despise the day of small things. But who among us can shut his eyes to the sad truth, that the Spirit of the Lord is straitened—that even where the means of grace are most abundant and most pure, the fruit of righteousness and peace is but scanty and precarious ? Even among the people who know the joyful sound, it cannot be said that the signs of spiritual life are such as ought to satisfy the spiritual mind. Amid many serious professions, many salutary convictions and impressions, many works of faith and labours of love, we cannot but confess and mourn over a lamentable want of sound and enlightened views—of accurate and extensive knowledge respecting the system of divine truth, and the interpretation of the Word of God. And still more we deplore the absence of that uncompromising decision of character, and that high-toned and heavenly elevation of principle and of aim, which ought to distinguish the followers of Jesus, and by which the world might be rebuked and reclaimed. The low standard by which devotedness to God, and separation from the world, are too generally measured and estimated ; the facility with which the name of true godliness is given and assumed ; the wide prevalence of formality and lukewarmness ; the rare examples among us of remarkable attainments in self-denial, in humility, in zeal, and love, and the extent to which these have almost ceased to be expected ; the manifold inconsistencies of those who seem to be walking with God, their partaking in other men's sins, and the frequent instances of their conformity to an evil world ;—all combine to impress the sad conviction, that if there be really spiritual life in the Church at all, it is but as the bruised reed and the smoking flax ;—and that a new infusion of vital heat and of power from above is greatly needed, to brace and nerve anew the Christianity of our day, and fit it for the final struggle with the mustering hosts of the Prince of Darkness.

And turning our eye from the professing Church of Christ in our land, to the state of society at large, we cannot but be moved to sigh and to cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. How many thousands of our countrymen are beyond the

reach of all the ordinary means and influences of grace, and how few care for their souls ! Multitudes everywhere forsake the assembling of themselves together, and never hear the glad tidings of salvation. The Sabbath is profaned, in too many instances, by ordinary labour ; in other cases, by idleness, the neglect of ordinances, and the haunting of scenes of dissipation and riot. Need we dwell on the melancholy progress of intemperance—checked, indeed, as we would hope, in some measure, by the efforts of late made against it—but still, it is to be feared, maintaining its ground, and likely to defy all the plans and exertions of men, unless the Lord himself, by his Word and Spirit, interpose ? The relaxation of morals—the loose ideas too commonly entertained on the subject of offences against the law of chastity—the vitiating and corrupting influences to which the young are exposed, in the crowded state of our manufacturing population—the increase of profanity, and profligacy, and crime ; these are evils which it may well make the heart sick to contemplate. And the alarm is greatly heightened by the bold avowal, in many quarters, of principles striking at the root of all religious faith, and all social decency and order, and the industrious dissemination of these principles in every insidious form, fitted to leaven the minds of the uninstructed and unsettled among the people. The condition of the poor, also, suffering too frequently under privations such as it could scarcely be conceived possible that a Christian country could tolerate, or that human nature could endure—exposed to the ravages of disease, the contamination of vice, and temptations to crime, hard, in their circumstances, to be resisted—is forcing itself on the notice of the community, and cannot but draw the eye of Him who makes their cause peculiarly his own. That means have been partially adopted for the remedy of these social grievances, in accordance with the will of God, is a cause of thankfulness to him. That these means have been so inadequate, is matter of reproach and blame to the Church and to the country.

If, now, God is visiting us for such things as these, it cannot be thought strange. Nor need we wonder when we see old institutions shaken, and threatening signs gathering all around upon the earth—distress of nations, with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth. Nay, when these things begin to come to pass, the Lord's people may look up and lift up their heads ; for their redemption draweth nigh. But the land is called to mourn. And we, especially, who are set to be witnesses for God, whether as united in one body under Christ our Head, or as individuals occupying the several stations in which God has placed us, should be constrained to search and try our ways, and to turn with our whole hearts unto the Lord.

As a Church, we desire that with one accord we should bow before our God, and reverently inquire what there may be in our conduct, or in our state, justly offensive to him. If we have been seeking to do His will in our public actings, has there been enough of prayer for His guidance, and consultation of His holy Word ? Has there been entire singleness of eye ? Has there been a due measure of humiliation and repentance ?—sufficient searching after the old paths, and sufficient recognition of old pledges and obligations ? May not carnal wisdom have mixed itself too much in our proceedings ? And whereas we are not all at one in the measures taken, may not this want of unanimity be in part ascribed to the absence of that spirit of meekness and of self-distrust which should have brought us all far nearer to Him who alone can lead us in the way of righteousness and of peace ? If, again, we have been moved and enabled to set on foot various schemes of Christian benevolence, for extending the blessings of education and the means of grace at home ; for supplying the spiritual wants of our countrymen in the Colonies ; and for sending forth missionaries to teach the heathen, and to testify to the Jews ;—have we duly given God the glory, and taken shame and guilt to ourselves ? Have we not been puffed up ? Has there not been boasting and self-confidence ? And have we not been tempted, forgetting our neglect in time past, and greatly over-rating our services now, to look upon the little we have done—little in comparison with what we might, with what we ought to have done—with what other churches have done, and are doing—as if it gave us some claim on the favour of God, or some security against the visitation of his wrath ? And, once more, if God, in some blessed instances, has been pleased to pour out his Spirit, and to give signal testimony to the Word of his grace, how have such dispensations been improved ? Has not the unbelief of some dishonoured the work of the Lord ? and the passing wonder of others appeared to limit his power ? What serious expectation of similar awakenings has been generally called forth ? What earnest longings after them ? Has it not been regarded as a strange thing that the preaching of the Gospel should, at any time, simultaneously prick the consciences of hundreds and of thousands, making them, with one accord, cry out in agony, What must we do to be saved ? Have not such scenes been found to minister, not

to godly edifying, but to vain excitement? And while God has been giving us specimens, here and there, of what he is still able and willing to do, for converting sinners and quickening his own people, have we, in any corresponding measure, enlarged our hearts in seeking his blessing? Have we not, on the contrary, grieved his Holy Spirit, so that he is straitened still?

Let us, as a Church, submit to be searched by God as to these things.

And in our several spheres of duty and relations of life, let us look to ourselves, as if each of us feared lest the lot which detected Achan might fall on him.

We entreat pastors and elders to inquire if the Gospel has been faithfully preached, and the fruit of preaching duly waited for and gathered in? How is discipline administered, for warning the unruly, winning back the erring, rebuking the profane, and guarding the purity of the house and ordinances of God? What care is taken of the young? What sympathy shown to the poor and the sick? What pains taken to instruct the ignorant, to edify and comfort believers, to deal affectionately with those who are forsaking their own mercies? What consultation is there of the pastor with the elders, respecting the condition of the flock, and the means by which the Lord's cause may be advanced, and souls may prosper more? What prayer together? What wrestling with God apart? Does the keeper of the vineyards of others keep his own? What are the labours of his study? What the exercises of his closet?

You who are the parents and heads of families, we exhort to consider well the trust committed to you, as having the care of the lambs of the flock, and what the Church has a right to expect from you, through whose instrumentality she should be daily receiving new sons and daughters, to be as plants for the garden of the Lord, and corner-stones polished for his palace. The things which you have heard and known, and your fathers have told you, are you not hiding from your children? Are you showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and the wonderful works which he hath done? Do you speak in your households of God's favour to our Church in days gone by, and of the worthies whom he raised up—names once familiar to our very babes—and of the holy cause in which they testified, and suffered, and died? Is parental discipline more relaxed, and the master's rule in his household less cheerfully acknowledged than of old? What prayer is made in your dwellings? what praises ascend on high? what catechising is there of your children and domestics? what care to imbue their minds with the form of sound words, and to interest their hearts in the love of Jesus? what tender dealing with the conscience? what anxious longing for the conversion of their souls? If in these things there be neglect and sin, can it be matter of wonder that so many of our youth, as they grow up, should enter into life with little attachment to the Church of their fathers, and little interest in her well-being?—ignorant of her value, careless of her institutions, unacquainted with all that she has been honoured to do for the Lord in this land, and all that the Lord has been pleased to do for her.

To those who hold a more private station in the Church, we would address a word of counsel and of persuasion. Let every one of you look to himself, and to his own case. The Lord is manifestly sifting his people. He will separate the precious from the vile. This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke and blasphemy. Temptations and trials abound; and as it is the last time, when antichrist is to come,—and even now already there are many antichrists,—so may it be expected that principles and professions are to be severely tested, and put to a searching proof. Are you prepared,—are you preparing,—for the evil to come? Have you an unction from the Holy One, and do you know the truth? Is your religion such as will not merely shine in the summer's sun, but stand the winter's blast? Amid causes of offence abounding on every side, amid the external troubles and the internal disorders and contentions of the Church, your faith may be apt to fail, and the world may seize its advantage for regaining its hold over you. You are urgently called to examine yourselves, whether you have received, or are seeking, grace sufficient for the crisis in which you are to act. And see if there be not,—in your unsteady walk with God,—in your occasional weariness of his service,—in the restraining of private prayer, and the withholding of an open testimony for God,—something which may in part bring home personally to you the sin and suffering of the Church at large, and constrain you, above all, to fear lest your own souls be not in health.

Finally, brethren, we beseech you all, with one accord, to pray for the Church and the land, that the Lord may arise and give deliverance. And let your chief anxiety be, not that deliverance come speedily, but that, when we are delivered, it may be the doing of the Lord alone, that His may be all the glory. And, meanwhile, let us wait patiently upon him. Let us turn unto the Lord with our whole hearts. Let us adore his justice in visiting us for our sins. Let us gratefully acknowledge his goodness in turning away from

us deserved judgments, and overruling evil for good. In his recent dealings with us he has not unfrequently disappointed our fears,—so that, amid things which might have occasioned bitterness, and wrath, and schism in our Assemblies, unlooked-for tokens of conciliation have appeared. Let us earnestly return and seek the Lord,—that He who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and who ordereth all our ways, may cause unity and peace to prevail, and may give help in the time of need. Let us pray for the outpouring of his Holy Spirit, and the revival of his gracious work. Let our desire be, that while he chastens, he may greatly quicken us ; and that, in the end, it may be manifest to all, that our safety cometh from the Lord. Now may God himself, even the Father, bless us ; and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be upon us all.—Amen.

Signed in name of the Assembly, by

ROBERT GORDON, *Moderator*.

X.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.

(Same as last year. Re-transmitted.)

XI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Standing Order on the Forms of Commissions.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on the Forms of Commissions, which was given in by Mr Dunlop, the convener, and read. The General Assembly approve of the Report, and did, and hereby do, declare and order in terms thereof, and direct the same to be inserted among the public Acts of this Church, the tenor whereof follows :—

1. Your committee would recommend that a copy of the Act, 1839, anent representative elders, together with a copy of the form of certificate approved by the General Assembly, 1840, and also of this report, if approved of by the Assembly, be transmitted to every minister of this Church, and that the Assembly declare that no certificates will henceforth be received, or held a fulfilment of the Act above mentioned, unless exactly agreeing with the form aforesaid ; it being specially attended to, that it is the certificate itself, and not an *extract* from the minutes of Session, that must be lodged along with the commission.

2. In regard to the attestation by Presbyteries of the commissions of representatives from burghs, the committee, considering that the requiring of the attestation of the Presbytery is additional to, and corroborative of, that of the Session, would recommend the Assembly to declare, that, on the one hand, Presbyteries are entitled to attest such commissions, although there be no certificate produced to them from the Session to which the commissioner belongs, that he is *bona fide* an acting elder, provided they have other sufficient grounds of information as to his truly being so ; and, on the other hand, that such certificate, when produced to them, while it ought not to be disregarded except on the strongest grounds, it is not to be holden as necessarily conclusive as to the qualification of the party in this respect.

3. Your committee would suggest, that all commissions should be desired to be transmitted to the Agent for the Church at least one week before the meeting of the Assembly, and that those so transmitted should be revised, so far as regards the regularity of the commission in point of form, by a meeting of the Procurator, Clerks, and Agent of the Church, and that their report as to the commissions being correct, should supersede the passing the same under the review of the usual revising committee ; while as to commissions which these parties may find to be objectionable in form, that they should at once be remitted to the Committee on disputed and objected Commissions.

A. DUNLOP, *Convener*.

XII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Standing Order anent the Visiting of Synod-Books.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee for Visiting the Synod-Books, which was given in and read. The Assembly approve of the report, and observing, in a few instances, that no notice is taken of inquiry having been made by the Synods at the several Presbyteries of collections having been made within their bounds for the different Schemes of the Church, did, and hereby do, direct that, in future, all such omissions, with other remarks of the visitors, shall be printed in the Acts of the Assembly.

XIII.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Act recommending Collections for the Five Schemes of the General Assembly.

(This Act is similar to the corresponding Act of last year.)

XIV.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Overture on the Eldership.

(See Act 10th, Assembly, 1842.)

XV.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Act appointing a Special Commission to co-operate with the Presbyteries within whose bounds certain Vacant Parishes are situated, in settling and superintending the same, and for other purposes therein mentioned.

The General Assembly, having taken into their consideration the state of the parishes herein after mentioned, and the necessity of making some special provision for the settlement and superintendence thereof, and for the ordering of certain other matters after mentioned, resolve, for this purpose, to appoint a Special Commission, to the effect and with the powers herein after set forth; and they accordingly did, and hereby do, appoint Dr Robert Gordon, their Moderator, &c.; to be commissioners to co-operate with the several Presbyteries within whose bounds are situated the following parishes, viz.:—Huntly, Keith, Glass, Mortlach, Rhynie, Cairnie, Botriphnie, and Marnoch, in the Presbytery of Strathbogie; Auchterarder, in the Presbytery of Auchterarder; Lethendy and Kinloch, in the Presbytery of Dunkeld; Muckairn, in the Presbytery of Lorn; and the new parish of Stewarton, in the Presbytery of Irvine,—in the settlement and superintendence of the said parishes, and the making provision for the supply of the ordinances of religion, and the exercise of discipline, and the ordering of all ecclesiastical matters therein; empowering and instructing the said commissioners to advise and direct the said respective Presbyteries in all their proceedings thereanent, and enjoining the said Presbyteries, as they are hereby enjoined, to conform themselves to such advice and directions; and with full power to the said commissioners, in the event of their deeming it necessary, of themselves, to do and perform, in relation to the premises, every act which the respective Presbyteries might have done and performed; and the said commissioners are farther empowered, in the event of any interference by the Civil Courts with the exercise of the spiritual jurisdiction and discipline of the Church by these or any other Presbyteries of the Church, and of their being applied to by such Presbyteries, to advise and direct such Presbyteries in regard to their proceedings; or if the said commis-

sioners shall deem it necessary, of themselves, to do and perform whatever it might have been competent for the said Presbyteries to have done and performed. And they are also instructed and empowered to advise with the Procurator in regard to legal processes in dependence, touching the questions connected with the matters regarding the parishes herein before mentioned, or any others that may be similarly situated; and the said commissioners are hereby empowered to choose their moderator and clerk: And the General Assembly appoint the said commissioners to hold their first meeting at Edinburgh, in the Presbytery Hall, on the 2d of June, at twelve o'clock, with power to hold meetings thereafter at such times and places as they shall see fit, and with power to their moderator at any time to summon meetings of the said commissioners, *pro re nata*, on five days' notice to each of the commissioners.

XVI.

Sess. ult., May 31, 1841.—Act appointing the Diet of next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 19th of May 1842.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

THE PRINCIPAL ACTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, MAY 19, 1842.

I.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1842.—The Queen's Commission to the Marquis of Bute produced, and ordered to be recorded.

VICTORIA, Dei gratiâ, Britanniarum Regina, Fidei Defensor; Omnibus probis hominibus, ad quos præsentes literæ nostræ pervenerint, Salutem. Quandoquidem Nos considerantes, quod Generalis Ecclesiæ Scotiæ Conventus in diem decimam nonam mensis Maii proximi convenire ordinatus fuit; Nosque cupidi, et necessarium esse judicantes, in commodum dictæ Ecclesiæ, ut idem Generalis Conventus die statuto et præscripto conveniret; atque rebus magni momenti Nos alio vocantibus, dicto Conventui personaliter interesse nequimus: Nosque abundè satisfactæ de sufficientia et fidelitate præfidelis Nostri et prædilecti Joannis Marchionis de Bute, quod ad summum munus Nostri supremi Commissionarii ad dictum Generalem Conventum ritè exercendum et obediundum usquequaque sit instructus: Noveritis igitur nominâvisse, constituisse et ordinâvisse, tenoreque præsentium nominare, constituere et ordinare, dictum præfidelem nostrum et prædilectum Joannem Marchionem de Bute, supremum Nostrum Commissionarium dictæ Ecclesiæ Scotiæ Generali Conventui; dando illi et concedendo plenam potestatem, commissionem et warrantum, sacram Nostram Personam et Auctoritatem Regalem repræsentandi, et præsentiam Nostram supplendi, et locum Nostrum in dicto subsequenti Generali Conventu, tanquam Commissionario Nostro pro eo proposito specialiter constituto, tenendi; omniaque ad imperium et munus Commissionarii Generali Conventui attinentia peragendi, tam plenè adeoque liberè in omni respectu quam quilibet alius in eodem summo munere fecerat seu quovis tempore præterito facere potuerat, et ac si Nos ipsæ personaliter præsentem facere potuerimus. Quæque omnia et singula, quæ dictus Joannes Marchio de Bute, in hac Nostra commissione prosequenda legitime fecerit, seu fieri ordinaverit, Nos firmiter ratificamus et approbamus. Insuper omnibus dicti Conventus et Ecclesiæ Pastoribus et Presbyteris cæterisque quibuscunque,

intra dictam partem Regni Nostri Uniti Magnæ Britanniae et Hiberniae Scotiam vocatam, subditis Nostris cujuscunque gradus seu qualitatis, ut dictum Joannem Marchionem de Bute, tanquam supremum Commissionarium Nostrum, quoad effectum et modum supra memoratos, agnoscant, revereantur, venerentur et audiant, mandamus et præcipimus: Et hanc Nostram commissionem à decimo nono die Maii proximi incipere, et deinceps durante subsequente sessione dicti Generalis Conventionis in vigore continuare declaramus, vel usquedum a Nobis revocabitur et exonerabitur. In cujus rei testimonium, Sigillum Nostrum per Unionis Tractatum custodiendum, et in Scotia vice et loco Magni Sigilli ejusdem utendum ordinatum, præsentibus appendi mandavimus, apud Aulam Nostram apud Saint James's, vigesimo quinto die mensis Aprilis, anno Domini millesimo octingentesimo et quadragesimo secundo Regniq[ue] Nostri anno quinto.

Per signaturam manu S. D. N. Reginae superscriptam.

II.

Sess. 1, May 19, 1842.—Her Majesty's Letter to the General Assembly.

VICTORIA, R.

Right Reverend and Well-beloved, we greet you well.—The security and welfare of the Church of Scotland, so intimately connected with the peace and eternal interest of a large portion of our people, demand our constant care, and are regarded by us with affectionate anxiety.

On our accession to our throne, we gladly renewed the solemn obligation which binds us to maintain the Presbyterian Church of Scotland inviolate in all its rights and privileges as by law established.

We rely on your loyalty, and we contemplate with satisfaction the approach of your meeting, in the confident expectation that your deliberations will be directed to the advancement of piety and virtue; and that in all your proceedings you will be guided by the love of religious peace, and by the temper of Christian charity and forbearance.

We would earnestly remind you, that the happiness of our people in Scotland will be promoted by your concord; and we pray that Almighty God may so knit your hearts and rule your decisions, that unity in the Church may be preserved, and that the harmony indispensable in councils adapted for the furtherance of religion may prevail among you.

It grieves us to know, that in some districts of Scotland many of the working-classes have suffered, and still continue to suffer, severe distress.

We affectionately commend the poor and the destitute to your pastoral care; and we exhort you to inculcate on your respective flocks the duty of freely contributing charitable aid to the relief of the necessities of their brethren.

We have thought fit to appoint our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin, John Marquis of Bute, to be the representative of our royal person in this Assembly. We are well assured of his tried ability and sincere wish faithfully to discharge the high and important duties with which he is entrusted. His prudence and attachment to the Church of Scotland are well known, and we are persuaded that our choice will be acceptable to you. And so we bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at St James's, the 11th day of May 1842, in the fifth year of our reign.

By her Majesty's Command,

JAMES GRAHAM.

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III.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1842.—The General Assembly's Answer to the Queen's most gracious Letter.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, convened in this General Assembly, have received with deep gratitude the gracious Letter conveying your Majesty's assurance, that the security and welfare of the Church of Scotland, so intimately connected with the peace and eternal interests of a large portion of your Majesty's subjects, engage your Majesty's constant care and affectionate anxiety.

We remember with heartfelt satisfaction that your Majesty, on your accession to the throne, recognised the solemn obligation which binds the Sovereigns of this country to maintain the Church of Scotland inviolate in all its rights and privileges, as by law established.

We feel grateful for your Majesty's confidence in our loyalty, and for the expression of your Majesty's satisfaction in the prospect of our meeting; and we humbly trust that, through Divine grace, our deliberations will be directed to the advancement of piety and virtue, and that in all our proceedings we will be guided by the love of religious peace, and by the spirit of Christian charity.

We assure your Majesty of our being fully aware that the happiness of your Majesty's subjects in Scotland will be promoted by our concord; and we earnestly pray that Almighty God may so guide our hearts, and rule our decisions, that unity in the Church may be preserved, and that the harmony which is so conducive to the furtherance of religion may prevail among us.

We participate most fully in your Majesty's sympathy with the sufferings of many of the working-classes in some districts of Scotland, and we have accordingly appointed collections to be made in all the churches in which your Majesty's benevolent wishes for their relief have not been already anticipated.

As office-bearers of this Church, it will ever be our study to watch over the interests of the poor and destitute; and we shall not fail to inculcate on our respective flocks the duty of freely contributing to the relief of their poor brethren.

We hail with satisfaction the appointment of the Most Noble the Marquis of Bute as the representative of your Majesty's person in this General Assembly, a nobleman who, from his tried ability, prudence, and courtesy, and from his well-known attachment, and large liberality to the Church of Scotland, cannot fail to be acceptable to us in the execution of the important trust committed to his care.

We acknowledge with the warmest gratitude your Majesty's renewed grant of L.2000 for the reformation of the Highlands and Islands; and it will be the object of our anxiety to apply this liberal donation in such a way as may most effectually promote your Majesty's pious and benevolent intentions.

That the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, may ever gladden your Majesty's heart with a sense of his favour;—that He may abundantly bless you with domestic happiness and public honour;—and that, after a long and prosperous reign, you may receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away, is the earnest prayer of,

May it please your Majesty, your Majesty's most faithful, most loyal, and most obedient subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Signed in our name, in our presence, and at our appointment, by

D. WELSH, *Moderator.*

IV.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1842.—The General Assembly's Address of Congratulation to the Queen on the Birth of a Royal Prince.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland met in General Assembly, beg leave to offer our most cordial congratulations on the birth of a Royal Prince, who, we trust, has been raised up by Divine Providence to inherit, at a period yet far distant, the throne of his illustrious progenitors. We feel ourselves bound to express our gratitude to the Governor among the nations, who has hitherto watched over your Majesty's health and safety, and we earnestly hope and pray that your life may be long preserved as a blessing to the British empire, and to the other kingdoms of the earth; and that the Prince, whose birth has been the signal for universal rejoicing throughout the land, may be so wisely trained under your Majesty's parental inspection, and so beneficially influenced by your Majesty's example, as to become, in due season, the faithful guardian of the sacred interests and privileges of the people, and the enlightened patron of all the great national institutions, which in times past have contributed so essentially to the power of the British nation.

It is our devout prayer that your Majesty, with your Royal Consort, and the objects of your maternal affection, may long enjoy domestic felicity;—that your reign may be signalised by the advancement of sound learning, by the flourishing of commerce and the arts of peace, and especially by the prevalence of pure religion;—and that your Majesty, and those who are most endeared to you, may be heirs of everlasting blessedness and glory in heaven.

Given at Edinburgh, this 21st day of May 1842, by your Majesty's most faithful, obedient, and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland,

D. WELSH, *Moderator.*

V.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Commission of the General Assembly to certain Ministers and Ruling Elders for discussing Affairs referred to them.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr David Welsh, Professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, their Moderator; and from the Presbytery of Dornoch, Mr Duncan Macgillivray at Lairg, Mr Peter Davidson at Stoer, ministers; Patrick Tennent, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Tongue, Mr Hugh Mackay Mackenzie at Tongue, Mr William Findlater at Durness, ministers; James Bridges, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Caithness, Mr William M'Kenzie at Olrick, Mr Charles Thomson at Wick, Mr Thomas Gun at Keiss, ministers; Robert Johnston, junior, Esq., W.S., residing in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kirkwall, Mr Peter Petrie at Kirkwall, Mr Adam Rettie at Evie and Rendall, ministers; James Howden, Esq., jeweller at Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Cairston, Mr Thomas Blyth at Birsay and Harray, Mr Peter Learmonth at Stromness, ministers; Robert Omond, Esq., physician in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of North Isles, Mr George Ritchie at Rousay and Egilshay, Mr James Brochie at Westray and Papa Westray, ministers; Charles Cowan, Esq., of Valleyfield, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lerwick, Mr John Bryden at Sandsting, Mr Alexander Stark at Sandwick, ministers; Charles Hay, Esq., younger of Laxfirth, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Burravoe, Mr John M'Gowan at Nesting, Mr William Stevenson at Northmavine, ministers; Isaac Bay-

ley, Esq., S.S.C., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Edinburgh, Dr Robert Gordon at High Church, Mr James Buchanan at High Church, Mr John Clark at Canongate, Mr David Horne at Corstorphine, Mr William Cunningham at College Church, Mr Thomas Guthrie at St John's Church, Mr Robert Jamieson at Currie, Dr Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, Dr Robert Smith Candlish at St George's Church, ministers; James Balfour, Esq., of Pilrig, Alexander Earle Monteith, Esq., Advocate, Mr William Whitehead, hosier, Edinburgh, Mr William Brown, surgeon, Edinburgh, ruling elders. From the City of Edinburgh, Sir James Forrest, Bart., Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Andrew Millar, Esq., merchant, formerly one of the Magistrates of the burgh. From the University of Edinburgh, the Very Rev. John Lee, D.D., Principal. From the Church in India, the Rev. Robert Kerr Hamilton, A.M., one of the ministers of St Andrew's Church, Madras, minister; John Law, Esq., late of Madras, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Linlithgow, Mr James M'Farlan at Muiravonside, Mr Lewis H. Irving at Abercorn, Mr William Learmonth at West Calder, Mr William M. Hetherington at Torphichen, ministers; Henry Salmon, Esq., of Bonny-side, James Hamilton, Esq., of Ninewar, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Queensferry, Donald Horne, Esq., of Langwell, W.S. From the Presbytery of Biggar, Carlyle Bell, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Peebles, Mr John Elliot at Peebles, Mr Walter Paterson at Kirkurd, ministers; Thomas Charles Burns, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Peebles, Harry Maxwell Inglis, Esq., of Loganbank, W.S. From the Presbytery of Dalkeith, Mr John Crawford at Crichton, Mr William Scott Moncreiff at Pennycuik, Mr John Adamson at Newton, ministers; James Moncreiff, Esq., Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Haddington, Dr Angus Makellar at Pencaitland, Mr John Abernethy at Bolton, Mr William Bruce Cunningham at Prestonpans, ministers; Hew Francis Cadell, Esq., merchant in Cockenzie, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Haddington, Mr Thomas Doda, nurseryman, residing in Haddington. From the Burgh of North Berwick, Alexander Goodsir, Esq., Secretary of the British Linen Company's Bank, Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Dunbar, Mr David Logan at Stenton, Mr Robert Burns Thomson at Spott, ministers; Patrick Dalmahoy, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dunbar, Captain James Hay of Belton, R.N. From the Presbytery of Dunse, Mr William Cousin at Boston Church, Dunse, Mr John Baillie at Fogo, ministers; John Cadell, Esq., of Tranent, Advocate, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Chirnside, Mr George Tough at Ayton, Mr John Turnbull at Eyemouth, Mr Thomas Smith Goldie at Coldstream, ministers; David Milne, Esq., Advocate, younger of Milnegraden, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Kelso, Mr James Hope at Roxburgh, Mr John Gifford at Nenthorn, ministers; Frederick Lewis Roy, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Jedburgh, Mr John Richmond at Southdean, Mr David Aitken at Minto, Mr John A. Wallace at Hawick, ministers; John Paton, Esq., of Crailing, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Jedburgh, William Oliver Rutherford, Esq., of Edgerston. From the Presbytery of Lauder, Mr Walter Wood at Westruther, Mr David Waddell at Stow, ministers; David Dickson, Esq., of Hartree, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lauder, Macduff Rhind, Esq., Advocate. From the Presbytery of Selkirk, Mr John Campbell at Selkirk, Mr George Ritchie at St Boswell's, ministers; Robert Boston, Esq., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Selkirk, George William Hay, Esq., of Whiterigg. From the Presbytery of Annan, Mr Hugh M'Bryde Broun at Brydekirk, Mr William Nivison at Kirtle, ministers; Sir Patrick Maxwell, Bart., of Springkell, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Langholm, Mr Angus Barton at Castleton, Mr Adam Cunningham at Eskdalemuir, ministers; Alexander Harley Maxwell, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochmaben, Dr Robert Colvin at Johnstone, Mr Thomas Hunter Thomson at Dalton, Mr William Little at Kirkpatrick-Juxta, ministers; John James Hope Johnston, Esq., of Annandale, M.P., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lochmaben, David Johnston, Esq., of Riggheads, writer in Dumfries. From the Presbytery of Penpont, Mr George Smith at Penpont, Mr Robert Wilson at Tynron, ministers; Andrew Lorimer, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dumfries, Mr George Greig at Tinwald, Mr George John Duncan at Kirkpatrick-Durham, Mr Robert Crawford

at Irongray, Mr Robert Gillies, A.M., at Carlawerock, ministers; Mr James Brown, Holywood, Mr James Swan, Torthorwald, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Dumfries, Archibald Hamilton, Esq., writer in Dumfries, a member of Council. From the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, Mr Samuel Smith at Borgue, Mr John M'Millan at Kirkcudbright, Dr John Whitson at Crossmichael, ministers; Mr William Poole, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Kirkcudbright, Andrew Storie, Esq., Writer to the Signet, residing in Edinburgh. From the Burgh of New Galloway, James Morgan, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Wigtown, Mr Peter Young at Wigtown, Mr Alexander Forrester at Sorbie, ministers; George James Laurie, D.D., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Wigtown, Stair H. Stewart, Esq., of Physgill. From the Burgh of Whithorn, William Wingate, Esq., Glasgow. From the Presbytery of Stranraer, Mr Thomas B. Bell, assistant and successor at Leswalt, Mr Robert Donald, at Shenchan Church, ministers; Mr William Tod, schoolmaster in Kirkmaiden, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Stranraer, Mr William Black, merchant, residing in Stranraer. From the Presbytery of Ayr, Mr Ebenezer B. Wallace at Barr, Mr Robert Paton at Straiton, Mr Thomas Burns at Monkton, Mr James Symington at Muirkirk, Mr Robert Houston at Dalmellington, Mr James Fairlie at Mauchline, ministers; Claud Alexander, Esq., of Ballochmyle, George M'Micken Torrance, Esq., George Square, Edinburgh, John Barclay, Esq., manager of Catrine Cotton Works, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Ayr, Adam Hunter, Esq., merchant in Ayr. From the Presbytery of Irvine, Mr Matthew Dickie at Dunlop, Mr George Colville at Beith, Mr Robert Ferguson at Fenwick, Mr John Hamilton, Gaelic Church, Saltcoats, ministers; William Howieson Crawford, Esq., of Crawfordland, Patrick Boyle Mure Macredie, Esq., of Pierceton, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Irvine, John Allan Rankine, Esq., writer in Irvine. From the Presbytery of Paisley, Mr Robert Stevenson at Middle Parish, Mr James Graham at North Parish, Mr Alexander Salmon at Barrhead, Mr James Falconer at Martyrs' Parish, ministers; Mr John Munro, Mr William Muir, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Renfrew, Matthew Muir, grain-merchant in Paisley. From the Presbytery of Greenock, Mr James Smith at Greenock, Mr James Drummond at Cumbray, Mr John Dow at Largs, ministers; Mr John Gray, merchant in Greenock, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Hamilton, Mr William Buchan at Hamilton, Mr Hugh Dewar at Stonehouse, James Begg, D.D., New Monkland, Mr William Jackson at West Airdrie, Mr David Paton at Chapelton, ministers; William Clark, M.D., of Moffat, William Collins, Esq., Glasgow, ruling elders. From the Presbytery of Lanark, Mr Andrew Borland Parker at Lesmahagow, Mr David Burness at Wiston and Robertson, Mr Thomas Stark at St Leonard's, Lanark, ministers; Thomas Rennie Scott, Esq., Castlemains, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Lanark, Allan Elliot Lockhart of Cleghorn, Esq. From the Presbytery of Glasgow, Dr John Muir at Glasgow, Dr Michael Willis at Glasgow, Dr Matthew Leishman at Govan, Dr Robert Buchanan at Glasgow, Mr John Cochran at East Cumbernauld, Mr Peter M'Morland at Glasgow, Mr John Park at Cadder, Mr David Menzies at Glasgow, Mr John Reid at Glasgow, Mr John Lyon at Banton, ministers; James Buchanan, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, John Geddes, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, Henry Dunlop, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, John Gordon, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, John Bain, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, ruling elders. From the City of Glasgow, Andrew Ranken, Esq., merchant in Glasgow. From the University of Glasgow, Rev. Alexander Hill, D.D., Professor of Theology in said College. From the Burgh of Rutherglen, Alexander Drew of Shawfield, Esq. From the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Mr Matthew Barclay at Old Kilpatrick, Mr William B. S. Paterson at Kilmaronock, Mr William Dunn at Cardross, Mr John Pollock at Baldernock, ministers; William Brown, Esq., of Kilmardinny, John Wright, junior, Esq., merchant in Glasgow, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Dumbarton, Robert Duncanson M'Kenzie, Esq., of Caldervan. From the Presbytery of Dunoon, Mr John Macdougall at Lochgoilhead and Kilmorich, Mr Alexander Macbride at North Bute, ministers; Mr Duncan Campbell, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Rothsay, Charles Mackinlay, Esq.,

heritor in Rothsay, and residing there. From the Presbytery of Kintyre, Mr Duncan M'Nab at Campbeltown, Mr Hector M'Neill at Campbeltown, ministers; John Grant, Esq., merchant in Campbeltown, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Campbeltown, Nathaniel Harvey, Esq., bank agent in Campbeltown. From the Presbytery of Isla and Jura, Mr Alexander Cameron at Kilchoman, Mr Colin Hunter at Portnahaven, ministers; James Crawford, junior, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Inverary, Mr Duncan Campbell at Inverary, Mr Dugald Campbell at Glassary, ministers; James Hunter, Esq., residing at Lochgilphead, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Inverary, James Blackadder, Esq., upholsterer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Lorn, Mr Donald M'Naughton at Duror, Mr Duncan M'Lean at Glenorchy, ministers; John George Wood, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Mull, Mr Neil M'Lean at Tyrie, Mr Neil M'Lean at Ulva, Mr Donald Stewart at Tobermory, ministers; Dr George Gray, Professor of Oriental Languages, University of Glasgow, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunkeld, Mr John Waddell at Burrelton, Mr Andrew Kessen at Lethendy, Mr John M'Kenzie at Dunkeld, ministers; John Murray, Esq., 24, Ainslie Place, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Weem, Mr Alexander Campbell at Weem, Mr Alexander Robertson Irvine at Foss, ministers; James Stewart Robertson, Esq., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Perth, Mr John Thomson at Monedie, Mr William Ritchie at St Martins, Mr James Noble at St Madoes, Mr Andrew Bonar, assistant and successor to Mr John Rogers, minister at Collace, Mr Andrew Gray at Perth, ministers; James Mellis Nairn, Esq., of Dunsinnane, Laurence Craigie, Esq., of Glendoick, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Perth, William Henderson, Esq., physician in Perth, and residing in Rose Terrace there. From the Presbytery of Stirling, Mr Andrew Brown at Alva, Mr John Harper at Bannockburn, Mr Ebenezer Johnstone at Plean, ministers; Robert Bruce, Esq., of Kennet, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Stirling, John Aikman, Esq., Treasurer of the said Burgh. From the Presbytery of Auchterarder, Mr James Thomson at Muckhart, Mr Finlay Macalister at West Church, Crieff, Mr Samuel Grant at Ardoch, ministers; Adam M'Cheyne, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunblane, Mr William M'Kenzie at Dunblane, Mr James Duncan at East Kincardine, Mr George Hope Monilaws at Tulliallan, ministers; Henry Paul, Esq. of Woodside, banker in Glasgow, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dunfermline, Mr Thomas Doig at Torryburn, Mr Andrew Bethune Duncan at Culross, Mr William Gilston at Carnock, ministers; Robert Douglas, Esq., banker, Dunfermline, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Culross, John Tait, Esq., Advocate. From the Burgh of Inverkeithing, Alexander Stevenson, Esq., W.S., residing in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, Mr David Bell at Kennoway, Mr Alexander O. Laird at Abbotshall, Mr David Couper at Burntisland, Mr John Alexander at Kirkcaldy, ministers; Charles Maitland Christie, Esq., of Durie, Patrick Don Swan, Esq., Provost of Kirkcaldy, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Kirkcaldy, Major Hugh Lyon Playfair, residing in the city of St Andrews. From the Burgh of Burntisland, Alexander Hutchison, Esq., writer in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Cupar, Dr Alexander Kidd at Moonzie, Mr John Thomson at Balmerino, Mr Robert Johnston at Auchtermuchty, Mr Angus M'Gillivray at Dairsie, ministers; David Maitland Makgill Crichton, Esq., of Rankellour, David Reid, Esq., Cruvie, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Cupar, Duncan M'Intyre, Esq., manufacturer in Cupar. From the Presbytery of St Andrews, Mr James Roger at Denino, Dr Robert Haldane at St Andrews, Mr Charles Nairn at Forgan, Mr William Ferrie at Anstruther Easter, ministers; Robert Bayne Dalgleish, Esq., of Dura, Colonel William Playfair, residing at St Andrews, ruling elders. From the Burgh of St Andrews, Sir David Brewster, Principal of the United College of St Salvador and St Leonards, St Andrews, and residing in St Andrews. From the University of St Andrews, Mr Andrew Alexander, Professor of Greek in the United College. From the Burgh of Pittenweem, John Wood, Esq., banker in Colinsburgh. From the Burgh of Crail, Peter Walker, Esq., of Muirhead. From the Burgh of Anstruther Easter, Mr George Darsie, junior, residenter in Anstruther Easter. From the Burgh of Anstruther Wester, Walter Malcolm, Esq., writer in

Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Meikle, Mr James Flowerdew at Essie and Nevay, Mr William Ramsay at Alyth, Mr Patrick Barty, Ruthven, ministers; Robert Smythe, Esq., of Methven, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Forfar, Mr Daniel Cormick of the South Parish, Kirriemuir, Mr William Clugston at Forfar, Mr George Loudon at Inverarity, ministers; James Bonar, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Dundee, Mr James Thomson at St Clement's, Mr John Roxburgh at St John's, Mr George Lewis at St David's, Mr Samuel Miller at Monifieth, Mr Patrick Leslie Miller at Wallacetown, Dundee, ministers; John Thain, Esq., merchant, Mr Alexander Hean, builder, Dundee, ruling elders. From the Burgh of Dundee, Alexander Balfour, Esq., merchant in Dundee. From the Presbytery of Aberbrothock, Mr John Kirk at Arbirlot, Mr John Laird at Inverkeillor, Mr James Lumsden at Barry, ministers; Captain John H. Montgomerie of Broomfield, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Aberbrothock, Mr George Kyd, manufacturer at Mary-well Village, in the parish of St Vigean's, within the Presbytery of Aberbrothock. From the Presbytery of Brechin, Dr Joseph Paterson at Montrose, Dr Robert Smith at Montrose, Mr John Eadie at Dun, ministers; Captain Thomas Ramsay, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Brechin, Patrick Guthrie, Esq., merchant in Brechin. From the Burgh of Montrose, Mr Francis Japp, Treasurer of the Burgh of Montrose. From the Presbytery of Fordoun, Mr John Glegg at Bervie, Mr John Cook at Lawrence Kirk, Mr Samuel Trail, assistant and successor at Arbutnott, ministers; Walter Cook, Esq., W.S., ruling elder. From the Burgh of Bervie, Alexander Johnston, Esq., W.S., residing at Tullos House. From the Presbytery of Aberdeen, Dr Alexander John Forsyth at Belhelvie, Mr William Primrose at Melville Parish, Mr William Mitchell at Holborn, Mr William Leslie, assistant and successor at Fintray, Mr John Stephen at John Knox's Parish, Mr Robert Thomson at Peterculter, ministers; Dr Daniel Dewar, Principal of Marischal College and University, Captain Thomas Shepherd, residing at Straloch, Dr William Henderson, physician, Aberdeen, ruling elders. From the City of Aberdeen, David Chalmers, Esq., of Westburn, one of the members of Council of the said Burgh. From Marischal College, Dr Robert James Brown, Professor of Greek in said University. From the Presbytery of Kincardine-O'Neil, Mr Robert Milne Miller at Aboyne, Mr William Ingram at Echt, Mr James Watson, assistant and successor at Tarland, ministers; James Hope, junior, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Alford, Mr James Paull at Tullynessle and Forbes, Mr Robert Meiklejohn at Strathdon, Mr Alexander Low at Keig, ministers; Dr George Cook, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of St Andrews, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Ellon, Mr Francis Knox at Tarves, minister; Mr Hercules Scott, Professor of Moral Philosophy in King's College and University, Aberdeen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Garioch, Mr James Bisset at Bourtie, Mr Thomas Burnett at Daviot, Mr John Wilson at Premnay, ministers; Captain James Elphinstone Dalrymple at Westhall, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Kintore, William Macdonald, Esq., of Ormiston. From the Presbytery of Deer, Mr James Welsh at New Deer, Mr John Morrison at Old Deer, Mr James Yuill at East Parish Church of Peterhead, ministers; Mr John Anderson, residing in Mormond village, Strichen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Turriff, Mr George Ramsay Davidson at Drumblade, Mr Joseph Thorburn at Forglen, ministers; Neil Smith, junior, Esq., merchant in Aberdeen, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Fordyce, Mr John Innes at Fordyce, Mr Robert Shanks at Buckie, ministers; Dr James Russell, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Cullen, John Fraser, Esq., Provost of the said Burgh of Cullen. From the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Mr David Dewar at Bellie, Mr Harry Leith at Rothiemay, ministers; Major Ludovick Stewart, residing at Pittyvaich, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Aberlour, Mr Lewis William Forbes at Boharm, Mr William Asher at Inveraven, ministers; James McInnes, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Abernethy, Mr William Grant at Duthill, Mr James Grant at Cromdale, ministers; the Right Hon. Francis William Earl of Seafield, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Elgin, Mr Alexander Brander at Duffus, Mr Francis Wylie at Elgin, ministers; Adam Longmore, Esq., residing in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From

the Burgh of Elgin, Archibald Bonar, Esq., banker in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Forres, Mr Mark Aitken at Dyke, Mr Peter Farries at Edinkillie, ministers; Henry Tod, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Forres, George Cumming, Esq., W.S. in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Nairn, Mr William Barclay at Auldearn, Mr Simon Fraser M'Lauchlan at Cawdor, ministers; John Clerk Brodie, Esq., W.S. at Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Nairn, James Campbell Brodie, Esq., of Lethen. From the Presbytery of Inverness, Dr Alexander Rose at Inverness, Mr Simon Mackintosh at Inverness, ministers; William Stothert, Esq., of Cargen, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Inverness, Mr Alexander Mackenzie, residing at Douglas Row of Inverness. From the Presbytery of Chanonry, Mr Simon Fraser at Fortrose, Mr Donald Kennedy at Killearnan, ministers; George Buchan, Esq., of Kelloe, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Fortrose, Maurice Lothian, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Tain, Mr David Carment at Rosskeen, Mr Hugh M'Leod at Logie Easter, ministers; Donald Williamson, Esq., writer at Tain, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Tain, Dr George Smyttan, H.E.I.C.S., residing in Edinburgh. From the Presbytery of Dingwall, Mr Duncan Campbell at Kiltearn, Mr George M'Leod at Maryburgh, ministers; Dr James Begbie, physician in Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Burgh of Dingwall, Hugh Innes Cameron, Esq., Provost of the Burgh of Dingwall. From the Presbytery of Abertarff, Mr Donald Cameron at Laggan, Mr Donald Chisholm at Boleskine and Abertarff, ministers; Robert Bell, Esq., Advocate, Procurator for the Church of Scotland, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Skye, Mr John M'Kinnon at Strath, Mr Coll M'Donald at Portree, ministers; George Tweedie Stodart, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lewis, Mr Alexander M'Leod at Uig, Mr Duncan Matheson at Knock, ministers. From the Presbytery of Uist, Mr John Bethune at Berneray, Mr Norman M'Leod at Trumisgarry, ministers; Hugh Bruce, Esq., Advocate, Edinburgh, ruling elder. From the Presbytery of Lochcarron, Mr John M'Rae at Glenelg, Mr James Morrison at Kintail, ministers; Alexander Dunlop, Esq., Advocate in Edinburgh, ruling elder; and the Assembly added thereto the name of the Rev. Dr Brunton, Professor of Hebrew in the University of Edinburgh, named by the Moderator; to be commissioners of this General Assembly, to the effect after mentioned; with power to the said commissioners, or their quorum, which is hereby declared to be any thirty-one of the said commissioners, whereof twenty-one are always to be ministers, to meet and convene within the Assembly House at Edinburgh, the first day after the dissolution of this Assembly, at twelve of the clock noon, and thereafter the second Wednesday of August, the third Wednesday of November,, and the first Wednesday of March next to come, and oftener, when and where they shall think fit and convenient, with power to the said commissioners to choose their own moderator; and with authority, in the event of any application being made by any of the ministers deposed or suspended in consequence of the occurrences connected with the Presbytery of Strathbogie, to take the same into their consideration, and, if they shall see cause, to remove the censure; and, likewise, the General Assembly fully empower their said Commissioners, or their quorum above mentioned, to cognosce and finally determine as they shall see cause, in every matter referred to, or which shall be referred to them, by any act or order of the Assembly; and to do every thing contained in and conform to the instructions given, or to be given, by the Assembly; and to advert to the interest of the Church on every occasion, that the Church and the present establishment thereof do not suffer or sustain any prejudice which they can prevent, as they will be answerable; provided always, that this general clause be not extended to particular affairs or processes before Synods or Presbyteries, that are not of universal concern to, or influence upon, the whole Church. And it is hereby appointed that no private processes be determined, except at the four stated diets; and what shall be determined at one diet of the commission, with relation to private causes, shall be unalterable by any other diet thereof, and shall stand and continue in force till disapproved of by the General Assembly. And the Assembly renews the instructions given by the General Assembly in the year 1717 to their commission, and ap-

points the same to stand in full force, as instructions to the commissioners before named, and to be observed by them in all points, as if the same were specially here inserted; and that they inquire into the publishing and spreading of books and pamphlets tending towards the promoting of opinions of whatever kind, inconsistent with our Confession of Faith; and that the recommenders of such books and pamphlets, or of the errors therein contained, whether by word, writ, or print, be called before the said Commission to answer for the same; and, further, the said Commission is hereby empowered to receive any references and appeals that shall be made to them from Synods in matters of doctrine, and ripen such affairs for next General Assembly; and to contribute what they can to the suppression of vice and immorality, and to give all needful advice and assistance to Synods and Presbyteries, upon application to them for that end: Likewise, to take care that the impressions of the Holy Scriptures, the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, and such books as are authorised by this Church, relating to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, be correct; and to give directions about printing the same. And the commissioners are appointed and empowered to keep a correspondence with the Committee for Reformation of the Highlands and Islands, for suppressing Popery and Superstition, and for promoting the knowledge of true religion, and carrying on a reformation in those parts, and to give assistance and concurrence therein; and, if need be, to apply to the government for a proper remedy and speedy redress. And the said commissioners are hereby strictly prohibited and discharged to meddle in any other matters than what are committed and referred to them as above mentioned: And, in all their actings, they are to proceed according to the acts and constitution of this Church, and to do nothing contrary thereto, or to the prejudice of the same; declaring, that in and for all their actings they shall be accountable to, and censurable by, next General Assembly, as they shall see cause. And the General Assembly appoints the said commissioners particularly to observe the Acts of the General Assembly 1712 and 1719, respecting the Application of the Public Money; which two Acts are printed among the Acts of the Assembly, 1761. And this Commission is to continue and endure until another Commission be appointed; and members are required to attend the diets of the said Commission; and absentees therefrom are ordered to be noticed, according to the 17th Act of the General Assembly, held in the year 1706: And for the better securing a quorum and attendance of members on the Commission, the General Assembly prohibits the Presbytery of Edinburgh, or any other Presbytery within twelve miles thereof, to meet on any of the days or weeks appointed for the meeting of this Commission; and such of the members of these Presbyteries as are on the Commission are required, all of them, to give attendance on the diets thereof; and the Presbyteries, at a greater distance, who have four or more members on the Commission, are to take care that at least two of them attend each diet of the same; and the General Assembly appoint their Commission, at the first meeting, to discuss as many of the causes and questions relative to the settlement of vacant churches, which are or shall be referred to them by the Assembly, as they can overtake; and it is further provided, that when any Presbytery or Synod of this Church shall decline to comply with the sentence of the Commission, or to give the same a full execution, in that case, the Commission is hereby prohibited to execute the same, by appointing any such correspondent meeting, as has been sometimes the practice, but shall allow the same to lie over to the ensuing Assembly, to which such Presbyteries or Synods shall be answerable for such their conduct, and are hereby appointed to send up with their commissioners their reasons for the same. And that in passing their sentences, and in ordering the execution of the same, they strictly observe the 12th Act of the Assembly, 1736.

VI.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Commission to some Ministers and Ruling Elders for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and for Managing her Majesty's Royal Bounty.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, nominate and appoint the Rev. Dr David Welsh, Professor of Church History in the University of Edinburgh, Moderator, all the ministers who are members of the Presbytery of Edinburgh; Mr Peter Davidson, &c.; to be a committee of this Assembly for the Reformation of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, for promoting the knowledge of true religion, suppressing Popery and profaneness, and for managing the Royal Bounty for these ends, according to, and in terms of, her Majesty's grant to this Assembly. In prosecution of which purposes, the committee are to appoint preachers and catechists to go to such places as they shall find, upon due information, to be the most proper, according to her Majesty's design, expressed in her warrant; and in so doing, that they have particular regard to such parishes in South Uist, Small Isles, Glencoe, Harris, the countries of Moidart, Glengarry, and Lochaber, and the other parishes of the Synods of Glenelg and Argyle, which the committee shall find, by reason of their vast extent, by the prevalence of Popery and ignorance, and other unhappy circumstances, to be in the greatest distress: And they shall take care that the persons they employ be certified, and found, upon due trial, to be properly qualified for their respective offices; of good abilities for the same; of a pious life and conversation; prudent, of undoubted loyalty to her Majesty, and of competent skill in the principles of divinity, and particularly in Popish controversies; such preachers and catechists being hereby appointed to be subject to, and under the inspection of, the Presbyteries of the bounds to which they are sent, who are to take care that the orders of the committee be duly observed by them. And the preachers are also appointed to catechise, and both they and the catechists to instruct the people from house to house, and to visit the sick; and, in all their labours among the people to be careful to teach them the principles and duties of the true Christian Protestant religion, and the obligations they are under to duty and loyalty to our Sovereign Queen Victoria, and obedience to the laws: And the committee are empowered to give them such instructions as to their work and behaviour, as they shall judge meet; which instructions the preachers and catechists are hereby ordered to obey. The General Assembly do farther appoint the said committee to have a particular regard in their proceedings to the regulations agreed upon by the committee of the Assembly for managing the Royal Bounty on the 30th September 1730, approved by frequent Assemblies; and to take care that Presbyteries, and others concerned, observe the same, which they are hereby ordered to do; particularly, the Assembly ordains the several Presbyteries to insert in their registers the committee's appointments of the designations, salaries, and stations of the several missionaries, and to have an exact regard thereto, in all the letters they shall write about the said missionaries, and in giving of certificates to them; and to direct all their letters concerning missionaries in their bounds only to the moderator of the committee; which letters shall be signed at the appointment of the Presbytery by the moderator or clerk thereof: And the Assembly does discharge any payment to be made of the salaries of the missionaries, except upon receipts from the missionaries themselves, and upon certificates from the Presbyteries, bearing that they have served for the time mentioned in the receipts; and that every catechist who receives a salary from the Royal Bounty, on condition that the parishioners or gentlemen of the district shall pay a certain sum in aid of such salary, shall insert in the body of his receipt to the cashier a declaration that he has received the particular sum specified; and that the attestation of the Presbytery shall, in like manner, bear that the catechist has received the stipulated sum which the committee make the condition of his appointment; that a journal of the itinerant's labours in the ministry of the mission committed to him be written on the back of the Presbytery's certificate, and signed by him, as the

ground on which the Presbytery have granted him said certificate. The General Assembly do also empower the said committee to apply, for the purposes above mentioned, what may remain of the last year's Royal Bounty, not disposed of by reason of any of the missionaries not fulfilling the appointments laid upon them; and that they are to keep a register of their proceedings, and likewise distinct books of accounts, how the foresaid money is bestowed, which shall be patent to any concerned, or who may be pleased to inspect the same. Of the persons above named as members of this committee, five are declared to be a quorum, whereof three are to be ministers. But it is hereby appointed, That at the quarterly meeting of the committee in which the scheme or establishment of missionaries for the ensuing year is to be approved and determined, not less than fourteen shall be a quorum, whereof nine shall be ministers: And the said committee are appointed to have their first general meeting at Edinburgh the first lawful day after the adjournment of the first stated diets of the Commission of the General Assembly; their second meeting (which is for fixing the annual scheme) upon the first Thursday of July, with power to those members who shall then be present to adjourn; and their other two general meetings the first lawful days after the stated meetings of the Commission of the General Assembly in November and March, within the Assembly Aisle, at twelve o'clock noon, except that day shall fall to be Saturday, and then the meeting shall be upon Monday next thereafter, at the said hour; with power to the said committee to adjourn themselves to such times and places as they shall find most needful and convenient. And they are to keep a correspondence with the Commission of the General Assembly, and the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and their committee, and to take their advice and assistance; and also to correspond with the Synods and Presbyteries concerned. They are likewise instructed and empowered, as they shall see cause, to apply to the government, or any magistrate, for assistance and support in carrying on the design of the commission now given to them. And the General Assembly do grant full power to the said committee to make such regulations as to the administration of the foresaid Royal Bounty, as to them may seem most beneficial. And the said committee are appointed to examine the accounts of the distribution of the Royal Bounty, and to lay the same before the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury, or the Barons of her Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and to report their diligence to the General Assembly, to whom they are to be accountable. And it is agreed, that no person once employed, and inserted in the scheme, shall be struck out thereof for that year, but by a quorum of at least fourteen, whereof nine to be ministers; and in case any complaint shall be made against any of those on the scheme, it shall not be determined the first ordinary meeting that the same is offered, but it shall lie on the table till another meeting; and, in the mean time, the person complained of, and the Presbytery of the bounds wherein he officiates, shall be acquainted with such complaint, and those concerned be required to send to the said committee a just account of the matter against the next meeting. And it is further appointed, That after the yearly scheme of missionaries on the Royal Bounty is settled in the manner above directed, and notice thereof given by letters to the Presbyteries concerned, such Presbyteries shall send up to the said committee their answers to these letters, at farthest with their commissioners to the General Assembly, if the same be not done sooner; and that the committee, at their first meeting after the General Assembly, shall endeavour to complete the next year's scheme themselves, and if they cannot complete it, they shall name a sub-committee of their number for that purpose, who are to lay their draught thereof before a subsequent meeting, which is appointed to meet as soon after the rising of the Assembly as possible: And empower the committee, at their first meeting, to reject any petition for a new station, in case they shall find sufficient objections against it: And that the said committee, in making up the scheme of missionaries, &c., do not exceed the sum in the grant.

VII.

Sess. 2, May 20, 1842.—Act on the Conversion of the Jews.

The General Assembly having heard the report of the Committee for promoting Christianity among the Jews, approve of the same, and appoint the following ministers and elders, viz., the ministers of the Presbyteries of Edinburgh and Glasgow, &c.; to be a committee, of which Dr Keith shall be convener, with all the powers conferred by former Acts of Assembly, appointing committees for the same object; and, in particular, with full power to appoint an acting sub-committee in Edinburgh, and corresponding and co-operating sub-committees in other places, as well as to nominate missionaries and agents, and take all other needful steps for forwarding this work, in those stations which shall appear to be most promising: Further, The General Assembly having considered the recommendation of the Committee relative to the Establishment of an Institution or Mission for the Conversion of the Jews in London, together with the application to that effect, of certain ministers and elders connected with this Church and resident there, reported to the Assembly by the committee, do hereby request and authorise the said ministers and elders, together with such others in communion with this Church as they may associate with themselves, to act as a committee on behalf of this Church, and in subordination to the acting committee before referred to, for the purpose of collecting funds, as well as of managing and superintending such missionary operations among the Jews in London, as it may be found desirable to institute, with instructions to the said committee in London to avail themselves as far as possible of the concurrence and co-operation of the Christians of other denominations, who may be willing to give their aid in this good work of the Lord. And the General Assembly, with reference to that part of the report of the committee, which brings before them the case of Mr Allan, and that of Mr Wingate, being sensible, as well of the urgency of the call for additional labourers among the Jews, as of the high qualifications of these two candidates for the office, and the peculiar circumstances in which they have been placed, approve of the arrangements adopted and contemplated by the committee; and, in particular, as to Mr Allan, the Assembly agree to dispense with one session of his attendance on Divinity and Church History, he having pursued his studies during the past year under Dr Duncan's superintendence at Pesth, and having submitted all his discourses to the Professor of Theology in Glasgow, under whom he formerly studied; and they authorise the Presbytery of Glasgow, or any other Presbytery of this Church, without waiting for the usual sanction of the Synod, to take Mr Allan on trial for licence, and thereafter, on his being licensed as a probationer, to proceed with his ordination as a missionary to the Jews, according to the laws of the Church; while, again, as to Mr Wingate, the General Assembly, dispensing, in his case, with the usual preliminary of licensing him as a probationer to preach the Gospel, which is indispensable to his being eligible to a charge in this country, and with a view exclusively to his appointment as a missionary to the Jews, authorise the Presbytery of Edinburgh, or any other Presbytery of this Church, to take trial of his gifts and qualifications in the usual manner, after his completion of the next session of college, being the second session of his attendance on the Professor of Theology; and thereafter, on being satisfied, to ordain him to the office of the ministry as a missionary to the Jews as aforesaid; it being expressly understood and hereby provided, that he shall not, in respect of such ordination, be considered eligible for a charge in Scotland, until he shall have completed the *curriculum* prescribed by the laws of this Church, as essential to the receiving of a licence as a probationer as aforesaid. And the Assembly renews its recommendation to the ministers of the Church to remember the cause of God's ancient people in the services of the sanctuary.

VIII.

Sess. 3, May 21, 1842.—Standing Order as to Dissents.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, appoint, that no dissents against any deliverance of the Assembly shall be given in until the matter in which it is pronounced shall, for that sederunt, be disposed of, the minutes completed and adjusted, and the House ready to proceed to other business; before doing which, it shall be intimated by the Moderator, that dissents from any deliverance in the course of the proceeding then brought to a close may now be tendered, and that the clerks shall not receive or record any dissents before such intimation shall have been made.

IX.

Sess. 4, May 21, 1842.—Act rescinding the Act, 1799, anent Ministerial Communion.

The General Assembly, having considered the Overture for rescinding the 5th Act of the General Assembly, 1799, did, and hereby do, rescind that part of the 5th Act of the Assembly of 1799, which discharges and prohibits, under pain of such censures as the judicatories of the Church may see cause to inflict, all the ministers of the Church, and the ministers of all Chapels of Ease connected therewith, from employing to preach, upon any occasion, or to dispense any of the other ordinances of the Gospel, within any congregation under the jurisdiction of this Church, persons who are not qualified, according to the laws of the Church, to accept of a presentation, and from holding ministerial communion in any other manner with such persons; while, at the same time, the Assembly enjoins upon all ministers of this Church to guard against holding ministerial communion with men who are not duly ordained and sound in the faith.

X.

Sess. 5, May 23, 1842.—Act anent the Election of Elders.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee for classing Returns to Overtures, having found that the Overture anent the Eldership has received the approbation of a majority of the Presbyteries of the Church, did, and hereby do, enact the said Overture into a Standing Law of the Church, as follows:—

1. That when a kirk-session shall have resolved upon an addition to the number of elders in the same, the minister shall publicly intimate from the pulpit, after divine service on the Lord's Day, that an appointment of additional elders has been resolved upon, and shall also intimate the number which is to be added; and he shall certify the whole male communicants of the congregation, that, on the third Lord's Day thereafter, they shall give in lists of such members of the congregation, being communicants and of full age, as they would choose for the office of the eldership, the number of names in each list being required to be as near as may be one-half more than the number of elders proposed, as, for instance, six when four elders are to be appointed; the session being at liberty, if they see fit, to suggest the names of such persons as they may deem meet for the office, for the consideration of the communicants; and the minister shall repeat the intimation on the two following Lord's Days, giving such exhortation as he shall deem necessary.

2. That on the Lord's Day fixed for giving in the lists aforesaid, the said male communicants shall respectively give to the elder or elders of the congregation appointed to receive them their said lists, which shall be signed by the parties lodging them, and shall have been sealed up by them before being given in.

3. That if the number of elders proposed to be appointed be not an even number, that to be contained in the lists shall be equal to it and one-half of the next imme-

diate larger number, as, for instance, if the elders proposed to be appointed shall be five, the names to be given in shall be eight in each list.

4. That on the following Monday, the session shall meet in the Church with open doors, so that all members of the congregation who choose to attend may be present, and shall then and there open the sealed lists, and the names in each list shall be read aloud and recorded, with the number of votes given for each, and those having most votes, to the number required to be contained in the lists, shall be taken as the parties chosen, from among whom the elders are to be appointed.

5. That the session shall thereupon select, from among the parties chosen as aforesaid, the number resolved to be added to the session; being, however, always entitled, according to the laws of the Church, to judge of the qualifications and fitness for the office of the parties so chosen, and to reject such as they shall judge to be unqualified; and being also entitled, if they shall see cause, in the particular circumstances of any special case, to appoint to be elders the whole of the parties so chosen.

6. That when the parties so chosen and appointed shall have declared their willingness to accept the office of elder, their edict shall be served, and the other steps followed out towards their ordination, agreeably to the forms now in use, and according to the laws of the Church.

7. That in parishes which, by the intervention of lochs, ridges of hills, or the like, are separated into totally distinct districts; or when, from other circumstances, a division is considered necessary and proper, the session may, with consent and authority of the Presbytery, divide the parish into districts, and require a certain number of elders to be appointed for each district; and the choosing of the elders of each district shall be by the male communicants residing in each district respectively, in the same manner as is herein before provided as to parishes.

The General Assembly appoint a copy of this Act to be transmitted to every kirk-session within the bounds of the Church, and direct the kirk-sessions to insert the same in their respective records; enjoin Presbyteries at their visitation of the session-books, to see that this direction has been complied with; and farther, to take order, either at their parochial visitations, or on application of members of congregations, that, so far as the means exist for it, an adequate number of elders be established in every congregation; and farther, appoint all ministers and session-clerks to make a return of the names of the elders in their several sessions, with the dates of their ordination, or of their admission, (if previously ordained,) and their usual places of residence; and for facilitating the making of these returns, appoint the following committee to prepare and transmit schedules, to be filled up and re-transmitted to the committee before the first day of April next to come, and to report to the next General Assembly the results, pointing out also the alteration in regard to the number of elders in the respective sessions, as compared with the corresponding returns obtained in 1828, viz., Rev. James Buchanan, Thomas Guthrie, R. Jameson, J. Adamson, W. Bruce Cunningham, James Balfour, Esq., W. Brown, Esq., Carlyle Bell, Esq., Captain Ramsay, John Tait, Esq., James Bonar, Esq., Macduff Rhind, Esq., James Crawford, jun., Esq., and Alexander Dunlop, Esq.—Mr Dunlop to be convener.

XI.

Sess. 5, May 23, 1842.—Overture anent Attendance on the Latin Class.
(Re-transmitted.)

XII.

Sess. 6, May 23, 1842.—Resolution as to Patronage.

The General Assembly, having considered the Overtures and Petitions anent Patronage, did, and hereby do, resolve and declare, That patronage is a grievance,

has been attended with much injury to the cause of true religion in this Church and kingdom, is the main cause of the difficulties in which the Church is at present involved, and that it ought to be abolished; and appoint the following committee to prepare petitions to the two Houses of Parliament, and an address to the Queen, on the subject, viz.—The Moderator, Dr Gordon, Dr Makellar, Dr Dewar, Dr Buchanan, Mr Cunningham, Dr Candlish, Mr Buchanan, Mr Gray, (Perth,) Mr Buchan, Mr Makgill Crichton, Mr Earle Monteith, Mr Dunlop, Mr Bridges;—Mr Cunningham to be convener.

XIII.

Sess. 7, May 24, 1842.—Act on India Missions.

The General Assembly, having heard the Report of the Committee for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, approve thereof, and authorise the same to be printed and circulated; and the General Assembly requested the Moderator to present to Dr Brunton, and through him to the committee, the grateful thanks of this Assembly, for their intelligent, zealous, and devoted labours in the conduct of the important missionary scheme committed to their care; re-appoint the committee, with former powers and instructions, and enjoin them to continue their best exertions to procure additional funds for the promotion of this cause, which is again earnestly recommended to the support of the Presbyteries and ministers, and of all the members of the Church, and of all Christians, whether at home or abroad, who take an interest in the extension of Gospel truth among the heathen.

XIV.

Sess. 16, May 28, 1842.—Act for Parochial Collections throughout the Church.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland appoint the following days for general collections throughout all the churches within their bounds, viz.:—(1.) The third Sabbath of June for relief of the Labouring Classes in Distress; (2.) The fourth Sabbath of August for the Scheme for Conversion of the Jews; (3.) The fourth Sabbath of October for Education; (4.) The fourth Sabbath of December for Foreign Missions; (5.) The fourth Sabbath of February for the Home Mission—the collection for Colonial Churches for the current year having already taken place;—and they appoint the collections for the next year to commence in the ordinary order of rotation, with the Scheme for Conversion of the Jews on the fourth Sabbath of April; provided always, that whenever the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper happens to fall on any of the said Sabbaths, the collection shall be made on the Sabbath immediately preceding. And the Assembly appoint every minister, on the Sabbath preceding that on which each collection is to be made, to give due intimation thereof from the pulpit, accompanied with such information on the object of the collection as he may deem fitting. The General Assembly, while rejoicing at the increased fruits of the Christian zeal of the people of this Church, during a year of peculiar depression and distress, would earnestly urge on them the duty of still farther augmenting the means provided by them for promoting the cause of the Redeemer, so inadequate to the extent of the field daily opening up to the operations of the Church, and so far within what might be expected from the gratitude and love due to a crucified Saviour. They would, particularly, press upon all ministers of the Church, the duty incumbent on them, of at least affording to their parishioners an opportunity of contributing towards the spread of the Gospel of Christ. The General Assembly hail with the highest gratification the information they have received of the increased number of Parochial Associations for Raising Funds in support of the Schemes of the Church, and renew their earnest recommendation to institute such associations where these have not already been established; and they would specially press on the

members of these associations the great importance of accompanying all their efforts with frequent meetings for prayer and supplication, in especial connection with the objects in support of which they are associated. Farther, the General Assembly enjoin all the Presbyteries of the Church to hold a yearly meeting, of which due intimation shall be given in all the parish churches within its bounds, and which the public shall be invited to attend; in order to afford to every minister of the Presbytery an opportunity of stating what has been done within his parish in furtherance of the said objects, and to give to the persons present, by means of addresses by one or two of the members specially appointed for that purpose, such information as to the progress of Christianity at home and abroad, as may be best calculated to arouse the benevolence of the Christian public, and to maintain their interest in the prosperity of the said objects. And, particularly, the General Assembly appoint the several Presbyteries to require an account of the diligence of all the ministers within their bounds in this matter, and to record the report of every minister in their Presbytery-books; and likewise ordain the several Synods to take a particular account of the diligence of their respective Presbyteries, and to record it in their Synod-books. And the Assembly earnestly urge on their faithful people seriously to consider the duty of contributing liberally towards the advancement of Christ's cause, according to the ability wherewith God has blessed them.

The General Assembly appoint the minister of every parish within the bounds of this Church to read this Act from the pulpit, on the second Sabbath of June next to come, or where there is no service on that day, or where it is the Communion Sabbath, on the first Sabbath thereafter.

XV.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Order as to the Titles of New Churches.

The General Assembly, finding there is a general misapprehension on the subject, did, and hereby do, direct, that the drafts of the titles of the new churches lodged, or to be produced by the respective parties, be remitted to the revising committee on the constitutions of new churches, that they may be satisfied that they are framed in terms of the constitutions; and instruct the Agent of the Church to give out extracts of the constitutions to the parties, only on the production of a certificate from the committee, to the effect that the feudal titles are framed, or sufficient security given that the titles shall be framed, in terms of the constitutions; and such committee shall, for that purpose, have access to the constitutions and relative papers before extract. And the substance of this order shall be communicated by the revising committee to all parties bringing up constitutions to the General Assembly.

XVI.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Act Amending the First Article of the Standing Orders passed in the year 1838.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Revising Committee for New Churches, did, and hereby do, amend the first article of the standing orders passed in 1838, and enact, that instead of the words "alongst with the feudal titles of the site, or drafts thereof," there be substituted the words "alongst with the drafts of the feudal titles of the church and ground."

XVII.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Overture and Interim Act, with Regulations for carrying into effect the Act of Assembly, May 29, 1835, on the Calling of Ministers.

The General Assembly agree, without a vote, to authorise the omission of the

words "sustain the call and," in the sixth section of the second head; also unanimously agree to omit those portions of the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth sections, which relate to special objections; and, with these amendments, re-transmit the following Overture and Regulations to Presbyteries for their consideration; and, in the mean time, convert them into an Interim Act.

Whereas the General Assembly have declared, &c.

XVIII.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Act on Home Missions.

The General Assembly, upon the recommendation of their Committee on the Home Missionary objects of the Church, did, and hereby do, appoint the following committee, to be called the Home Mission Committee, of which Dr Makellar is to be convener; the Moderator, &c.; which General Committee is hereby empowered to take charge of the objects formerly carried on by separate Committees appointed by this Church, called—the Church Extension Committee—the Committee for Aiding Congregations already Established—the Committee for the Employment of Probationers—and the Committee for the Encouragement of Young Men to the Office of the Ministry; and the Assembly empower this General Committee, annually, at its first meeting after the rising of the Assembly, to appoint four separate standing committees, one for each of the special objects above mentioned, the conveners whereof to be Dr Simpson, for Church Extension; Dr Candlish, for Aiding Congregations; Dr Clason, for the Employment of Probationers; and Mr C. J. Brown, for the Encouragement of Young Men; and the General Committee is hereby appointed, from time to time, to allocate to each separate Standing Committee, out of the general fund which may be contributed to this Scheme, such sum as they may deem proper for the object under its charge; and they shall, at the same time, receive such special contributions for each of the objects as any parties may appropriate thereto, applying the same according to the specific destination of the donor. Farther, the Assembly direct that, in the mean time, the expenditure in the erection of the new fabrics shall be limited to the produce of the supplementary fund, and, so far as regards the general fund, to meeting the subsisting engagements thereon; but that the Standing Committee in charge of this branch of the Scheme shall direct their attention to obtaining the removal of the obstacles to the erection of the *quoad sacra* parishes into parishes *quoad civilia*, using all prudent means for obtaining endowments to the ministers of these churches, and opening up communications with the heritors of the various parishes, with a view to the attainment of the improvements and benefits pointed out in the report of the sub-committee, given in to the Assembly of 1836 by the Marquis of Tweeddale. The Assembly also instruct the Standing Committee for Aiding Congregations to turn their attention to those cases where, from peculiar circumstances, sufficient or secure provision cannot be obtained, and must be guided in their conduct by the relative conditions of the respective congregations; with reference to the Committee for the Employment of Probationers, the Committee are appointed to apply the fund allocated to the object under their charge, either in adding to the provision made locally for missionaries in particular parishes or districts, according to the rules hitherto acted on by the former committee, provided always, the missionary to be employed be examined and approved of by the committee, or in the employment of missionaries after the manner of the missionaries on the Royal Bounty; and in regard to the encouragement of young men for the ministry, the attention of the committee in charge of that object shall be very much directed to seeking out and encouraging those having the Gaelic language, and the committee shall bestow particular attention in framing a system of regulations for conducting the object entrusted to them, in such a way as to secure all the advantages and avoid the evils incident to a scheme of this nature.

XIX.

*Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Claim, Declaration, and Protest, anent the Encroachments of the Court of Session.**

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, taking into consideration the solemn circumstances in which, in the inscrutable providence of God, this Church is now placed; and that, notwithstanding the securities for the government thereof by General Assemblies, Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk-Sessions, and for the liberties, government, jurisdiction, discipline, rights, and privileges of the same, provided by the statutes of the realm, by the constitution of this country, as unalterably settled by the Treaty of Union, and by the oath “inviolably to maintain and preserve” the same, required to be taken by each Sovereign at accession, as a condition precedent to the exercise of the royal authority; which securities might well seem, and had long been thought to place the said liberties, government, jurisdiction, discipline, rights, and privileges of this Church beyond the reach of danger or invasion;—these have been of late assailed by the very Court to which the Church was authorised to look for assistance and protection, to an extent that threatens their entire subversion, with all the grievous calamities to this Church and nation which would inevitably flow therefrom;—did, and hereby do, solemnly, and in reliance on the grace and power of the Most High, resolve and agree on the following Claim, Declaration, and Protest: that is to say:—

Whereas, it is an essential doctrine of this Church, and a fundamental principle in

* The following is the notice of the discussion in the House on the adoption of this Declaration and Claim:—

Tuesday, May 24, 1842. Sess. 7.

The General Assembly called for the Overture for a Declaration against the unconstitutional encroachments of the Civil Courts, which was read. It was moved and seconded, that the General Assembly approve of the tenor of the Declaration and Claim proposed in the said Overture, and declare in general in terms thereof; and remit to a committee to report to the House any verbal emendations or alterations that may appear necessary to render it fit to be given forth as the declaration of this House. It was also moved and seconded, that the General Assembly, having seriously considered the present state of the Church, has, with the view and in the earnest desire of restoring its tranquillity, adopted the following resolutions:—

1. That as the Act on Calls, commonly denominated the Veto Act, infringes on civil and patrimonial rights, with which, as the Church has often declared, it is not competent for its judicatories to intermeddle, the said Act is hereby declared to be null and void, and the penal judicial procedure in the Church Courts, which has been founded on it, or occasioned by it, is cancelled or set aside.

2. That whilst the members of this Church believe and maintain that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church; that there is a spiritual government committed by him to the office-bearers of the Church, independent of the civil power, and that the intrusion of unqualified or unsuitable ministers is decidedly at variance with the principles of this Church—the application of these doctrines to particular points and cases may occasion conscientious diversity of opinion, such diversity, however, affording no ground for those who may so differ separating from each other, or not continuing members of the same Ecclesiastical Body.

3. That such being the case, it is of unspeakable moment to the welfare of the Church and the best interests of religion, that the agitation which has of late prevailed, distracting the minds of men, and fatal to the prevalence and power of vital godliness, should cease, and that ministers should devote themselves chiefly to the regular and assiduous discharge of their pastoral and parochial duties.

4. That the law of the Church, as recognised and sanctioned by the law of the State, being, that, in the case of a vacancy in a parish, the members of the congregation in full communion with the Church, may state objections of whatever kind to a presentee; that the Church Courts can judicate and decide on these objections, and can determine whether, under all the circumstances of each case, these circumstances being minutely stated in the record, the presentee should, according to their solemn conviction of duty, and on their moral and religious responsibility, be inducted; there exists at present great security against the settlement of unqualified and unsuitable ministers, whilst ample opportunities are afforded to the office-bearers of the Church, as members of the different ecclesiastical judicatories, to propose, in a legal and constitutional manner, any measures which may appear to them calculated to increase that security.

Tuesday, May 24, 1842. Sess. 8.

The General Assembly resumed the consideration of the Overture for a declaration against the unconstitutional encroachments of the Civil Courts; and, after long reasoning, the vote was taken on the two motions: moved at the former diet, when it carried first motion by a majority of 241 to 111. Whereupon the Assembly found in terms of the first motion. From which finding Dr Cook dissented in his own name, and in name of all who might adhere to him; to which dissent adhered Dr Haldane and several others. The Assembly appointed a committee to revise the Declaration and Claim.

its constitution, as set forth in the Confession of Faith thereof, in accordance with the Word and Law of the most holy God, that "there is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ;" and that, while "God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be, under him, over the people, for his own glory, and the public good, and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword;" and while "it is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honour their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake," "from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted;" and while the magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, in the exercise of that power, which alone is committed to him, namely, "the power of the sword," or civil rule, as distinct from the "power of the keys," or spiritual authority, expressly denied to him, to take order for the preservation of purity, peace, and unity in the Church, yet "the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of Church officers distinct from the civil magistrate;" which government is ministerial, not lordly, and to be exercised in consonance with the laws of Christ, and with the liberties of his people:

And whereas, according to the said Confession, and to the other Standards of the Church, and agreeably to the Word of God, this government of the Church, thus appointed by the Lord Jesus, in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate or supreme power of the State, and flowing directly from the Head of the Church to the office-bearers thereof, to the exclusion of the civil magistrate, comprehends, as the objects of it, the preaching of the Word, administration of the sacraments, correction of manners, the admission of the office-bearers of the Church to their offices, their suspension and deprivation therefrom, the infliction and removal of Church censures, and, generally, the whole "power of the keys," which, by the said Confession, is declared, in conformity with Scripture, to have been "committed" to Church officers, and which, as well as the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments, it is likewise thereby declared, that "the civil magistrate may not assume to himself:"

And whereas this jurisdiction and government, since it regards only spiritual condition, rights, and privileges, doth not interfere with the jurisdiction of secular tribunals, whose determinations as to all temporalities conferred by the State upon the Church, and as to all civil consequences attached by law to the decisions of Church Courts in matters spiritual, this Church hath ever admitted, and doth admit, to be exclusive and ultimate, as she hath ever given and inculcated implicit obedience thereto:

And whereas the above mentioned essential doctrine and fundamental principle in the constitution of the Church, and the government and exclusive jurisdiction flowing therefrom, founded on God's Word, and set forth in the Confession of Faith and other Standards of this Church, have been, by divers and repeated Acts of Parliament, recognised, ratified, and confirmed—inasmuch as,—

First, The said Confession itself, containing the doctrine and principles above set forth, was "ratified and established, and voted and approven as the public and avowed Confession of this Church," by the fifth Act of the second Session of the first Parliament of King William and Queen Mary, entitled, "Act ratifying the Confession of Faith, and settling Presbyterian Church government;"—to which Act the said Confession is annexed, and with it incorporated in the statute law of this kingdom.

Second, By an Act passed in the first Parliament of King James VI., entitled, "Of admission of ministers; of laic patronages," it is enacted and declared, "That the examination and admission of ministers within this realm be only in the power of the Kirk, now openly and publicly professed within the same;" and, while the "presentation of laic patronages" was thereby "reserved to the just and ancient patrons," it was provided, that, if the presentee of a patron should be refused to be admitted by the inferior ecclesiastical authorities, it should be lawful for the patron "to appeal to the General Assembly of the whole realm, by whom the cause being decided, shall take end as they decern and declare."

Third, By an Act passed in the same first Parliament, and renewed in the sixth Parliament of the said King James VI., entitled, "Anent the jurisdiction of the Kirk," the said Kirk is declared to have jurisdiction "in the preaching of the true Word of Jesus Christ, correction of manners, and administration of the holy sacraments;" and it is farther declared, "That there be no other jurisdiction ecclesiastical acknowledged within this

Ch. 25, sect.

6.

Ch. 23, sect.

1.

Ch. 23, sect.

4.

Ch. 30, sect.

1.

Ch. 30, sect.

4.

Ch. 23, sect.

5.

1690, c. 5.

1567, c. 7.

1567, c. 12.

(Fol. Ed.)

1579, c. 69.

realm, other than that *which is and shall be within the same Kirk, or that flows therefrom, concerning the premises ;*" which Act, and that last before mentioned, were ratified and approved by another Act passed in the year 1581, entitled, " Ratification of the liberty of the true Kirk of God and religion, with confirmation of the Laws and Acts made to that effect of before ;" which other Act, and all the separate Acts therein recited, were again revived, ratified, and confirmed by an Act of the twelfth Parliament of the said King James VI., entitled, " Ratification of the Liberty of the true Kirk," &c. ; which said Act (having been repealed in 1662) was revived, renewed, and confirmed by the before mentioned statute of King William and Queen Mary.

Fourth, The said Act of the twelfth Parliament of King James VI. ratified and approved the General Assemblies, Provincial Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk-Sessions " appointed by the Kirk," and " the whole jurisdiction and discipline of the same Kirk ;" cased and annulled " all and whatsoever acts, laws, and statutes, made at any time before the day and date thereof, against the liberty of the true Kirk, jurisdiction and discipline thereof, as the same is used and exercised within this realm ;" appointed presentations to benefices to be directed to Presbyteries, " with full power to give collation thereupon, and to put order to all matters and causes ecclesiastical within their bounds, according to the discipline of the Kirk, providing the foresaid Presbyteries be bound and astricted to receive and admit whatsoever qualified minister, presented by his Majesty or laic patrons ;" (the effect of which proviso, and of the reservation in the Act of the first Parliament of King James VI., above mentioned, is hereinafter more fully adverted to ;) and farther declared, that the jurisdiction of the Sovereign and his Courts, as set forth in a previous Act, to extend over all persons his subjects, and " in all matters," should " noways be prejudicial nor derogate any thing to the privilege that *God has given to the spiritual office-bearers of the Kirk, concerning heads of religion, matters of heresy, excommunication, collation, or deprivation of ministers, or any such like essential censures,* grounded and having warrant of the Word of God ;" by which enactment, declaration, and acknowledgment, the State recognised and established as a fundamental principle of the constitution of the kingdom, that the jurisdiction of the Church in these matters was " given by God" to the office-bearers thereof, and was exclusive, and free from coercion by any tribunals holding power or authority from the State or supreme civil magistrate.

Fifth, The Parliament holden by King Charles II., immediately on his restoration to the throne, while it repealed the above recited act of the twelfth Parliament of King James and other relative acts, at the same time acknowledged the supreme and exclusive nature of the jurisdiction thereby recognised to be in the Church, describing the said Acts, as Acts " by which the *sole and only* power and jurisdiction within this Church *doth stand in the Church,* and in the General, Provincial, and Presbyterial Assemblies and Kirk-Sessions," and as Acts " which may be interpreted to have given any Church power, jurisdiction, or government, to the office-bearers of the Church, their respective meetings, other than that which acknowledgeth a dependence upon, and subordination to, the sovereign power of the King, as supreme."

Sixth, The aforesaid Act of King William and Queen Mary,—on the narrative that their Majesties and the Estates of Parliament conceived " it to be their bounden duty, after the great deliverance that God hath lately wrought for this Church and kingdom, *in the first place,* to settle and secure therein the true Protestant religion, according to the truth of God's Word, as it hath of a long time been professed within this land ; as also the government of Christ's Church within this nation, agreeable to the Word of God, and most conducive to true piety and godliness, and the establishing of peace and tranquillity within this realm,"—besides ratifying and establishing as aforesaid the Confession of Faith, did also " establish, ratify, and confirm the Presbyterian Church government and discipline ; that is to say, *the government of the Church by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies,* ratified and established by the 116th Act of James VI., Parliament 12, anno 1592, entitled, ' Ratification of the Liberty of the true Kirk,' &c., and thereafter received by the general consent of this nation, *to be the only government of Christ's Church within this kingdom ;*" and revived and confirmed the said Act of King James VI.

And whereas, not only was the exclusive and ultimate jurisdiction of the Church Courts, in the government of the Church, and especially in the particular matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, above mentioned, recognised, ratified, and confirmed,—thus necessarily implying the denial of power on the part of any secular tribunal, holding its authority from the Sovereign, to review the sentences of the Church Courts in regard to such matters, or coerce them in the exercise of such jurisdiction:

but all such power, and all claim on the part of the Sovereign to be considered supreme governor over the subjects of this kingdom of Scotland in causes *ecclesiastical and spiritual*, as he is in causes *civil and temporal*, was, after a long continued struggle, finally and *expressly repudiated and cast out of the constitution* of Scotland, as *inconsistent with the Presbyterian Church government* established at the Revolution, and thereafter unalterably secured by the Treaty of Union with England; by the constitution of which latter kingdom, differing in this respect from that of Scotland, the Sovereign is recognised to be supreme governor, "*as well in all spiritual and ecclesiastical things and causes as temporal.*" Thus:—

First, The General Assembly having, in the year 1582, proceeded to inflict the censures of the Church upon Robert Montgomery, minister of Stirling, for seeking to force himself, under a presentation from the king, into the archbishopric of Glasgow, contrary to an act of the General Assembly discharging the office of Prelatic bishop in the Church, and for appealing to the secular tribunals against the infliction of Church censures by the Church courts, and seeking to have these suspended and interdicted,—and having deposed and excommunicated him, notwithstanding of an interdict pronounced by the Privy Council of Scotland, the then supreme secular court of the kingdom,—and having at the same time declared it to be part of the subsisting discipline of the Church, that any ministers thereof who "should seek any way by the civil power to exempt and withdraw themselves from the jurisdiction of the Kirk, or procure, obtain, or use any letters or charges, &c., to impair, hurt, or stay the said jurisdiction, discipline, &c., or to make any appellation from the General Assembly to stop the discipline or order of the ecclesiastical policy or jurisdiction granted by God's Word to the office-bearers within the said Kirk," were liable to the highest censures of the Church;—although their sentence of excommunication was declared by one of the acts of Parliament of the year 1584, commonly called the "Black Acts," to be void, yet ultimately the king and privy council abandoned their interference, Montgomery submitted to the Church courts, and the statute of the twelfth Parliament of King James VI., already mentioned, cased and annulled "all and whatsoever acts, laws, and statutes made at any time before the day and date thereof, against the liberty of the true Kirk, jurisdiction and discipline thereof, *as the same is used and exercised within this realm*;" since which enactment, no similar interference with the discipline and censures of the Church was ever attempted till the year 1841.

1592, c. 116.

Second, It having been declared by another of the "Black Acts" aforesaid, entitled, "An act confirming the king's majesty's royal power over all the estates and subjects within this realm," that "his highness, his heirs and successors, by themselves and their councils, are, and in time to come shall be, judges competent to all persons his highness' subjects, of whatsoever estate, degree, function, or condition that ever they be of, spiritual or temporal, *in all matters* wherein they or any of them shall be apprehended, summoned, or charged to answer to such things as shall be inquired of them by our sovereign lord and his council," it was, by the said before mentioned act of the twelfth Parliament of King James VI., declared that the said act last above mentioned "shall noways be prejudicial, nor derogate any thing to the privilege that God has given to the spiritual office-bearers of the Kirk, concerning heads of religion, matters of heresy, excommunication, collation or deprivation of ministers, or any such like essential censures, specially grounded and having warrant of the Word of God."

1584, c. 129.

1592, c. 116.

Third, It having been enacted, on the establishment of Prelacy in 1612, that every minister, at his admission, should swear obedience to the Sovereign, as "the only lawful supreme governor of this realm, as well in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical as in things temporal," the enactment to this effect was repealed on the restoration of Presbyterian Church government.

1612, c. 1.

1640, c. 7.

Fourth, A like acknowledgment, that the Sovereign was "the only supreme governor of this kingdom, over all persons, *and in all causes*," having been, on the second establishment of Prelacy consequent on the restoration of King Charles II., required as part of the ordinary oath of allegiance, and having been also inserted into the "Test Oath," so tyrannically attempted to be forced on the subjects of this realm during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., and the same doctrine of the king's supremacy in all causes, spiritual and ecclesiastical, as well as temporal and civil, having farther been separately and specially declared by the first act of the second Parliament of the said King Charles II., (1669,) entitled, "Act asserting his majesty's supremacy over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical," whereby it was "enacted, asserted, and declared, that his majesty hath the supreme authority and supremacy over all persons, and in all causes ecclesiastical,

1661, c. 11.

1681, c. 6.

1669, c. 1.

Estates, 1689, c. 18. within this kingdom,"—the Estates of this kingdom, at the era of the Revolution, did set forth, as the second article of the "Grievances" of which they demanded redress under their "Claim of Right," "That the first act of Parliament, 1669, is inconsistent with the establishment of Church government now desired, and ought to be abrogated."

1690, c. 1. *Fifth,* In compliance with this claim, an act was immediately thereafter passed, of which the tenor follows: "Our sovereign lord and lady, the king and queen's majesties, taking into their consideration, that by the second article of the Grievances presented to their majesties by the estates of this kingdom, it is declared, that the first act of the second Parliament of King Charles the Second, entitled, 'Act asserting his majesty's supremacy over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical,' is inconsistent with the establishment of the church government now desired, and ought to be abrogate: Therefore, their majesties, with advice and consent of the estates of Parliament, do hereby abrogate, rescind, and annul the foresaid act, and declares the same in the whole heads, articles, and clauses thereof, to be of no force or effect in all time coming." In accordance also therewith, the oath of allegiance above mentioned, requiring an acknowledgment of the king's sovereignty "in all causes," was done away, and that substituted which is now in use, simply requiring a promise to be "faithful, and bear true allegiance" to the sovereign; and all preceding laws and acts of Parliament were rescinded, "in so far as they impose any other oaths of allegiance and supremacy, declarations and tests, excepting the oath *de fidei*." By the which enactments, any claim on the part of the Sovereigns of Scotland to be supreme rulers in spiritual and ecclesiastical, as well as in temporal and civil causes, or to possess any power, by themselves or their judges holding commission from them, to exercise jurisdiction in matters or causes, spiritual and ecclesiastical, was repudiated and excluded from the constitution, as inconsistent with the Presbyterian Church government then established, and secured under the statutes then and subsequently passed, "to continue, without any alteration, to the people of this land, in all succeeding generations."

1689, c. 2.

1706, c. 6.

And whereas divers civil rights and privileges were, by various statutes of the Parliament of Scotland, prior to the Union with England, secured to this Church, and certain civil consequences attached to the sentences of the courts thereof, which were farther directed to be aided and made effectual by all magistrates, judges, and officers of the law; and in particular:—

1592, c. 117. It was, by an act of the twelfth Parliament of King James VI., enacted, "That all and whatsoever sentences of deprivation, either pronounced already, or that happens to be pronounced hereafter by any Presbytery, Synodal or General Assemblies, against any parson or vicar within their jurisdiction, provided since his Highness' coronation, is, and shall be reputed in all judgments, a just cause to seclude the person before provided, and then deprived, from all profits, commodities, rents, and duties of the said parsonage and vicarage, or benefice of cure; and that, either by way of action, exception, or reply; and that the said sentence of deprivation shall be a sufficient cause to make the said benefice to vaie thereby:"

1690, c. 5. As also, by the fifth act of the first Parliament of King William and Queen Mary, it was enacted, "That whatsoever minister, being convened before the said general meeting, and representatives of the Presbyterian ministers or elders, or the visitors to be appointed by them, shall either prove contumacious for not appearing, or be found guilty, and shall be therefor censured, whether by suspension or deposition, they shall, *ipso facto*, be suspended from, or deprived of their stipends and benefices:"

1693, c. 22. As also, by an act passed in the fourth session of the first Parliament of King William and Queen Mary, entitled, an "Act for settling the peace and quiet of the Church," it was provided, that no minister should be admitted, unless he owned the Presbyterian Church government, as settled by the last recited act, "to be the only government of this Church;" "and that he will submit thereto, and concur therewith, and never endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof;" and it was statute or ordained, "that the Lords of their Majesties' Privy Council, and all other magistrates, judges, and officers of justice, give all due assistance for making the sentences and censures of the Church, and judicatories thereof, to be obeyed, or otherwise effectual, as accords:"

1695, c. 22. As also, by an act passed in the fifth session of the foresaid Parliament, entitled, an "Act against intruding into Churches without a legal call and admission thereto," on the narrative, "that ministers and preachers, their intruding themselves into vacant churches, possessing of manses and benefices, and exercising any part of the ministerial function in parishes, without a legal call and admission to the said churches, is an high contempt of the law, and of a dangerous consequence, tending to perpetual schism;" such intrusion, without an orderly call from the heritors and elders—the right of presentation by patrons

being at this time abolished,—and “legal admission from the Presbytery,” was prohibited under certain penalties; and the Lords of the Privy Council were recommended to remove all who had so intruded, and “to take some effectual course for stopping and hindering those ministers who are, or shall be hereafter deposed by the judicatories of the present Established Church, from preaching or exercising any act of their ministerial function, which” (the said statute declares) “they cannot do after they are deposed, without a high contempt of the authority of the Church, and of the laws of the kingdom establishing the same.”

And whereas, at the Union between the two kingdoms, the Parliament of Scotland, being determined that the “true Protestant religion,” as then professed, “with the worship, discipline, and government of this Church, should be effectually and unalterably secured,” did, in their Act appointing commissioners to treat with commissioners from the Parliament of England, as to an union of the kingdoms, provide, ^{1705, c. 4.} “That the said commissioners shall *not* treat of or concerning any alteration of the worship, discipline, and government of the Church of this kingdom, as now by law established;” and did, by another Act, commonly called the Act of Security, and entitled, “Act for securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government,” ^{1706, c. 4.} “establish and confirm the said true Protestant religion, and the worship, discipline, and government of this Church, to continue without any alteration to the people of this land in all succeeding generations;” and did “for ever confirm the 5th Act of the first Parliament of King William and Queen Mary,” entitled, “Act ratifying the Confession of Faith, and settling Presbyterian Church Government, ^{1690, c. 5.} *and the whole other Acts of Parliament relating thereto;*” and did “expressly provide and declare, That the foresaid true Protestant religion, contained in the above mentioned Confession of Faith, with the form and purity of worship presently in use within this Church, and its Presbyterian Church government and discipline; that is to say, the government of the Church by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, all established by the foresaid Acts of Parliament, pursuant to the Claim of Right, shall remain and continue unalterable: and that the said Presbyterian government shall be the only government of the Church within the kingdom of Scotland:” And farther, “for the greater security of the same,” did, *inter alia*, enact, “That, after the decease of her present Majesty, the Sovereign succeeding to her in the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Great Britain shall, in all time coming, at his or her accession to the Crown, swear and subscribe, that they shall inviolably maintain and preserve the foresaid settlement of the true Protestant religion, with the government, worship, discipline, right, and privileges of this Church, as above established by the laws of this kingdom, in prosecution of the Claim of Right;” which said Act of Security, “with the establishment therein contained,” it was specially thereby enacted, “should be held and observed in all time coming, as a fundamental and essential condition of any treaty or union to be concluded betwixt the two kingdoms, *without any alteration thereof, or derogation thereto, in any sort, for ever:*” It being farther thereby provided, that “the said Act and settlement therein contained shall be insert and repeated in any Act of Parliament that shall pass, for agreeing and concluding the foresaid treaty or union betwixt the two kingdoms; and that the same shall be therein expressly declared to be a fundamental and essential condition of the said treaty or union in all time coming.” In terms of which enactment, this Act of Security was inserted in the Treaty of Union between ^{1706, c. 7.} the two kingdoms, as a fundamental condition thereof, and was also inserted in the Act of the Parliament of Scotland ratifying and approving of the said Treaty, and likewise in the corresponding Act of the Parliament of England, entitled, “An Act ^{5 Anne, c. 2.} for a Union of the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland.”

And whereas, at the date of the said Treaty of Union, the right of patrons to present to churches stood abolished by statute, after the following manner, *viz.*:—By ^{1690, c. 5.} the Act of King William and Queen Mary, herein before mentioned, the Act of ^{1692, c. 116.} James VI., also herein before mentioned, then standing totally repealed, was only revived, subject to the express exception of “that part of it relating to Patronages,” which consequently remained repealed and unrestored, and “which,” the Act 1690, c. 5, farther bore, “is hereafter to be taken into consideration.” The part of the said Act,

thus left repealed and unrevived, was the provision, that Presbyteries “be bound and astricted to receive whatsoever qualified minister presented by his Majesty or laic patrons,”—a provision which, while it subsisted, was held to leave the Church free to proceed in the collation of ministers “according to the discipline of the Kirk;” and non-compliance with which implied only a forfeiture of the fruits of the particular benefice, which it did by virtue of the immediately succeeding statute 1592, c. 117, whereby it was enacted, that “in case the Presbytery *refuses* to admit any *qualified* minister presented to them by the patron, it shall be lawful to the patron to retain the whole fruits of the benefice in his own hands.” This subject having, accordingly, been thereafter taken into consideration in the same session of Parliament, was definitively settled by an Act, entitled, “Act concerning Patronages,” whereby the right of presentation by patrons was “annulled and made void,” and a right was vested in the heritors and elders of the respective parishes “to *name* and *propose* the person to the whole congregation, to be approven or disapproven by them,” the disapprovers giving in their reasons “to the effect the affair may be cognosed upon by the Presbytery of the bounds, at whose judgment, and by whose determination,” (as is declared by the said Act,) “*the calling and entry* of a particular minister is to be ordered and concluded.”

And whereas the said Act last mentioned formed part of the settlement of the Presbyterian Church government effected at the Revolution, and was one of the “Acts relating thereto,” and to the statute 1690, c. 5, specially confirmed and secured by the Act of Security and Treaty of Union; yet, notwithstanding thereof, and of the said treaty, the Parliament of Great Britain, by an Act passed in the 10th of Queen Anne, repealed the said Act, “in so far as relates to the presentation of ministers by heritors and others therein mentioned,” and restored to patrons the right of presentation, and enacted that Presbyteries should be “obliged to receive and admit in the same manner, such qualified person or persons, minister or ministers, as shall be presented by the respective patrons, as the persons or ministers presented before the making of this Act ought to have been admitted:”

And whereas, while this Church protested against the passing of the above mentioned Act of Queen Anne, as “contrary to the constitution of the Church, so well secured by the late Treaty of Union, and solemnly ratified by Acts of Parliament in both kingdoms,” and for more than seventy years thereafter uninterruptedly sought for its repeal, she at the same time maintained, and practically exercised, without question or challenge from any quarter, the jurisdiction of her courts to determine ultimately and exclusively, under what circumstances they would admit candidates into the office of the holy ministry, or constitute the pastoral relationship between minister and people, and, generally, “to order and conclude the entry of particular ministers:”

And whereas, in particular, this Church required, as necessary to the admission of a minister to the charge of souls, that he should have received a call from the people over whom he was to be appointed, and did not authorise or permit any one so to be admitted till such call had been sustained by the Church Courts, and did, before and subsequent to the passing of the said Act of Queen Anne, declare it to be a fundamental principle of the Church, as set forth in her authorised Standards, and particularly in the Second Book of Discipline, repeated by Act of Assembly in 1638, that no pastor be intruded upon any congregation contrary to the will of the people:

And whereas, in especial, this fundamental principle was, by the 14th Act of the General Assembly, 1736, re-declared, and directed to be attended to in the settlement of vacant parishes, but having been, after some time, disregarded in the administration of the Church, it was once more re-declared by the General Assembly, 1834, who established certain specific provisions and regulations for carrying it into effect in time to come:

And whereas, by a judgment pronounced by the House of Lords, in 1839, it was, for the first time, declared to be illegal to refuse to take on trial, and to reject the presentee of a patron, (although a layman, and merely a candidate for admission to the office of the ministry,) in consideration of this fundamental principle of the Church, and in respect of the dissent of the congregation; to the authority of which

1592, c. 117.

1690, c. 25.

10 Anne, c. 12.

Chap. 3, § 5.

Act of Assembly, 1736, c. 14.

Act of Assembly, 1834, c. 9.

Auchterarder Case, 1839.

judgment, so far as disposing of civil interests, this Church implicitly bowed, by at once abandoning all claim to the *jus devolutum*,—to the benefice, for any pastor to be settled by her,—and to all other civil right or privilege which might otherwise have been competent to the Church or her Courts; and anxiously desirous, at the same time, of avoiding collision with the Civil Courts, she so far suspended the operation of the above mentioned Act of Assembly, as to direct all cases, in which dissents should be lodged by a majority of the congregation, to be reported to the General Assembly, in the hope that a way might be opened up to her for reconciling with the civil rights declared by the House of Lords, adherence to the above mentioned fundamental principle, which she could not violate or abandon by admitting to the holy office of the ministry a party not having, in her conscientious judgment, a legitimate call thereto, or by intruding a pastor on a reclaiming congregation contrary to their will; and farther, addressed herself to the Government and the Legislature for such an alteration of the law, (as for the first time now interpreted,) touching the temporalities belonging to the Church, (which alone she held the decision of the House of Lords to be capable of affecting or regulating,) as might prevent a separation between the cure of souls and the benefice thereto attached.

And whereas, although during the century which elapsed after the passing of the said Act of Queen Anne, Presbyteries repeatedly rejected the presentees of patrons on grounds undoubtedly *ultra vires* of the Presbyteries, as having reference to the title of the patron or the validity of competing presentations, and which were held by the Court of Session to be contrary to law, and admitted others to the pastoral office in the parishes presented to, who had no presentation or legal title to the benefice, the said Court, even in such cases, never attempted or pretended to direct or coerce the Church Courts, in the exercise of their functions in regard to the collation of ministers or other matters acknowledged by the State to have been conferred on the Church, not by the State, but by God himself. On the contrary, they limited their decrees to the regulation and disposal of the temporalities which were derived from the State, and which, as the proper subjects of “actions civil,” were within the province assigned to the Court of Session by the Constitution, refusing to interfere with the peculiar functions and exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of the Church. Thus,—

In the case of Auchtermuchty, where the Presbytery had wrongfully admitted another than the patron's presentee, the Court found, “That the right to a stipend is a civil right; and, therefore, that the Court have power to cognosce and determine upon the legality of the admission of ministers, *in hunc effectum*, whether the person admitted shall have right to the stipend or not;” and simply decided, that the patron was entitled to retain the stipend in his own hands.

Moncrieff v. Maxton, Feb. 15, 1735.

So also, the same course was followed in the cases of Culross, Lanark, and Forbes; in reference to one of which (that of Lanark) the Government of the country, on behalf of the Crown, in which the patronage was vested, recognised the retention of stipend by the patron, as the only competent remedy for a wrongful refusal to admit his presentee;—the Secretary of State having, in a letter to the Lord Advocate of Scotland, (January 17, 1752,) signified the pleasure of his Majesty, “Directing and ordering his Lordship to do every thing necessary and competent by law, for asserting and taking benefit, in the present case, of the said right and privilege of patrons by the law of Scotland, to retain the fruits of the benefice in their own hands till their presentee be admitted.”

Cochran v. Stoddart, June 26, 1751.
Dick v. Carmichael, Mar. 2, 1753.
Forbes v. M^rWilliam, Feb. 1762.

So farther, in the before mentioned case of Culross, the Court refused, “as incompetent,” a bill of advocacy presented to them by the patron, for the purpose of staying the admission by the Presbytery of another than his presentee.

Cochran, Nov. 19, 1748.

So likewise, in the case of Dunse, the Court would not interfere in regard to a conclusion to prohibit the Presbytery “to moderate in a call at large, or settle any other man,” because “that was interfering with the power of ordination or internal policy of the Church, with which the Lords thought they had nothing to do.”

Hay v. Presbytery of Dunse, Feb. 26, 1749.

And so, in the same manner, in the case of Unst, where the party concluded to have the Presbytery ordained to proceed to the presentee's settlement, as well as to have the validity of the presentation and the right to the stipend declared, the Court limited their decree to the civil matters of the presentation and stipend.

Lord Dundas v. Presbytery of Shetland, May 15, 1793.

And whereas, pending the efforts of the Church to accomplish the desired alteration of the law, the Court of Session,—a tribunal instituted by special Act of Parlia-

1537, c. 36. ment for the specific and limited purpose of "doing and administration of justice in all *civil actions*," with Judges appointed simply "to sit and decide upon all *actions civil*,"—not confining themselves to the determination of "*civil actions*,"—to the withholding of civil consequences from sentences of the Church Courts, which, in their judgment, were not warranted by the statutes recognising the jurisdiction of these courts,—to the enforcing of the provision of the Act 1592, c. 117, for retention of the fruits of the benefice in case of wrongful refusal to admit a presentee, or the giving of other civil redress for any civil injury held by them to have been wrongfully sustained in consequence thereof,—have, in numerous and repeated instances, stepped beyond the province allotted to them by the Constitution, and within which alone their decisions can be held to declare the law, or to have the force of law, deciding not only "*actions civil*," but "*causes spiritual and ecclesiastical*,"—and that, too, even where these had no connection with the exercise of the right of patronage,—and have invaded the jurisdiction, and encroached upon the spiritual privileges of the Courts of this Church, in violation of the Constitution of the country,—in defiance of the statutes above mentioned, and in contempt of the laws of this kingdom; as for instance—

1st Lethendy Case. By interdicting Presbyteries of the Church from admitting to a pastoral charge, when about to be done irrespective of the civil benefice attached thereto, or even where there was no benefice—no right of patronage—no stipend—no manse or glebe, and no place of worship, or any patrimonial right connected therewith.

Stewarton Case. By issuing a decree requiring and ordaining a Church Court to take on trial and admit to the office of the holy ministry, in a particular charge, a probationer or unordained candidate for the ministry, and to intrude him also on the congregation, contrary to the will of the people; both in this and in the cases first mentioned, invading the Church's exclusive jurisdiction in the admission of ministers, the preaching of the Word, and administration of sacraments—recognised by statute to have been "*given by God*" directly to the Church, and to be beyond the limits of the secular jurisdiction.

Daviot Case. By prohibiting the communicants of the Church from intimating their dissent from a call proposed to be given to a candidate for the ministry to become their pastor.

Stewarton Case. By granting interdict against the establishment of additional ministers to meet the wants of an increasing population, as uninterruptedly practised from the Reformation to this day;—against constituting a new Kirk-Session in a parish, to exercise discipline;—and against innovating on its existing state, "as regards pastoral superintendence, its Kirk-Session, and jurisdiction, and discipline thereto belonging."

Strathbogie Case. By interdicting the preaching of the Gospel, and administration of ordinances throughout a whole district, by any minister of the Church under authority of the Church Courts, thus assuming to themselves the regulation of the "*preaching of the Word*" and "*administration of the sacraments*," and at the same time invading the privilege, common to all the subjects of the realm, of having freedom to worship God according to their consciences, and under the guidance of the ministers of the communion to which they belong.

2d Auchterarder Case. By holding the members of inferior Church judicatories liable in damages for refusing to break their ordination vows and oaths, (sworn by them, in compliance with the requirements of the statutes of the realm, and, in particular, of the Act of Security embodied in the Treaty of Union,) by disobeying and setting at defiance the sentences, in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, of their superior Church judicatories, to which, by the Constitution of the Church and country, they are, in such matters, subordinate and subject, and which, by their said vows and oaths, they stand pledged to obey.

Enslamond Case. By interdicting the execution of the sentence of a Church judicatory prohibiting a minister from preaching or administering ordinances within a particular parish, pending the discussion of a cause in the Church Courts as to the validity of his settlement therein.

Cambuslangh Case. By interdicting the General Assembly and inferior Church judicatories from inflicting Church censures; as in one case, where interdict was granted against the pronouncing of sentence of deposition upon a minister found guilty of theft by a judgment acquiesced in by himself; in another, where a Presbytery was interdicted from proceeding in the trial of a minister accused of fraud and swindling; and in a third, where a Presbytery was interdicted from proceeding with a libel against a licentiate for drunkenness, obscenity, and profane swearing.

1st and 2d Strathbogie Cases. By suspending Church censures, inflicted by the Church judicatories in the exercise of discipline, (which, by special statute, all "*Judges and officers of justice*" are ordered

“to give due assistance” for making “to be obeyed or otherwise effectual,”) and so reponing ministers suspended from their office, to the power of preaching and administering ordinances; thus assuming to themselves the “power of the keys.”

By interdicting the execution of a sentence of deposition from the office of the holy ministry, pronounced by the General Assembly of the Church; thereby also usurping the “power of the keys,” and supporting deposed ministers in the exercise of ministerial functions, which is declared by special statute to be a “high contempt of the authority of the Church and of the laws of the kingdom establishing the same.”

8d Strath-
bogie Case.

By assuming to judge of the right of individuals elected members of the General Assembly to sit therein, and interdicting them from taking their seats; thus interfering with the constitution of the Supreme Court of the Church, and violating her freedom in the holding of General Assemblies secured to her by statute.

5th Strath-
bogie Case.

By, in the greater number of the instances above referred to, requiring the inferior judicatories of the Church to disobey the sentences, in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, of the superior judicatories, to which, by the constitution in Church and State, they are subordinate and subject, and which, in compliance with the provisions of the statutes of the realm, their members have solemnly sworn to obey;—thus subverting “the government of the Church by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies,” settled by statute and the Treaty of Union, as “the only government of the Church within the kingdom of Scotland.”

By all which Acts, the said Court of Session, apparently not adverting to the oath taken by the Sovereign from whom they hold their commissions, have exercised powers not conferred upon them by the Constitution, but by it excluded from the province of any secular tribunal,—have invaded the jurisdiction of the Courts of the Church—have subverted its government—have illegally attempted to coerce Church Courts in the exercise of their purely spiritual functions—have usurped the “power of the keys”—have wrongfully acclaimed, as the subjects of their civil jurisdiction, to be regulated by their decrees, ordination of laymen to the office of the holy ministry, admission to the cure of souls, Church censures, the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments—and have employed the means entrusted to them for enforcing submission to their lawful authority, in compelling submission to that which they have usurped—in opposition to the doctrines of God’s Word set forth in the Confession of Faith, as ratified by statute—in violation of the Constitution—in breach of the Treaty of Union, and in disregard of divers express enactments of the Legislature.

And whereas, farther encroachments are threatened on the government and discipline of the Church as by law established, in actions now depending before the said Court, in which it is sought to have sentences of deposition from the office of the holy ministry reduced and set aside, and minorities of inferior judicatories authorised to take on trial and admit to the office of the holy ministry, in disregard of, and in opposition to, the authority of the judicatories of which they are members, and of the superior judicatories to which they are subordinate and subject.

4th Strath-
bogie Case.

8d Auchter-
arder Case.
3d Lethendy
Case.

And whereas, the government and discipline of Christ’s Church cannot be carried on according to His laws and the constitution of His Church, subject to the exercise, by any secular tribunal, of such powers as have been assumed by the said Court of Session.

And whereas this Church, highly valuing, as she has ever done, her connection, on the terms contained in the statutes herein before recited, with the State, and her possession of the temporal benefits thereby secured to her for the advantage of the people, must, nevertheless, even at the risk and hazard of the loss of that connection and of these public benefits,—deeply as she would deplore and deprecate such a result for herself and the nation,—persevere in maintaining her liberties as a Church of Christ, and in carrying on the government thereof on her own constitutional principles, and must refuse to intrude ministers on her congregations, to obey the unlawful coercion attempted to be enforced against her in the exercise of her spiritual functions and jurisdiction, or to consent that her people be deprived of their rightful liberties.

THEREFORE, the General Assembly, while, as above set forth, they fully recognise the absolute jurisdiction of the Civil Courts in relation to all matters whatsoever of a civil

nature, and especially in relation to all the temporalities conferred by the State upon the Church, and the civil consequences attached by law to the decisions, in matters spiritual, of the Church Courts, do, in name and on behalf of this Church, and of the nation and people of Scotland, and under the sanction of the several statutes, and the Treaty of Union herein before recited, CLAIM, as of RIGHT, that she shall freely possess and enjoy her liberties, government, discipline, rights, and privileges, according to law, especially for the defence of the spiritual liberties of her people, and that she shall be protected therein from the foresaid unconstitutional and illegal encroachments of the said Court of Session, and her people secured in their Christian and constitutional rights and liberties.

And they DECLARE, that they cannot, in accordance with the Word of God, the authorised and ratified Standards of this Church, and the dictates of their consciences, intrude ministers on reclaiming congregations, or carry on the government of Christ's Church, subject to the coercion attempted by the Court of Session as above set forth; and that, at the risk and hazard of suffering the loss of the secular benefits conferred by the State, and the public advantages of an establishment, they must, as by God's grace they will, refuse so to do; for, highly as they estimate these, they cannot put them in competition with the inalienable liberties of a Church of Christ, which, alike by their duty and allegiance to their Head and King, and by their ordination vows, they are bound to maintain, "notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise."

And they PROTEST, that all and whatsoever acts of the Parliament of Great Britain, passed without the consent of this Church and nation, in alteration of, or derogation to the aforesaid government, discipline, right, and privileges of this Church, (which were not allowed to be treated of by the Commissioners for settling the terms of the Union between the two kingdoms, but were secured by antecedent stipulation, provided to be inserted, and inserted in the Treaty of Union, as an unalterable and fundamental condition thereof, and so reserved from the cognizance and power of the federal legislature created by the said Treaty,)—as also, all and whatsoever sentences of courts in contravention of the same government, discipline, right, and privileges, are and shall be, in themselves, void and null, and of no legal force or effect; and that, while they will accord full submission to all such acts and sentences, in so far—though in so far only—as these may regard civil rights and privileges, whatever may be their opinion of the justice or legality of the same, their said submission shall not be deemed an acquiescence therein, but that it shall be free to the members of this Church, or their successors, at any time hereafter, when there shall be a prospect of obtaining justice, to claim the restitution of all such civil rights and privileges, and temporal benefits and endowments, as for the present they may be compelled to yield up, in order to preserve to their office-bearers the free exercise of their spiritual government and discipline, and to their people the liberties, of which respectively it has been attempted, so contrary to law and justice, to deprive them.

And, finally, the General Assembly call the Christian people of this kingdom, and all the Churches of the Reformation throughout the world, who hold the great doctrine of the sole Headship of the Lord Jesus over his Church, to witness, that it is for their adherence to that doctrine, as set forth in their Confession of Faith, and ratified by the laws of this kingdom, and for the maintenance by them of the jurisdiction of the office-bearers, and the freedom and privileges of the members of the Church from that doctrine flowing, that this Church is subjected to hardship, and that the rights so sacredly pledged and secured to her are put in peril; and they especially invite all the office-bearers and members of this Church, who are willing to suffer for their allegiance to their adorable King and Head, to stand by the Church, and by each other, in defence of the doctrine aforesaid, and of the liberties and privileges, whether of office-bearers or people, which rest upon it; and to unite in supplication to Almighty God, that He would be pleased to turn the hearts of the rulers of this kingdom, to keep unbroken the faith pledged to this Church, in former days, by statutes and solemn treaty, and the obligations, come under to God himself, to preserve and maintain the government and discipline of this Church in accordance with His Word; or otherwise, that he would give strength to this Church—office-bearers

and people—to endure resignedly the loss of the temporal benefits of an establishment, and the personal sufferings and sacrifices to which they may be called, and would also inspire them with zeal and energy to promote the advancement of His Son's kingdom, in whatever condition it may be His will to place them; and that, in His own good time, He would restore to them these benefits, the fruits of the struggles and sufferings of their fathers in times past in the same cause; and, thereafter, give them grace to employ them more effectually than hitherto they have done, for the manifestation of His glory.

XX.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Address to the Queen on the subject of the foregoing Claim of Right.

May it please your Majesty,

We, your Majesty's most loyal, dutiful, and devoted subjects, the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, met in General Assembly, relying with undoubted confidence on the gracious assurance repeatedly vouchsafed to us, of your Majesty's determination to maintain inviolate the government, worship, discipline, rights, and privileges of this Church, humbly approach your Majesty, in order to lay before your Majesty a statement of the invasions which have recently been made on the said government, discipline, rights, and privileges of this Church.

We deeply lament that the invasions of which we complain have proceeded from the Court of Session, to whose determinations, in their own province, we have ever yielded and inculcated implicit obedience.

We most respectfully submit to your Majesty's favourable consideration the Claim, Declaration, and Protest, which we have adopted with reference to this matter, wherein are fully set forth the legal and constitutional securities for the rights and privileges of this Church, and the encroachments thereon, from which we desire to be protected.

We fully rely on your Majesty's determination to uphold and maintain the government, discipline, rights, and privileges of this Church; and while we cannot, in accordance with the dictates of our conscience, and our views of the Word of God, submit to the coercion attempted over us in the exercise of our spiritual functions by the said Court, and must refuse to do so, even at the hazard of the loss of the temporal advantages we at present enjoy, we earnestly trust that such measures may be directed by your Majesty as will preserve to us the peaceable possession of those rights and privileges secured to us by statute and solemn treaty.

Given at Edinburgh, this 30th day of May 1842, by your Majesty's most faithful, obedient, and loyal subjects, the Ministers and Elders of this National Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

D. WELSH, *Moderator.*

XXI.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Declaration as to Declaratory Act of 1834, anent the Ministers of quoad sacra Parishes.

The General Assembly, on consideration of the overture anent *quoad sacra* ministers, without a vote, did, and hereby do declare, That the principle on which the Declaratory Act of 1834 is founded, is a fundamental principle of this Church, to which she is resolved, by the grace of God, at all hazards to adhere, and instruct the Standing Committee of the Home Mission Committee, charged with the object of Church Extension, to use all efforts in their power to obtain the removal of the obstruction

to the erection of parishes *quoad temporalia*, presented by the provisions of the Act, 1707, and to secure adequate permanent provision for these ministers.

XXII.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Act appointing Meeting of Synod of Orkney.

The General Assembly, on an application from the Synod of Orkney, did, and hereby do, appoint the said Synod in future to meet at Kirkwall, on the third Wednesday of April; and the Assembly supersede the appointment of the meeting of the said Synod in July next.

XXIII.

Sess. 17, May 30, 1842.—Act appointing the Meeting of the Synod of Argyle.

The General Assembly, on the application of the Synod of Argyle, did, and hereby do, authorise the said Synod to meet alternately at Lochgilphead and Inverary, on the first Wednesday of September annually; and appoint the first meeting to be held at Lochgilphead, on the first Wednesday of September next.

XXIV.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Act appointing a Special Commission, with reference to the present Difficulties of the Church.

The General Assembly, having taken into their consideration the state of the parishes herein after mentioned, and the necessity of making some special provision for the settlement and superintendence thereof, and for the management and ordering of certain other matters after mentioned, resolve, for this purpose, to appoint a Special Commission, to the effect and with the powers herein after set forth; and they accordingly did, and hereby do, appoint Dr David Welsh, their Moderator; and Dr Robert Gordon, High Church, Edinburgh, Dr Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, Dr Angus Makellar at Pencaitland, Dr Patrick M'Farlan at Greenock, Dr Thomas Brown, Dr John Smyth, Dr Nathaniel Paterson, Dr James Henderson, and Dr Robert Buchanan at Glasgow, Dr James Brewster at Craig, Dr David Dickson at St Cuthbert's, Mr James Grierson at Errol, Mr Lewis Balfour at Colinton, Mr James Thomson, and Mr John Roxburgh at Dundee, Mr John Paul at St Cuthbert's, Mr James M'Laggan at Kinfauns, Mr Duncan M'Farlan at Renfrew, Mr John Bruce, Mr William Cunningham, Dr Robert Smith Candlish, Mr Archibald Bennie, Mr James Buchanan, Mr Thomas Guthrie, and Mr Charles John Brown at Edinburgh, Mr James Bannerman at Ormiston, Mr David Thorburn at South Leith, Mr James Scott at Dalmeny, Mr Andrew Gray at Perth, Mr David Simpson at Aberdeen, Mr James Cordiner at Forgue, Mr George Shepherd at Kingussie, Mr George M'Kay at Rafford, Mr William Barclay at Auldearn, Mr Alexander Stewart at Cromarty, Dr M'Nair at Paisley, Mr D. Carment at Rosskeen, Mr William M'Kenzie at Dunblane, Mr Matthew Barclay at Old Kilpatrick, Mr D. Horne at Corstorphine, Mr Burns at Monkton, Mr Dickie at Dunlop, Mr Hetherington at Torphichen, Mr M'Gillivray at Dairsie, *Ministers*; and the Procurator, Dr Daniel Dewar, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen, Sir David Brewster, Principal of the United College of St Salvator and St Leonard's, St Andrews, Dr Robert J. Brown, Professor of Greek in Marischal College, Aberdeen, the Right Honourable Sir James Forrest of Comiston, Bart., Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, George Buchan, Esq., of Kelloe, Robert Bruce, Esq., of Kennet,

James Campbell Brodie, Esq., of Lethen, Major Ludovick Stewart of Pittyvaich, William Howison Crawford, Esq., of Crawfordland, William Collins, Esq., Glasgow, John Thomson, Esq., Banker, Alexander Dunlop, Esq., Advocate, John George Wood, Esq., W.S., John Clerk Brodie, Esq., W.S., Archibald Bonar, Esq., Banker, Maurice Lothian, Esq., Solicitor, Robert Johnston, jun., Esq., W.S., James Hamilton, Esq., of Ninewar, James Moncreiff, Esq., Advocate, Dr Begbie, James Bonar, Esq., W.S., W. Whitehead, Esq., Edinburgh, Dr Smyttan, Claud Alexander, Esq., of Ballochmyle, James Bridges, Esq., W.S., and D. M. M. Crichton, Esq., of Rankeillour, *Elders*; five, of whom three shall be ministers, to be a quorum, to be commissioners, to co-operate with the several Presbyteries within whose bounds are situated the following parishes:—viz., Huntly, Keith, Glass, Mortlach, Rhynie, Cairnie, Botriphnie, and Marnoch, in the Presbytery of Strathbogie; Auchterarder in the Presbytery of Auchterarder; Lethendy and Kinloch in the Presbytery of Dunkeld; Muckairn in the Presbytery of Lorn; Culsamond in the Presbytery of Garioch; and the new parish of Stewarton, in the Presbytery of Irvine,—in the settlement and superintendence of the said parishes, and the making provision for the supply of the ordinances of religion, and the exercise of discipline, and the ordering of all ecclesiastical matters therein; empowering and instructing the said commissioners to advise and direct the said respective Presbyteries in all their proceedings thereanent, with full power to the said commissioners, of themselves, to do and perform, in relation to the premises, every act which the respective Presbyteries might have done and performed in those cases in which the Presbytery of the bounds may be exposed to hazard by performing the same; and especially with power to moderate in a call to, and ordain a minister to the congregation of the said new church at Stewarton, and to grant ordination to the missionaries labouring in the several Strathbogie parishes, or others of the parishes above mentioned, in which there may be no speedy prospect of obtaining the enjoyment of the benefice for the maintenance of the ministry of the Word to those of the parishioners continuing in communion with this Church; and the said commissioners are further empowered in the event of any interference by the Civil Courts, with the exercise of the spiritual jurisdiction and discipline of the Church, by these or any other Presbyteries of the Church, and of their being applied to by such Presbyteries, to advise and direct such Presbyteries in regard to their proceedings; or of themselves to do and perform whatever it might have been competent for the said Presbyteries to have done and performed in the event aforesaid. And they are also instructed and empowered to advise with the Procurator in regard to legal processes in dependence touching the questions connected with the matters regarding the parishes herein before mentioned, or any others that may be similarly situated; and the said commissioners are appointed and authorised to take charge of all transactions with reference to a settlement of the great questions now in dependence touching the spiritual jurisdiction of the Church, and the liberties of the Christian people, in regard to the appointment of pastors to congregations, instructing them in all their proceedings regarding these matters, to have respect to the several deliverances of the General Assembly thereanent; and instruct such ministers of the Church as the said commissioners may call upon, to place their services at the disposal of the commissioners; and the said commissioners are hereby empowered to choose their moderator and clerk: And the General Assembly appoint the said commissioners to hold their first meeting at Edinburgh, in the Presbytery Hall, on the third of June, at ten o'clock, with power to hold meetings thereafter at such times and places as they shall see fit, and with power to their Moderator at any time to summon meetings of the said commissioners *pro re nata*, on five days notice to each of the commissioners.

XXV.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Overture anent Processes against Ministers.

The General Assembly, upon the Report of the Committee on the Form of Pro-

cess, without a vote agree to transmit the following Overture to all the Presbyteries of this Church for their consideration :—

1. That, in all cases of libel against a clergyman on charges of heresy or immorality, inferring deposition or suspension, it shall not be competent for the party libelled to exercise the functions of his office from the date of the service of the libel till the decision of the case upon the merits.

2. That, when a judgment finding the relevancy of a libel has become final, it shall be competent for the Presbytery to proceed with the case till it is ready for judgment on the merits, notwithstanding of any appeals which may be taken in the course of the proceedings.

XXVI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Standing Orders on the Form of Process.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee on the Form of Process, agreed that the following Resolutions, contained in their Report, be converted into Standing Orders of this Church :—

1. That no fees shall be exigible on presenting petitions on general subjects ; and that all such petitions as may be lodged on or before the day of meeting of the Assembly, shall be classified and reported on to the Assembly, so as to show the import thereof, and number of names attached thereto ; in consequence whereof, the printing of such petitions shall in future be dispensed with, unless the parties choose to print the same.

2. That overtures shall be classified and reported on as above, and the printing thereof also in like manner dispensed with.

3. That the second standing order of 28th May 1838 shall be altered and explained to the effect of declaring—That *the printed copies only* of all papers, appointed by former standing orders to be printed, shall be lodged *with the Agent*, four days before the meeting of the Assembly, excepting when they relate to matters arising after that date, otherwise they shall not be received nor founded upon in the Assembly ; and that the record and other original papers shall be transmitted through the Committee of Bills as formerly.

XXVII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Proposed Standing Order.

The General Assembly, on the Report of the Committee on the Form of Process, direct the following Resolution of their committee to be printed in the Acts of the General Assembly, that Presbyteries may be fully aware of what is intended to be proposed for adoption as a standing order to the next General Assembly :—

That, in cases of general resolutions, or of proposals for altering, repealing, or declaring any of the laws of the Church, or for enacting new laws, being submitted to the House, and when more than two motions shall be before the House at the same time, the question shall be put, Aye or No, upon each motion, beginning with the last. But that in cases of judgments on causes, the vote shall be taken in the same manner as at present. Or,

That the vote shall be taken as at present in all cases ; but that when it shall be required, the question Aye or No shall also be put separately on the motion or amendment, which shall have been carried according to the present method of taking the votes, excepting in the case of causes submitted for the judgment of the House, which shall continue to be disposed of as formerly.

XXVIII.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Declaratory Act as to Special Objections to Presentees.

The General Assembly did, and hereby do, declare, that it is the law of this Church, that it is competent at moderating in a call for any male communicant to state objections, of whatever kind, without a libel, to the presentee, or to the settlement taking place, and that the Presbytery are bound to receive and consider these objections.

XXIX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Overture anent Union of Offices.

The General Assembly, having considered the Overture anent Union of Offices, agreed to transmit the same to Presbyteries for their consideration.

The General Assembly, being desirous to promote the interests of religion and literature, direct all the Presbyteries of this Church to employ all means competent to them in order to prevent the same person from holding at the same time a Principality or Professorship in any University and a parochial or pastoral charge; and that this direction may be uniformly carried into effect, the General Assembly do, with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries of this Church, enact and ordain, that if a Principal or Professor in any University be hereafter presented to a parochial or pastoral charge, he shall, on his admission thereto, forthwith resign his Principality or Professorship, and at the next ordinary meeting of Presbytery thereafter produce to the Presbytery a certificate that his resignation has been accepted; and that if any minister of a parish, or any pastor of a congregation, be hereafter presented or elected to any Principality or Professorship in any University, he shall, at the first ordinary meeting of Presbytery, which shall take place after his induction into the Principality or Professorship, resign into the hands of the Presbytery his parochial or pastoral charge; and in the event of this injunction not being complied with by the persons holding such offices, the General Assembly, with the like consent of the Presbyteries of this Church, ordain the Presbytery of the bounds to serve him, in his character of minister, with a libel for the breach of this statute, and to proceed therein according to the rules of this Church.

XXX.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Act appointing a Day of Humiliation and Prayer.

The General Assembly, having considered the Overtures for a Day of Humiliation, and being deeply impressed with the continued tokens of the Divine displeasure still resting on the Church, and on this highly favoured and guilty land, did, and hereby do, appoint Thursday, the 21st day of July, to be set apart as a day of solemn humiliation and prayer, with especial reference to the distressed condition of the country; and the General Assembly earnestly invite the co-operation and concurrence of other denominations of Christians in the observance of that day; and appoint their Moderator to prepare a suitable pastoral address.

(The Address is appended to the Acts in the original edition, and is as follows:—)

PASTORAL ADDRESS.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—The alarming indications of the Divine displeasure against our native country, manifested in the divisions and distractions that continue to afflict our Church, and in the current of events by which vast multitudes of our brethren around us are subjected to all the ills of poverty and want, have moved us, met together

in solemn Assembly, to proclaim a fast throughout all the land ; and while we call upon the individuals, and families and flocks over which the Lord has made us overseers, we would invite others also to join together in humiliation of soul before the Lord, under His threatening judgments, and in earnest supplication that He would turn away His wrath, and cause His face to shine upon us.

The wretchedness endured by increasing numbers of our brethren in the humbler classes of society from actual destitution, the less palpable, but not less real sufferings of those whose hearts are brought low under the silent decay of their worldly substance, and the acknowledged inability of the wisdom of man to devise adequate means for the removal of these evils, or even to determine the period of their continuance, or the limits of their operation, are calculated to awaken the most thoughtless to serious reflection. Afflictive providences, in whatever circumstances they are exhibited, should ever inspire sentiments of reverential awe, leading each individual beholder to be still, and know that God is the Lord. Wherever there is suffering there must have been sin ; and when we see the outstretched arm of the Lord descending upon the devoted head, we are reminded of our own sinful state, and of our fearful deservings. But when we behold multitudes, and these our fellow-countrymen, singled out as the objects of the Divine chastisements,—their comforts blasted, their prospects darkened, their minds amazed through fear, and when no one can say when or where the evil may be stayed,—a more impressive lesson is set before us. National judgments betoken national sin. And in considering the appalling scenes of human misery existing in the midst of us, we are called upon to stand forth before the Lord, with our little ones, our wives, and our children, and to cry unto Him in our affliction, adoring his awful sovereignty, acknowledging our individual share in the guilt that has drawn down his chastisements, and submitting ourselves wholly to his righteous disposal, while deprecating the inflictions of his deserved displeasure.

In preparing for this solemnity our first duty must be, to endeavour to ascertain wherefore the Lord has a controversy with us. And here we must not confine our inquiries to the special occasions or more obvious and immediate causes of the distresses which prevail. It is the part of wisdom, indeed, to attend to these, and to seek, by every proper means, for their removal. But our search must extend farther, even to the sins of the people that cause the land to mourn. We are ever ready to limit our views to what is present and outward ; and in witnessing the calamities of others, we are prone to conceive that they are sufficiently accounted for by the operation of temporary causes, in which we have no farther concern than as they afford prudential rules for the guidance of human conduct. In acting thus, however, we misinterpret altogether the true character of events, and neglect intimations conveyed in the course of Divine Providence. Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid ? Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it ? The Scriptures teach us, that the Almighty, in his dispensations, has purposes beyond the special occasions of them ; that the ills which come upon one class of individuals have often a reference to the transgressions of others ; while they hold out a general warning, that unless we repent, we shall all likewise perish.

Every individual, therefore, should be much employed in searching and bemoaning the transgressions of his heart and of his life ; and with this exercise of soul respecting our individual condition, we should connect a serious consideration of the iniquities that prevail in the land, that we may unite in mourning over the sins with which, as a nation, we are chargeable. And here the abuse we have made of our special privileges cannot fail to arise before our view. It was the voice of the Almighty to the children of Israel of old,—You only have I known of all the nations of the earth ; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities. And the distinguishing manifestations of the Divine goodness which have been displayed to our highly favoured land, as they aggravate our guilt, so they mark out the character of our national suffering as a Divine infliction. In the free preaching of the glorious Gospel,—in the general diffusion of the benefits of education,—in the Scriptural purity of the institutions of religion, there has been no people on the face of the earth more signally blessed. And it affords matter of the deepest sorrow and shame to all, that we have so little profited by these inestimable advantages.

The Word of God has had free course in our land, and the Gospel has been freely preached to us. But can it be said that the privilege has been fully improved ? Have all diligently waited upon God in his ordinances ? It has, indeed, pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save multitudes who have believed. But is not the number of those increasing who forsake the assembling of themselves together ? And even of those who seem to seek after God, and delight to know his ways as a nation, that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God, how much of self-pleasing, and formality, and hypocrisy, have mingled with their service ? Have the professors of religion lived up to their

privileges, or shown their efficacy in their lives? Have they made it their holy aim to exhibit in the temper of their minds, and the tenor of their conduct, the blessed power of the Gospel of our salvation? Has it been their object to give full proof of the energy which God imparts to his Word in delivering men from the love of a present evil world, and from the principles of our evil nature? Or, while even the best must acknowledge that they fall short in all these respects, do not many seek how they may make their religious professions harmonize with the pursuit of all those objects upon which the men of this world are most strongly bent, and the indulgence of the sinful passions that reign undisguised among the children of disobedience?

We have experienced the great national blessing of a wide-spread education. We have been indebted to the enlightened zeal of our early Reformers from the errors of Popery, for advantages connected with the instruction of the young of all classes, such as no other country has enjoyed, and to which the high name of Scotland among the nations of the earth, and the success of so many of her sons in our own and in other lands, must be mainly ascribed. As our nation owes these advantages to religion, have we made a due return to religion? Has sufficient care been exercised that the schools of elementary instruction should, agreeably to the intention of their founders, be chiefly consecrated to the godly upbringing of the young? Or has there not been great neglect in this respect? Has not that which was intended as a spiritual ordinance been too much regarded as a secular institution, so that the opportunities of early education have been too often employed with no higher aim than as a means for promoting the worldly advantages of ourselves and our children?

And having experienced the advantages of the religious ordinances and institutions handed down to us by the holy men who have gone before us, have we been sufficiently careful that their benefits should be enjoyed by our brethren around us according to the necessities of an increasing population? Have we been mindful, as a nation, of teaching diligently to our children the truths which we learned from our fathers, that they might declare them to the generation to come? Or, are we not leaving thousands, and tens of thousands of the little children whom Jesus loves, to rise around us without any effectual endeavour to bring them to Jesus? And are there not multitudes among us, of whom, in the degradation of their penury, it must be said that no one careth for their souls, even in this land that names the name of Him who gave it as a characteristic of his appearing, that the Gospel was preached to the poor?

From the necessities of our earthly condition, and from the enterprising character of our countrymen, there is scarcely any land into which our brethren and children have not penetrated. In almost all our Colonies, vast numbers of Scotsmen are to be found, and new kingdoms are rising from our loins. An opportunity is thus presented to us for extending the knowledge of the Lord over the earth. But have we laid out this talent to usury? Or are we not allowing our fellow-countrymen to leave our shores without any adequate efforts for their spiritual interests; and, instead of seeking that they may prove heralds of the Gospel in the new regions whither they are going, or be themselves the founders of new Christian kingdoms, neglecting them altogether, or thinking merely of their temporal state, and continuing our intercourse with them for no higher end than the promotion of our individual advantage, or adding to the national resources?

In no respect has our country been more distinguished than by the high Scriptural principles professed by almost all denominations of Christians among us respecting the sanctification of the Sabbath, and in regard to the outward observance of it there is certainly less to condemn than in any other land; and there is no particular as to which it could be more clearly proved that godliness is profitable unto all things. And yet how much have we to answer for in the desecration of that holy day? How far does our practice fall short of our principles? And while multitudes are openly profaning, in every varied form, the day that God has declared to be holy, how many of those by whom it is outwardly observed satisfy themselves with the form instead of the substance? How melancholy are the inconsistencies exhibited in regard to it? And how few display such unequivocal tokens of its sanctifying influences upon their whole deportment, as, without the Word, might win the thoughtless and profane to external decency, and it may be, to inward holiness?

In regard to these and all other sins, our duty is to abase ourselves in the dust because of the dishonour we have done to His name and cause who has so highly favoured us, and, in the strength of the Lord, to turn away from our iniquities,—praying that a spirit of repentance and reformation may be shed abroad, that we all may be led to a better improvement of our mercies,—that we may seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, trusting that all needful things will be added unto us, so that our sufferings may be re-

moved, or, if continued, may tend to perfect that righteousness which alone exalteth a nation.

In calling you to the exercises of fasting and humiliation, we would never have you to forget that sympathy and relief must be extended to those who suffer, as the first and as the abiding effect of genuine contrition of soul. We have already called upon you to this duty—affording you an opportunity to contribute of your substance as the Lord hath prospered you ; and so long as there is distress among us, your liberality must be exercised for its mitigation. This is the unfailing consequence, or rather, it is the essential element, of godly penitence. Is not this the fast that I have chosen, saith the Lord, to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him ; and hide not thyself from thine own flesh.

If such a spirit were generally to prevail ; if even those professing godliness were to walk worthy of their vocation, there would be reason to hope for the fulfilment of the promise, that our light would break forth as the morning ;—that the sad calamities which are at present exciting the apprehensions of all would wholly overpass, and that a barrier would be reared against their recurrence. If there were less of the love of gain, and more of the love of God, a spirit of greater moderation would be diffused ; and if the condition of the poor were more wisely considered, and if more care were exercised for the elevation of their character and habits, they would less readily yield themselves as instruments of the cupidity of those who, hastening to be rich, fall into a snare, and pierce themselves, and pierce their country, through with many sorrows.

It is in Religion alone that the permanent security and happiness of any people is to be found ; and though the chastisements of the Lord may be withdrawn without the spirit of repentance being exhibited, their removal can be in such cases only temporary, and the last state of such a land will be worse than its first. It is impossible, therefore, not to think with sorrow of those who limit their views to inferior causes, and who refuse to own the work of the Lord. With reference to our brethren in affliction, while we cannot but see cause of thankfulness in the patience with which their trials have been borne, and while we trust that, in many instances, this has arisen from a spirit of submission to the Divine will, we would remind those with whom it is otherwise, that the benefit of their Fatherly discipline is not received till they see who appointed the rod, and that till then all their temporal deprivations are but typical of a worse famine that may bring death to their souls. And in regard to those who, while they may pity and aid the destitute, make a mock at every appeal to the duty of recognising a higher power in this national visitation, and who are prepared to make our day of fasting a day of folly and sin, our souls would weep in secret places for their pride, and our eyes would weep sore, when we consider the denunciation against those who regard not the doings of the Lord. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish ; for I work a work in your days which ye shall not believe, though a man declare it unto you.

Still more solemnly would we warn those who neither fear God nor regard man,—who in the day of their fast find pleasure, and exact all their labours ; or those who, without the form, as well as without the power of godliness, have despised the poor, and oppressed them. Behold, the hire of the labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

But it is not only in the distresses and deprivations of many of our fellow-countrymen that we have matter of humiliation. The unhappy dissensions which prevail in the Church, with the sad consequences which they have brought in their train, of estrangements, and contentions, and collisions, interrupting the harmony of families and friends, embittering the intercourse of social life, disturbing the peace of society, and threatening even the stability of the institutions of the country, cannot be contemplated without anxiety and alarm. In this unhappy state of our affairs, all the members of our Church may well humble themselves before the Most High. There may be a difference of opinion as to the character of the principles contended for, and as to the nature of the proceedings to which our divisions may be traced as their immediate cause. But, differing in other particulars, we may agree in this, that none of us are without sin,—that it is the duty of all to pray that our sins may be pardoned, and that God, by his Holy Spirit, would so teach us to improve under His afflicting hand, that we may be prepared for enjoying the peace which Christ promised to all his true followers. And here, we have hoped for the sympathy and prayers of other branches of the Church of Christ. Where one member of the body of Christ suffers, all the other members suffer along with it. And while those who endure are more especially called upon to exercises of self-examination and acts of self-abasement, we would seek for an interest in the prayers of the faithful, that this our purging may be blessed towards our bringing forth more fruit. Those who have built upon the true founda-

tion, but who differ in what is not essential, may perhaps even unite with us in inquiring whether we have not allowed earthly feelings to mingle too much with our differences,—whether we have not thought more of what is peculiar to Paul or to Apollos, than of what belongs to Christ—whether we have not omitted opportunities of doing good by co-operating together against the common enemies of the Lord, and sought rather who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, than remembered all that is involved in the declaration, that he who is not against us is for us.

The dissensions which have existed among different denominations of Christians, however they may have originated, have tended greatly to the injury of religion; and we cannot but look upon them, not less than the divisions in our own Church, as holding a place among the causes of the Divine displeasure against our land. We know not even to what extent the distresses among us might have been prevented or mitigated, had all who name the name of Christ united, in so far as their principles would allow, in making common cause against prevailing ignorance and infidelity, and endeavoured to give the impress of a higher Christian character to the inhabitants of our land. It may not yet be too late. Let us pray, then, that Ephraim may no longer vex Judah, nor Judah Ephraim. If we cannot be one in opinion, we may be one in Christian love, and in joint efforts for adding to the numbers of the true followers of Christ.—“Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee! Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our God, shall bless us!”

By order of the Assembly,

DAVID WELSH, *Moderator.*

XXXI.

Sess. ult., May 30, 1842.—Act appointing the Diet of next General Assembly.

The next General Assembly of this National Church is appointed to be holden at Edinburgh, on Thursday, the 18th of May 1843.

Extracted from the Records of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THREE ACTS OF THE GENERALL ASSEMBLY, FOR PROMOVING THE KNOWLEDG OF THE GROUNDS OF SALVATION, AND OBSERVING THE RULES OF DISCIPLINE.

Sess. 17, August 2, 1652, ante meridiem.—Overture for ordering of Lecturing and Catechising, to be observed whill the next Generall Assembly.

THE Generall Assembly, after consideration of the great controversie the Lord hath against the land, for the manifold transgressions of his known commands, and continued despising of grace and reconciliation offered through Jesus Christ, whereby transgressions might have been, and yet may be pardoned and amended; and after acknowledgment of the just quarrell he hath against us all his ministers, for the sins of our persons and calling, for which he hath so shaken the Judicatories and Assemblies of this Kirk amongst us, and doth threaten to cast down altogether the hedge of discipline, and to thrust all his ministers for a time from their places; do seriously exhort and charge all and every one intrusted with the holy ministry, to stir up themselves to seek the Lord more carefully, and settle their own peace with him, and to make full proof of their ministry, so long as the day of his patience continueth; and, in particular, to bee more diligent in the means of acquainting the people with the Scripture, and grounds of religion held forth in the Catechism, and to this end does recommend,

1. That every minister do so dispose of the time appointed for the reading of Scripture, as both the order of the Directory, and Act of Uniformity, in the point of lecture, may be observed; that two chapters being read, one of the Old Testament, and the other of the New, after reading of the first, some few observations of the chief doctrines being held forth, and propounded briefly and plainly to the people, time may be left to read the second chapter, and to give some brief observations on it also, as the time allowed will suffer.

2. For promoting the work of catechising, the Assembly, besides that they renew the act for catechising weekly, 1. Recommends that also every Lord's Day, when the people do most frequently convene, some competent portion of the Catechism be explained before the whole congregation, (without prejudice of the preaching;) and recommendeth that in this publike catechetick instruction, the points that are handled be propounded by question, to be answered by some called up for that purpose. 2. And because many being bashfull to speak in publike audience, do either altogether absent themselves, or, if they must compear, are so distempered with fear, that their edification is marred; the Assembly recommendeth this overture, that the minister, in the publike catechetick instruction, call up some that are more able in knowledge, and prepared before, to answer the points that are to be interrogat and explained, that all the congregation may the more freely drink in knowledge, and more frequently attend such exercises; and that others, that are not so fit to speak in publike, be tryed in their knowledge, at the more private dyets of examination, or in their families. 3. That ministers, beside publike teaching and instructing, be carefull, and make conscience to teach and instruct from house to house, and frequently visite the families within their charge, on purpose for this very work; and try what pains parents and heads of families take to instruct such as are under them, accord-

ing to their station ; and, if they find them negligent herein, to admonish them ; and if, after oftner admonition, they continue in that sinfull negligence, to bring them to more publike admonition before the Session. 4. That the ministers and sessions of every congregation see that such as have schools in their bounds exercise the young ones under their charge in getting the Catechism by heart, which will much serve to further the publike catechetick doctrine. 5. And that the minister, with some of the session appointed for that effect, do, every quarter of a year, or so often as they can conveniently, visit the schools in their bounds, to try what diligence is used in this. And if these that teach schools shall be found negligent herein, and after admonition shall continue so, that course be taken to get them removed, and others put in their place.

The Assembly recommends to Presbyteries to be seriously thinking upon further overtures, which may be conduceable for making catechizing further usefull, and may serve for promoting the knowledge of God in the land ; and to bring their thoughts to the next Generall Assembly.

Sess. 19, August 3, 1652, ante meridiem.—Act concerning Admitting Expectants to their Trials, and Ruling Elders to act in Presbyteries and Synods.

The General Assembly having, out of their earnest desire of the peace and unity of this Kirk, condescended upon an Overture of Peace, and not onely propounded it to some brethren who were here, opposite to the publick judicatories of this Kirk, but also in pursuance of that end, ordained the said overture to be presented and offered by the severall Presbyteries or Synods, to all in their respective bounds, who hes protested against, and declined, or consented, or adhered unto the protestations and declinatours made against this and the preceeding Generall Assemblie, and the conditions therein contained, to be required of them ; and, considering the great prejudice like to arise to this Kirk, by increasing of our unhappie differences and distractions, if young men shall be admitted into the ministry, which shall still blow the fire of contention, and continue in avowed opposition to, and contempt of, the publick judicatories ; therefore, ordaines Presbyteries to take speciall care, that upon the calling of any expectant to a particular charge of the ministry, before they admit him to his trials, they require him, under his hand, to passe from the protestations and declinatours against this and the preceeding Generall Assemblie, if he hath been accessory to the same, and to promise and give assurance that he shall abstain from holding up debates and controversies about matters of differences in this Kirk, since the Assembly, 1650, in preaching, writing, or other wayes. Upon the performance whereof, the Presbyterie shall proceed to his trials, if not, in that case, the Presbyterie shall forbear to proceed untill the next Generall Assembly, leaving liberty to the Presbyterie and congregation for planting of the place otherwise. And the Assembly ordaines and requires that Presbyteries be not sudden to lay by such young men as at first refuses or scruples to perform these conditions mentioned, but that pains be taken upon them to convince them of the reasonableness thereof, and to perswade them to embrace them, and to give them a competent time for that effect.

Likeas the Assembly, considering the prejudice of elders comming to Presbyteries for strengthening a faction in opposition to the publick judicatories, ordains, that Presbyteries shall require the same things forementioned of every ruling elder that comes to sit and act in Presbyteries, and in case of his refusall, shall not admit him to act as an elder in the Presbyterie, but require the Kirk-session from which he is sent to make choise of, and send another, who, for the peace of this Church, shall agree to perform the conditions required.

Sess. 20, August 3, 1652, post meridiem.—Act for putting in execution former Acts and Constitutions of Generall Assemblies, anent Trying, Admitting, Removing, and Deposing of Church Officers, Censuring of Scandalous Persons, Receiving of Penitents, and Debarring of Persons from the Lord's Table.

The Generall Assembly, considering the obligations that lyes upon all ecclesiastick judicatories, and ministers within this land, by the commandement of God, and our Covenants and engagements taken upon us before God and the world, (whereunto they resolve, in the power of the Lord's might, constantly to adhere,) and to shew themselves faithfull and zealous in all their administrations for the Lord, and for advancing the work of reformation ; and, particularly, considering that the condition of this time doth require in speciall wayes, that in trying, admitting, removing, and deposing of church officers, censuring of scandalous persons, dispensing of ordinances, receiving of penitents, the rules of the Word of God, and constitutions of this Kirk, be diligently put in execution, and acuratly observed.

Therefore, the Assembly ordains, that Presbyteries and Synods, in admitting of persons

to the ministry, be accurate in their trials, according to the order prescribed in this Church, that none be admitted to the holy and high function but such as are qualified according as is required in the Word of God and constitutions of this Kirk, both for knowledge in the mystery of godliness, and abilities to teach and convince the gainsayers, as also in conversation and godliness, that they lay hands suddenly on no man, nor be partaker of other men's sin; and for this end, that every Presbyterie be carefull to have gathered together such Acts of Assemblies as concerneth the trial of ministers, and have them before them, whensoever any person is called to any place of the ministry, and is upon his trials.

2. Ordaines that Presbyteries and Synods, in their respective bounds, make conscience that such ministers as are found either ignorant, and not apt to feed the people of God with knowledge and understanding, or erroneous in their judgement in matters of religion, or are scandalous in their life and conversation, and are not examples unto their flocks in godly and holy walking, or disaffected to the work of reformation, be censured according to the degree of their offence and Acts of Assemblies. And for this end, that they be frequent and accurate in visitation of kirks, and therein make conscientious use of the rules prescribed for visitations, and of such Acts of former Assemblies, as holds forth the duties of ministers, and the grounds and causes of censure.

3. Ordains that where ministers lawfully deposed are unlawfully admitted, and not according to the order prescribed in the Acts of Generall Assemblies, or intrudes themselves into places, Presbyteries and Synods make use of that power and authority which Christ has put in their hands, to remedie the same, and to censure such disorders and enormities as they deserve; and that people be not accessory unto, or concurring with any ministers that are deposed, in intruding themselves into places, nor give them any countenance that does so, as they would not draw upon themselves the wrath of God, by contemning and despising Christ's ordinance of discipline; and that no Presbyteries nor Synods proceed to open the mouths of, or re-admit unto the ministry, any deposed ministers, but according to the order prescribed in the Acts of Generall Assemblies, as they will be answerable unto the Generall Assemblies.

4. Ordaines that sessions be carefull that none be admitted to be elders in congregations but such as are in some competent measure able and qualified, with knowledge of religion, and understanding of the duties of their calling, for discharging the duties of that office, and of a blamelesse Christian and godly conversation. And that before any be admitted to be an elder, the person's name that is designed be publicly intimate to the congregation the Lord's Day before, that if any have any thing to object against him, they may come and present the same to the session or to the minister. And that if any elder be found negligent in the duties of his charge, and continue so after admonition, or scandalous in his life and conversation, or to be a neglecter of the worship of God in his family, he be removed from, and purged out of the session.

5. Ordaines that Sessions and Presbyteries be carefull, and make conscience by all means to censure impartially all persons of whatsoever rank or condition that are scandalous, either in things of the First, or in things of the Second Table, according to the rules and order which Christ hath prescribed in his Word, and to proceed to the highest censures with such as are grossely and obstinately scandalous, or are ignorant, and contemn and continuedly neglect the means of knowledge, as publike and private catechizing, &c., after they are made inexcusable by sufficient means used to reclaim and gain them.

6. Ordaines that ministers and sessions in congregations be carefull, as they will be answerable to Christ Jesus, to debar from the Lord's Table all such persons as are found not to walk suitably to the Gospel, and being convinced and admonished thereof, do not reform; as also all such as have not knowledge to examine themselves, and to discern the Lord's body. And that for the more orderly performing of this, the minister, in examination of the people, have some of the elders alwayes with him, and represent unto the session such as are found grossely ignorant, that by order of the session they may be debarred.

7. That Presbyteries and Sessions make conscience that such persons as are found scandalous, and are under censure for that cause, be not received nor absolved from their censure, unless they give such satisfaction and evidences of their repentance as are expressed in the Acts of the Assemblies concerning the receiving of penitents.

J. MARGHIE.

No. II.

ADMONITION AND INFORMATION RESPECTING THE PROFANATION OF THE LORD'S DAY.

At Edinburgh, the 26th day of May, 1794 years. Which day, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland having called for the Report of their Committee appointed to consider the Overtures from the Presbytery of St Andrews, and Synod of Perth and Stirling, respecting the Profanation of the Lord's Day, the same was given in and read ; together with the Opinion of his Majesty's Solicitor-General, given at the request of the said committee, in the absence of the Procurator of the Church, who was confined by severe illness. Which Report and Opinion having been considered by the Assembly, the said Opinion, together with extracts from the different Acts of Parliament therein referred to, are, in name and by authority of the General Assembly, hereunto subjoined ; and the whole is ordered to be printed, that copies may be distributed by the special committee appointed for that purpose among the several Presbyteries of this Church : And, at the same time, Presbyteries are enjoined to circulate the copies hereof transmitted to them throughout their several bounds, for the information of all concerned ; and to act in other respects conformably to the power vested in them, in such a prudent manner as shall seem best calculated for checking the further profanation of the holy Sabbath. And the Assembly, thinking it expedient to confine the prosecutions which it may be necessary to carry on, to those cases which shall be judged to be proper subjects of prosecution by the several Presbyteries, it is particularly recommended to the inferior judicatories of the Church, that no prosecution shall be raised, at the instance of any minister or kirk-session, or of any person appointed by them, without the special advice and consent of the Presbytery of the bounds, after the said Presbytery shall have deliberately considered the case. And the General Assembly, impressed with the warmest sense of gratitude to the Divine Author of our faith, for the appointment of that day which was made for man, and reflecting with much satisfaction upon the advantages which the people of this country have derived from that devout observance of the Lord's Day by which they have long been distinguished, do earnestly beseech and admonish all ranks to resist, by their example and their influence, every violation of that day, and every attempt to diminish the veneration in which it is held : in particular, they admonish parents, as they value the most essential interests of those who are dearest to them ; and masters and heads of families, as they desire to preserve their servants from those habits and practices which are most destructive of the good order of society, to employ every method which appears to them most winning and effectual for rendering the stated returns of the Lord's Day subservient to the instruction and improvement of the children, apprentices, and servants, over whom they have influence.

OPINION of his Majesty's Solicitor-General respecting the Observance of the Sabbath Day.

The statutes now in force, with respect to the observance of the Sabbath Day, appear to me to be sufficient for checking the evil complained of. The statutes which I mean are the following :—Act 1661, c. 18 ; 1672, c. 22 ; 1693, c. 40 ; 1695, c. 13 ; and Act 1701, c. 11.

By these statutes, every person guilty of profaning the Sabbath Day, in any manner whatever, is made liable in a pecuniary penalty, *toties quoties*, to be recovered by prosecution before sheriffs, justices of peace, or any other judge ordinary. And the minister of every parish, the kirk-session, or the presbytery, or a person named by them, is entitled to prosecute.

There appears, therefore, to be no defect in the law as it stands, if duly executed. And the power of enforcing execution is lodged with the Church judicatories themselves. Perhaps it might be proper to cause print the above statutes, and transmit copies thereof to the different presbyteries, so that due notification may be given to all concerned.

(Signed)

ROBERT BLAIR.

Edinburgh, 24th May 1794.

The following are the Acts of Parliament, and part of Acts, referred to in the above Opinion :—

Anno 1661, c. 18.—Act for the Due Observation of the Sabbath Day.

The King's Majesty, considering how much it concerns the honour of God that the Sabbath Day be duly observed, and all abuses thereof restrained ; and that, notwithstanding of several Acts of Parliament made in that behalf, particularly the third Act of the sixth Parliament of King James the Sixth, of blessed memory, the said day hath been much prophaned by salmond-fishing, going of salt-pans, milnes, and killes, hiring of shearers, and using of merchandise on that day, and otherways : Therefore, our Sovereign Lord, with the advice and consent of his Estates of Parliament, ratifies and approves all former Acts of Parliament, made for observation of the Sabbath Day, and against the breakers thereof ; and, by these presents, inhibits and discharges all salmond-fishing, going of salt-pans, milns, or killes ; all hiring of shearers, carrying of loads, keeping of mercats, or using any sorts of merchandise on the said day, and all other profanation thereof whatsoever, under the pains and penalties following, viz., the sum of twenty pounds Scots for the going of ilk salt-pan, miln, or kill, on the said day, to be paid by the heritors and possessors thereof ; and the sum of ten pounds for ilk shearer and fisher of salmond on the said day—the one half thereof to be paid by the hirers and conducers, and the other half by the persons hired ; and the said sum of ten pounds for every other profanation of the said day ; and which fines and penalties are to be uplifted and disposed of in manner contained in the Act and Instructions anent the Justices of Peace.

Anno 1672, c. 22.—Act against Profaneness.

Our Sovereign Lord, considering the many and great violations of the law of God, and of the laws of this kingdom, established by his Majesty and his royal predecessors, against cursing, swearing, &c., profanation of the Lord's Day, mocking or reproaching of religion, and the exercises thereof ;—it is hereby statute and ordained, that besides the exercise of Church discipline, according to the laws and practice used in this Church, in every paroch within royal burgh, or wherein any of his Majesty's Privy Council or Lords of Session, Sheriff, Lord, or Bailiff of Regality, or their deputes or commissaries, have their residence, or keep courts, that the saids Counsellors or Lords of Session, Magistrates of such burghs, the Sheriffs, and the Lords and Bailiffs of Regalities, or their deputes, the Commissaries, or any Justice of Peace, they, or any one or more of them, execute or cause execute the saids laws, against such delinquents in the several paroches where they reside, as shall be dilated to them by the kirk-sessions, or other Church judicatories. Providing always, likeas it is hereby provided, that the minister and kirk-session, with the heritors of each parish, or such of them as, upon public intimation by the minister from the pulpit, upon eight days' warning, shall meet with the minister, and his assistants in discipline, have the nomination of a collector, who is to receive and compt for the fines so imposed ; excepting to the royal burghs the nomination of their collectors, who have been accustomed so to nominate, they always being accomptable, as other collectors, for the uses after specified : And where there be any paroches in which there is none of the saids above-named persons in authority resident, the minister and kirk-session, and heritors of the parish, or major part of them, who shall convene, upon public intimation by the minister, upon eight days' warning, shall nominate, so often as they see cause, a person resident within the paroch, whom they find most fit for executing of the saids statutes, and shall, under their hand, offer the person so chosen to the Sheriffs, Lords, and Bailiffs of Regalities, Stewarts, Commissaries, having the ordinary jurisdiction of that place, who are hereby authorised to give commission and deputation to the persons so chosen for conveying the persons transgressors of the foresaid statutes, and to judge them according to law. And it is hereby declared, that all execution shall pass upon the decreets and sentences of the saids judges and commissioners, as do or may pass upon the decreets or sentences of Sheriffs, Bailiffs of Royalty or Regality, for executing of the saids statutes, conform to the tenor thereof in all points. With power to the said minister, kirk-session, and heritors of each paroch, convened in manner aforesaid, to modifie and appoint such part and portion of the sums arising by the saids decreets to the collectors nominat by them for their services, as they shall find just, according to their pains and diligence. And it is hereby declared, that the remainder of the saids sums shall belong to, and be made use of for, the poor of each paroch respec-

tirè. in manner following, viz., the one-half thereof for the use of the poor of each paroch, to be sent to the correction-houses, for being bred to lawful trades, conform to an Act of Parliament made in this session of Parliament; and for which the collector shall be comptable to the heretors of each paroch, and shall deliver to them receipts from the masters of the correction-houses of the one-half of the saids sums, towards the allowance of the said poor people, appointed to be payed out of each paroch by the said Act; and the other half of the saids fines shall belong to the poor of each paroch *respectivè*, who, by the said Act, by reason of their age or infirmity, are appointed to be entertained within each paroch by the contributions at the paroch kirk, and for which the saids collectors are to be comptable to the minister and kirk-session of each paroch, or to the elders during the vacancy; and to be applied by them for the use of the poor, as they shall see cause.

Anno 1693, c. 40.—Act against Profaneness.

Our Sovereign Lord and Lady, taking to their serious consideration the profanity and immoralities that so much at present abound, and how much it concerns the glory of God, the honour of the Protestant religion, and the good and peace of the kingdom, that they be repressed and restrained; do, therefore, with advice and consent of the Estates of Parliament, hereby ratify and revive all Acts of Parliament formerly made against Sabbath-breaking, prophane and idle swearing, drunkenness, or other immoralities whatsoever, ordaining the same to be put to strict execution with all diligence. And for the better effectuating thereof, do hereby empower and ordain every Presbytery within this kingdom to appoint one or more within their respective bounds, whom they shall think fit to choise, to take notice of the foresaid vices and immoralities, and to dilate and prosecute the persons guilty thereof before the magistrates of the bounds, conform to the tenors of the saids Acts; and allowing to them, out of the fines and penalties that shall be incurred, not only their whole charges and expences of the said prosecutions, but also such further rewards as the Lords of their Majesty's Privy Council shall think fit.

Anno 1695, c. 13.—Act against Profaneness.

Our Sovereign Lord and Estates of Parliament, considering that the twenty-fifth Act of the second session of this current Parliament, intituled, Act against Profaneness, and the Acts generally and particularly therein ratified, has not taken the wished effect, through the negligence of the magistrates, officers, and others concerned to put the same in execution; do hereby authorise, and strictly require and enjoin all Sheriffs and their deputes, Stewarts and their deputes, Bailies of bailiaries and regalities, and their deputes, Magistrates of burghs royal, and Justices of Peace, within whose bounds any of the sins forbidden by the said laws shall happen to be committed, to put the saids Acts to exact and punctual execution at all times, without necessity of any dispensation, and against all persons, whether officers, soldiers, or others, without exception; with this certification, that such of the saids judges as shall refuse, neglect, or delay, to put the saids laws in execution, upon application of any minister or kirk-session, or any person in their name, giving information, and offering sufficient probation against the offender, that every one of the saids judges so refusing, neglecting, or delaying, shall, *toties quoties*, be subject and liable to a fine of one hundred pound Scots, to be applied for behoof of the poor of the parish where the scandal complained on was committed: declaring hereby that the agent for the Kirk, the minister of the parish, or any other person having warrant from him, or from the kirk-session within the parish whereof the scandal complained on was committed, shall have good interest to pursue, before the Lords of Session, any of the foresaid judges who shall happen to refuse, neglect, or delay, to put the saids laws against profaneness to exact and punctual execution, who are hereby ordained to proceed summarily without the order of the roll: and that it shall be a sufficient probation of their refusal, neglect, or delay, if the pursuer instruct, by an instrument under a nottar's hand, and witnesses thereto subscribing, and deponing thereupon, that he did inform the saids judges of the saids scandal, and offered a sufficient probation thereof, unless the judge so pursued condescend and instruct that, within the space of ten days after the said application, he gave order to cite the party complained on to compare before him within the space of ten days; and that, at the day of compareance, he was ready and willing to have taken cognition and trial of the scandal complained on, and instruct and condescend on a relevant reason why the saids laws were not put in execution against the person complained on.

Anno 1701, c. 11.—Act against Profaneness.

— Ratifies and approves the Acts following, viz., the Act of Parliament, 1672, intituled, Act against Profaneness, whereby all members of his Majesty's Privy Council, or Lords of Session, with all judges ordinary, having their residence, or keeping courts in any paroch, are ordained to execute, or cause execute, the said laws against any such delinquents therein as shall be dilated to them by the kirk-sessions or other Church judicatories, with power to the kirk-session and heritors to name a collector of the fines ; as also, where none of the foresaid persons in authority reside, to nominate a person resident within the paroch, whom they shall offer to the judge ordinary of the bounds, to the end he may grant them a deputation to the effect foresaid : As likewise to modify and appoint such fees to the said collectors out of the saids fines as they shall find just, and that the remainder of the saids fines be applied for the use of the poor, in manner specified in the said Act. The Act of Parliament, 1693, also intituled, Act against Profaneness, whereby every Presbytery within this kingdom is empowered and ordained to appoint one or more within their respective bounds to take notice of all vices and immoralities, and to dilate and prosecute the persons guilty, conform to the tenor of the former Acts ; and allowing to them, out of the fines, not only their whole expenses, but such rewards as the Lords of Privy Council shall think fit. The Act 1595, likewise intituled, Against Profaneness, whereby all the judges ordinary and their deputies, and all Justices of Peace, within whose bounds any of the said offences shall happen, are authorised and enjoined to put the said Acts against Profaneness to exact and punctual execution at all times, without necessity of any dispensation ; and against all persons, whether officers, soldiers, or others, without exception ; with certification, that any of the said judges that shall refuse or neglect to put the said laws in execution, upon the application of any minister, kirk-session, or any person in their name, informing and offering sufficient probation, he shall be liable and subject, *toties quoties*, to a fine of one hundred pound Scots for the poor of the paroch where the scandal happened ; declaring that the agent for the Kirk, the minister or kirk-session of the paroch, or any having their warrant, shall have good interest to pursue, before the Lords of Session, any of the said judges refusing or neglecting as said is ; and that the said refusal or neglect shall be sufficiently proven by an instrument under a nottar's hand, and witnesses subscribing, and deponing that the said information was given, and probation offered ; as the said Act more fully bears. And, lastly, the Act 1696, also intituled, Act against Profaneness, in the hail heads, articles, and clauses thereof, all which laws and Acts of Parliament generally and particularly above narrated, his Majesty, with advice and consent foresaid, ordains to be put to strict and punctual execution in all points ; and farther, all ministers, and kirk-sessions, and heritors concerned, are hereby required and ordained to do and act their parts faithfully in the premises, as they will be answerable ; and in case any person shall be excommunicate for not answering, or for not obeying and satisfying the Church, when processed before them for profaneness and immorality, or in case that any person, cited on the account foresaid, shall be declared by the Church to be contumacious, then, and in either of these cases, his Majesty, with advice and consent foresaid, statutes and ordains, that, upon application made by a Presbytery, Provincial Synod, or General Assembly, to his Majesty's Privy Council, representing the same, the Lords of Privy Council shall represent the said matter to his Majesty, that he may be duly informed anent the foresaid person found guilty or contumacious, as said is, as a person not fit to be employed or continued in any place of public trust, civil or military.

The above printed under the inspection of the Special Committee appointed for that purpose, and ordered to be transmitted to the several Presbyteries.

ANDREW DALZEL, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

No. III.

WARNING AND ADMONITION TO THE PEOPLE OF SCOTLAND, BY
THE COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MET AT EDIN-
BURGH, MARCH 1, 1798.

The Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in conformity to the instructions which they received, "to advert to the interest of the Church upon every occasion," have met at a season which summons all the friends of every civil and religious establishment around their standards; and while other orders of men, roused by the dangers which threaten their country, are making every exertion to diffuse the public spirit which their own conduct displays, the Commission judge it their indispensable duty to issue this Warning and Admonition to the people under their charge in the different parishes of Scotland.

In the arduous contest in which we are at present engaged, we have not as yet met with any national disaster; but, while the other states of Europe, intimidated by the progress of the French arms, are bending under the yoke, we have hitherto been able to protect our commerce, and to ward off the hostilities which have been directed against our shores. While, brethren, you celebrate the gallantry of our seamen, the vigilance and activity of our naval administration, the skill and alertness of our commanders; while you honour, with daily expressions of your good will, the illustrious heroes who led to victory, and pay every tribute to the memory of the brave and faithful men who fell in the cause of their country;—amidst the acknowledgments due to human exertions, look up to Him whom the wind and the seas obey. Recollect the circumstances which render the time and the measure of a naval victory completely dependent upon the will of Heaven. In the train of success which has attended us round the globe, mark the continued interposition of Providence for our defence; and, after the example of the noble admirals who, in the presence of their Sovereign, presented upon the altar of God the colours which have been won in the great naval engagements of this war, let all ranks of men unite in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory!"

The succession of naval victories, which we trust, brethren, you recollect with pious gratitude, has filled our enemies with rage. They are indignant that there is one nation in Europe over which, in the unexampled career of their fortune, they have never gained any advantage; which has persevered in opposing its influence to the wild progress of their ambition, and has had the magnanimity to extend its views to the independence of Europe, and the liberties of mankind. They are indignant that there is one free government which repudiates their false maxims; one established constitution which exposes the chimerical nature of their system; one happy country, where the complete security which the subject derives from the legal administration of justice, forms a striking contrast to the precarious tenure by which every man holds his life, his property, and his place in society, under the unlimited despotism which has been engrafted upon their doctrines of liberty and equality. They have declared that the French Republic and the British Government cannot subsist together. They are collecting on their coasts a great army, which, with a view both to insult and to intimidate us, they call "The Army of England;" and, having rejected the equitable terms which we offered, without proposing, in their turn, any plan of pacification, they boast that they will send this army to dictate in London the terms upon which they will condescend to give us peace.

After these declarations of the enemy, the war is not, on our part, a matter of choice: it is a war which the first law of nature, the great duty of self-preservation, renders just and necessary: it is a war not for wealth, for distant possessions, for commercial advantages: it is a war in defence of all the blessings which we have received from heaven—in defence of the honour, the independence, the existence of the nation. Imagine not, brethren, that it is only a temporary interruption of your tranquillity which you have reason to dread. The enemies with whom you now contend come to seize your property, to lay waste your lands, and to repay the armies which invade you with the spoil. In the fury of their rapine, they will make no distinction; but the houses of the peasant and the landlord, of the farmer and the cottager, will be consumed in one flame. They come to wrest out of our hands the dominion of the sea, to annihilate our commerce, to render us completely subject to their power, and to reduce Great Britain to the condition of Venice,

which, after pretending to make free, they sold to the Emperor ; of Holland, which their friendship has ruined ; of the combination of States, called the Cisalpine Republic, which hold a precarious existence under the protection of a victorious French General. They wage war against your form of government ; and, if they accomplish their designs, you will be no longer a free people. Instead of that security which every man enjoys, by knowing that he cannot be condemned till his conduct has been fully investigated, and the sentence of a jury has pronounced him guilty, there will be substituted the mandates of a government which, under the pretext of liberty, sets no bounds to its despotism ; which, without even the form of a trial, sends the suspected to public or to secret death, to prison or to banishment ; which confiscates their effects, and extends its persecution to all their connections. Instead of a subordination of ranks, which we know to be the best guard of liberty, by which no man is excluded from rising to riches and honour, and the different orders of the state minister to the subsistence, the protection, and the enjoyments of one another, there will be an equality of wretchedness, in which the rich are stripped of their property ; the poor, without being permitted to share in the spoil, are deprived of their comforts ; and all are alike subjected to arbitrary requisition, to insult, and oppression. Your enemies come, brethren, not only to dethrone your King, and to dismiss your Parliament, but they come to overthrow that religion which you and your fathers have professed, and the free exercise of which is one of the rights of a British subject. They wage war against the Scriptures which you revere ; against the God in whom you trust. They have effaced from their calendar that day upon which Christians have, from the beginning, celebrated the resurrection of the Lord Jesus ; and they are endeavouring to obliterate every memorial of the Christian religion. All religious establishment of every kind, all Christian belief and worship, they ridicule and proscribe. Were their impious threatenings to prevail, in those churches where you are now met, you would assemble no more ; the voice of your pastors would never again be heard there. Instead of the cheering, consoling, elevating doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, there would be publicly inculcated in this land that gloomy, degrading system, which banishes mind from the universe, which declares that death is an eternal sleep, and that beyond the grave there is no punishment to the wicked, no reward to the righteous, no recompence for the troubles of life. The sound instruction of the Scriptures would yield to the delusive doctrines of a false philosophy, which shakes the security of government, destroys the innocence and tranquillity of private life, and gives licence to a multitude of crimes : and the dereliction of every religious principle would, in this country, be accompanied with the same brutality of rage, and the same flagitiousness of conduct, which have appeared in the atrocious deeds that have marked the progress of the French Revolution. Nor would it be in your power, brethren, to fly, as many inhabitants of France have fled, from these horrors ; for whither could you go ? If this island become a province of France, there will be no longer an asylum for the wretched ; no other habitation of religion, truth, and justice ; but one sound of tumult and uproar will be heard around the globe.

We beseech you, brethren, seriously to consider the dangers of which we have given you a faithful picture. And we earnestly recommend it to all the ministers of this National Church to endeavour, by public and private instruction, to impress your minds with a sense of the duty which, in such circumstances, you owe to your country ; and to encourage people of all ranks to resolve, like our King and his two Houses of Parliament, that they will stand or fall with our religion, our laws, and liberties. Is there a Briton whose heart will not accord with such admonitions ? Is this a time to contend about political differences, when we are struggling for the very existence of the nation ? Shall speculative improvements of the best constitution in the world, shall attachment to a party, or private dissatisfaction, unnerve the British arm, and lay our side open to the dagger of the foe ? We have seen, with much satisfaction, the voluntary associations for the defence of the country, in which persons of rank and property, mingling with merchants, manufacturers, and mechanics, form a body of men trained to the use of arms, who, without forsaking the occupations of peace, are ready to repress internal tumult, and to guard our shores against the approach of the foe. We behold, with equal delight, another expression of the same patriotic spirit, in the alacrity with which money is furnished for the public service. While the taxes that have been lately imposed do not, in the smallest degree, affect the lower orders of the community, those who pay the largest share of them are so far from complaining of the burden created by the demands of the State, that we see them pressing forward to testify their zeal in the common cause, by the voluntary contribution of a large portion of their income. It is wise to think, that wealth cannot be so profitably expended as in preserving all that renders existence desirable : it is virtuous to learn private frugality from the extent of

the national expenditure : it is magnanimous to relinquish every paltry scheme of hoarding up superfluities and savings when all is at stake, and to trust that every sacrifice will be abundantly recompensed by the gratitude of the country, and a share in the national prosperity. Let those who are restrained by the narrowness of their income, or the demands of their families, from emulating the liberality of their brethren, be the more solicitous to exhibit every display of public spirit which their situation admits. A season of danger, of alarm, and national exertion, is a time when the laws should reign supreme ; when every man should be found at his post, waiting in silence to receive the orders which may be given him ; prompt in yielding obedience, and ready to lend to the community all his talents and all his vigour. At such a time, all who love their country, forgetting former quarrels, should, without recrimination, encourage one another under every hardship, and bear, without murmuring, every burden. Let every sinner think, that he adds to the sum of national guilt, and conspires, in his place, to draw down the vengeance of Heaven upon the land which nourishes him. Let the frivolous manners, the languid, careless, selfish spirit, and that corruption of the whole character, which the continuance of peace and national prosperity tends to foster, yield the place which they have usurped in this country to those manly virtues which the pressure of the times demands. Maintain, brethren, a secret regard to all the rights of your neighbours : abandon every vicious pursuit ; and concentrate, in love to your country, those affections which, at other times, follow after vanity. By this union of sentiment and of effort you will expose the falsehood of that insidious distinction which our enemies affect to draw between the government and the people of Britain ; and you will exhibit to their view a nation whom their emissaries were not able to corrupt, whom their boasting has not intimidated, and whom the history of their eventful Revolution is daily confirming in attachment to that unrivalled constitution, of which, with an envious eye and an usurping hand, they attempt to rob us.

Let a firm faith in the superintending Providence of God establish your minds, brethren, in perfect tranquillity, with regard to the issue of the present contest. To resist the rude attack of the spoiler, to set bounds to lawless ambition, and to prolong the reign of order and justice, is a duty which God hath imposed, a service which accords with the whole plan of His righteous administration, a work which He approves, and which He will bless. The combination of His enemies cannot shake the pillars of His everlasting throne. The Church of Christ is founded upon a " rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail ;" and, notwithstanding the assertions and efforts of infidelity, the public establishment of Christianity shall continue to be the barrier erected by the God of truth against the return of idolatry and superstition. " He that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they."—" He beholdeth mischief and spite to requite them with His hand."—" He hath bent His bow ;" and when His time is come, " He will make ready His arrows upon the strings," and " will find out them that hate Him." By continuing our successes at sea, He may still turn the battle from our gates : or, if He has destined that upon our own land we are to contend, whether Great Britain shall retain its rank amongst the nations of the earth, or become an appendage of the French Republic, He may employ the confusion and destruction which await the invader as an instrument of accelerating the return of peace. Be not afraid, brethren, of the threats of the foe ; but " sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." Recollect the glorious struggle by which your ancestors purchased the blessings of a free government ; and, proving yourselves worthy of the precious inheritance which they have transmitted to you, trust in that arm which made them strong. " Remember the Lord which is great and terrible ; and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses." Set up your banners in His name, and He will spread over you His impenetrable shield. " The right hand of the Lord, which doth valiantly," shall again overthrow those who rise up against you ; and your children's children shall, in this land, worship the God of their fathers. Amen.

The above Warning and Admonition having been read and fully considered, was unanimously approved by the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ; and they appoint the same to be forthwith printed, and copies thereof sent to all the Ministers of this Church ; who are hereby appointed to read the same from their respective pulpits, on Thursday next, the 8th of this present month, the day appointed for a National Fast, or on the first Lord's Day after it comes to their hands. Subscribed by

WILLIAM GREENFIELD, *Moderator.*
ANDREW DALZEL, *Clerk.*

No. IV.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ANENT
THE GAELIC BIBLE.*Edinburgh, May 18, 1826.*

Which day the General Assembly's Committee on the Gaelic Scriptures met in the Society's Hall, according to appointment. Present, Rev. Dr Campbell of Edinburgh, Convener; Rev. Principal Macfarlan of Glasgow; Rev. Dr Anderson of Edinburgh; Rev. John Stewart of Blair-Athole; Rev. John Macdonald of Urquhart; Rev. Colin Macvean of Kenmore; and the Rev. Mr Macarthur of Dairsie; and having appointed Principal Macfarlan Preses, there was laid before them a Report of the Directors of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, announcing the completion of the Quarto Edition of the Gaelic Bible, with an Octavo Edition of the New Testament in the same type, and a revised metrical version of the Psalms and Paraphrases.

REPORT of the Directors of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, to the Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, on the Quarto Gaelic Bible.

It affords the Directors great satisfaction to report to the Committee, that the printing of the whole of the Scriptures in Quarto, and also of the New Testament in Octavo, has lately been completed.

On this work being finished, it was suggested to the Directors by a member of the Committee, that, to render the work still more complete and useful, it would be very desirable to have the metrical version of the Psalms and Paraphrases revised and printed along with it. This measure appeared to be indispensably necessary, as there were in circulation two editions of the Psalms, which differed materially from each other, and which, on this account, produced much inconvenience. In order to remove this inconvenience, the Directors, with the unanimous consent and advice of the Committee, resolved to publish a version of the Psalter, which should unite the merits of both editions already referred to, and which, if approved and sanctioned by the General Assembly, might be adopted as the standard version.

This has been accordingly executed. And as great care has been taken to correct the errors of former editions,—to improve the harmony of the verse,—and to restore the literal rendering of passages that had been paraphrased, as well as to expunge, so far as was possible, obsolete and Irish words, the Directors confidently hope that this edition of the Psalter will meet the views of all parties, and that, under the sanction of the General Assembly, it may be adopted in public worship in all the Churches and Chapels of Ease in the Highlands of Scotland.

Two copies of the whole Scriptures in Quarto, and two copies of the New Testament in Octavo, each accompanied with a version of the Psalms and Paraphrases, thus revised and corrected, are ready to be laid upon the table of the General Assembly.

In closing their final report, the Directors believe that a brief statement of a few facts, illustrating the progress of this undertaking, may not be unacceptable to the Committee, and may afford some information to those who had not an opportunity of being much acquainted with the various steps which led to its present termination.

The version of the New Testament, by the Rev. James Stuart of Killin, was published in 1767; and the Old Testament was published at different times in four parts, and concluded in 1801.

The Directors found it necessary to yield to the sentiments and wishes strongly expressed by many respectable individuals conversant with Gaelic literature, for an improved edition of the fourth part of the Old Testament, containing the prophetic books, which should be more literal, and more conformable to the original Hebrew text. This service having been declined by the Rev. John Stuart of Luss, by whom the third part had been translated, and the two preceding carefully revised, the Directors then applied to the Rev. A. Stewart, minister of Dingwall, who cheerfully undertook the work proposed; and, accord-

ingly, a new edition of the Old Testament, including the fourth part revised and corrected, was published in 1807.

After the publication of the second edition of the Old Testament, it was suggested by the learned and pious translator, that a new edition, carefully revised, and receiving all the improvements of which the version was still susceptible, would be a work of great importance, and highly beneficial to our countrymen in the Highlands. In this measure, Dr Stuart was warmly encouraged by the Society, and every facility afforded him for its execution. The assistance of his friend, the Rev. A. Stewart of Dingwall, whose qualifications for the service were well understood, and highly appreciated by all conversant with Oriental and Celtic literature, was requested and obtained; and in him he found an able and willing coadjutor. The plan of a new and improved edition of the Gaelic Scriptures was then submitted to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1815. The Assembly approved of the plan, and appointed a committee to superintend the progress of the work.

In May 1821, a portion of the revised and improved translation, containing the Pentateuch, and extending to the third chapter of First Samuel, was laid on the table of the General Assembly. At this period, the unexpected and deeply lamented death of the two gentlemen who had been engaged in the undertaking, within a few days of each other, involved the whole business in great confusion. By all who were best acquainted with its nature, the loss thus sustained was considered as irreparable. Though different gentlemen were known as distinguished by their acquirements in Oriental and Celtic literature, yet there was none whose qualifications were universally acknowledged to be so pre-eminent as to procure from him that confidence from Gaelic scholars, which had been enjoyed by Dr Stuart, Luss, and by his friend, Mr Stewart of Dingwall. In these circumstances, the members of the Assembly's Committee unanimously recommended, that the plan of a revised and improved version should be relinquished, and that a reprint of the last edition, without any alteration on the text, should be undertaken with as little delay as possible. It was proposed, however, that the few instances of Irish phrases or idioms, occurring chiefly in the prophetic books, should be altered, and that the whole orthography should be conformed to that of the Pentateuch; which had been superintended by Dr Stuart himself. In this view, the Directors and the Society judged it their duty to acquiesce, and the plan was afterwards sanctioned by the General Assembly in May 1822.

This resolution was the more easily adopted, as the specimen of the corrected version published by Dr Stuart himself, although certainly improved, did not contain corrections which were either so numerous or of such importance as materially to affect the sense; and by this means a perfect uniformity in the Gaelic text was happily preserved.

In entering on this work, the Directors felt themselves peculiarly happy in being able to secure the services of Mr John Macdonald, preacher of the Gospel, who had been for several years employed by Dr Stuart in correcting the press for the Quarto Gaelic Bible, and whose intimate acquaintance with Dr Stuart's principles of translation, and the rules which he prescribed to himself in printing the Bible, rendered him peculiarly well qualified for the undertaking. Mr Macdonald has been enabled to bring this important work to a conclusion, with the entire and cordial approbation of all the members of the Committee; and to his minute accuracy and indefatigable attention, it is indebted for that high degree of excellence which it is acknowledged to possess.

It was found that the Irish phrases and idioms abounded much more in the New Testament than in the Old. Dr Stuart, in his revised Translation, had uniformly expunged them, wheresoever they occurred; insomuch, that not a single instance of the kind is to be found in the Pentateuch. This was a decisive proof of his own judgment in the case: And the Committee of the General Assembly unanimously judged it proper that the same alterations should be made in the New Testament; and that phrases and idioms purely Gaelic should be exclusively used, in order that a perfect uniformity might be maintained through the whole of the Scriptures.

Thus the Directors have endeavoured, to the utmost of their power, to avail themselves of the means within their reach, for rendering the present edition of the Gaelic Scriptures as perfect as possible. Though this work may not possess all the advantages it would have derived from the gentlemen originally employed in conducting it, had it pleased God to prolong their lives; yet the Directors are assured, by gentlemen well qualified to judge of its merits, that it is marked by such superior excellence, as will render it a precious and acceptable gift to their Highland countrymen, and secure for it lasting and extensive usefulness. To the members of the Assembly's Committee, they beg leave to express peculiar gratitude, sensible as they are how much the work is indebted to their minute attention and indefatigable diligence, in superintending its progress. The unanimity, alacrity, and

zeal, with which they co-operated in furthering the revised edition of the Psalter, the Directors are willing to consider as a proof of the fidelity with which the whole work has been conducted, and as affording a favourable presage of the approbation of the venerable Assembly, and of its usefulness and acceptableness to our countrymen at large.

The Directors look up with unfeigned gratitude and thanksgiving to that Divine Providence who has so graciously delivered them from the apprehensions with which, at one time, they were ready to be overwhelmed, and has permitted them to see the work now brought to so happy a termination. May He crown its circulation with His effectual blessing, and render His Holy Word the means of eternal life to generations long to come.

J. CAMPBELL, *Convener*.

The Committee, on receiving this report, feel themselves called on to express their high gratification in the information which it contains, and their gratitude to Him by whose blessing this important work has at length been completed. They beg leave to state to the General Assembly their approbation of the report, with their sense of the singular zeal, energy, and perseverance, which the Directors of the Society have shown, during the progress of this undertaking, and the accuracy and fidelity with which Mr Macdonald has discharged the important duty entrusted to him.

The Committee further beg leave to recommend, that the General Assembly, if they see proper, authorise this version of the Scriptures, with that of the Psalter, to be used exclusively in all the churches and chapels within their bounds in which public worship is conducted in the Gaelic language.

D. MACFARLAN, *Preses*.

No. V.

PASTORAL ADMONITION ON THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SABBATH.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland having taken into consideration the evil of Sabbath Profanation, as described in the Report of their Committee on that subject, resolved to issue the following Pastoral Admonition, which is hereby required to be publicly read by all the ministers of this Church, from their respective pulpits, on the first Lord's Day after receiving printed copies of the same.

JOHN LEE, *Cl. Eccl. Scot.*

Edinburgh, June 2, 1834.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,—Knowing well that there are many among you who are zealously exercised in having consciences void of offence towards God and man, whose hearts' desire and prayer it is, that pure and undefiled religion may flourish, and that iniquity may stop its mouth, we cannot conceal from ourselves that there are multitudes who bring reproach on our land, by disregarding the form and denying the power of godliness; and who, instead of humbly endeavouring to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, make light of that holy commandment which was first promulgated when the heavens and the earth were finished, "and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it;" and which will continue to be binding on all the generations of men till the heavens and the earth shall pass away.

We solemnly entreat you, brethren, to bear in mind that this precept rests on an authority not to be challenged or explained away by human reason,—that, though the Sabbath was made for man, man is not entitled to frustrate the beneficent purpose of God, by renouncing or foregoing the inestimable blessings which the institution was intended to secure; and that, though the evil heart of unbelief, and the prevalence of corrupt example, may tempt many to make a mock at this presumptuous sin, and to act as if their time were their own, and not included among the talents for which an account must be rendered in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ; yet the faithfulness of the Sovereign Judge will be vindicated by shutting out from his presence all who have wilfully departed from him, despising the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and set-

ting at nought the threatened vengeance which will assuredly be executed against them who obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness.

We call upon all, in every rank, to consider seriously in how many ways the command to sanctify the Sabbath is disobeyed in thought, in word, and in deed. Even among those who have prepared their hearts to seek God, it must be confessed that there is no small danger of suffering the mind to be unduly occupied on this holy day with vain imaginations and worldly cares; and that though idle and foolish talking may not be deliberately indulged, the conversation is not always with grace, seasoned with holiness, and many things are inconsiderately done, whereby the profane may be countenanced and encouraged in their worldly-minded pursuits, and weak brethren offended or made to stumble. But whatever may be the estimation in which you are held, and whatever the stations which you occupy, we cannot forbear to remind you, that all violations of the Fourth Commandment are utterly inconsistent with the principles of the doctrine of Christ, which you are bound to adorn, and, with the example of Christ, which it is your highest honour and interest to follow; and that those gross acts of profanation are especially perilous, which, while they betray contempt of the Divine Lawgiver, have a manifest tendency not only to grieve and wound every serious spirit, but to ensnare and mislead the giddy and careless, and thus ultimately involve them in everlasting ruin. Though we trust that some transgressions of the law of the Sabbath are less frequent than at former periods, we have too great cause to fear, that there has been, upon the whole, an increased abounding of this flagrant iniquity, and that many things are done, without hesitation or scruple, of which it is a shame even to speak. With deep concern we have learned, that in various parts of the country there has been, for a number of years past, a great increase of unnecessary travelling on the Lord's Day, both for purposes of business and amusement; that shops have been kept open on that day for the sale of provisions and other articles of traffic; that multitudes, forgetful of their most sacred duties and their immortal interests, have become accustomed to wander in the fields, to frequent scenes of recreation, or to spend their time in riot and drunkenness, and other immoralities. We do not attempt to enumerate the multiplied and aggravated offences of this description, of which we have received most unwelcome information; but we have ground for apprehending that many of these offences may be traced to the neglect of the religious instruction of children,—to the inattention of masters to the spiritual welfare of their servants,—to the inadequate provision for accommodating the population in places of public worship,—to the consequent deficiency of pastoral superintendence,—and, above all, to the temptation presented by the almost unlimited number of public-houses, which, in many places, are so inconsiderately licensed from year to year, with too little regard to the characters and habits of the landlords.

As we cannot shut our eyes to the alarming extent and enormity of these evils, the progress of which it is our duty to counteract by all the means within our reach, we earnestly warn you to beware of outraging the sanctity of the Sabbath, by engaging in any ordinary employment, or in any occasional labour which you cannot in your consciences, and in the near prospect of eternal judgment, regard as a work of necessity or mercy. As the Lord God has appropriated the Sabbath to himself, it is an impious encroachment on his inalienable prerogative to attempt to convert it either into a day of business or a day of idleness and pastime. In the entire cessation from secular pursuits, in the strict exclusion of all worldly cares, in turning away the eyes from vanity, in avoiding all corrupt communication, and in endeavouring to unite the heart to fear the Lord, and to attend on his service without distraction, a spiritually-minded man, far from accounting the Sabbath a weariness, finds it to be a delight; and has the satisfaction of knowing that, by the light of a good example, he is employing the most likely means of encouraging others to serve the Lord with gladness.

We exhort those who possess power and wealth, not only to set an example of the regular observance of the offices of divine worship, in public and in private, and to abstain from making any unnecessary demands on the time and the services of their dependants, that none may, on their account, be detained from the house of God; but diligently to exert themselves in discouraging and repressing the ensnaring haunts of guilty excess, and liberally to devise and promote more ample means of attending on the solemnities of religion, for those who have too good grounds for alleging that no space has been reserved for them in the churches of the Establishment. If, during the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus, it was matter of just commendation to a man of rank, who was an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, that from the love of that nation he had built a synagogue; much more must it become every Christian patriot, according to his ability, to provide access for men of all conditions to the house of prayer, that the small and the great meeting together may, with one accord, pour out their common supplications, intercessions, and

thanksgivings, before the throne of the Universal Father, who hath made of one blood all the families of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and who, in proclaiming it to be his pleasure that to the poor the Gospel shall be preached, has emphatically admonished the rich, that, in proportion as they know and value the truth, they ought to do with all their might whatsoever their hand findeth to do, for the free and copious communication of this inestimable privilege.

We exhort parents and masters that they be faithful and earnest in commanding their children and their households after them, to walk in the ways of the Lord, restraining them from the pernicious liberty of finding their own pleasure, imparting to them instruction in righteousness, and setting before them such an edifying pattern as may be expected to convince them that the duties of devotion are not only reasonable, but in the highest degree beneficial and pleasing to all who exercise themselves unto that vital godliness which is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

We exhort the humble in station to remember, that to them the Sabbath of the Lord ought to be peculiarly precious, as it provides for them not only a periodical relaxation from toil, but frequent opportunities of calmly considering the things which belong to their peace, and making preparation for entering on the rest which remaineth for the people of God. We beseech them to call to mind the honourable distinction which their fathers possessed in times past, when almost every household, poorly provided as it might be with the accommodations and comforts of life, offered up the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise, day by day continually, and when more especially the mornings and the evenings of the day of holy repose were passed either in sweet meditation on the power and glory of God, or in taking sweet counsel with brethren and companions in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. How unlike to such days of refreshing fellowship are the polluted Sabbaths to which many lost souls will forever look back as to the wide gate and the broad way which swiftly and surely led them to endless destruction! Let it no longer be the reproach of this land, once so renowned for purity of faith and decorum of Christian practice, that there are many of its degenerate inhabitants who have broken down the domestic altars, and profaned the sanctuaries, and on whom the weekly Sabbath opens and closes with no other distinction except that of being more exclusively than any other day devoted to folly, dissipation, and vice. Encompassed as you are with light, how great will be your condemnation, if of you it can be said, that in the tabernacles of grace neither your prayers nor your alms ascend in memorial before God; that the words of truth and soberness are seldom heard in your families; that not one thought of yours is bestowed on the care of the precious souls for whose good you are bound to watch; but that every expression, every action, and every relaxation, is as carnal, earthly, and devilish, as if man had been created for the purpose of dishonouring his Maker, degrading his own nature, and multiplying injuries and sorrows to his fellow-creatures;—that clamour, strife, sensuality, violence, and worse than brutal intoxication, with other kindred offences, fill up the measure of that day which God, in his mercy, appointed for the refreshment of man and beast, but which is so far from yielding refreshment to infatuated myriads of human beings, that, more than the most laborious of their other days, it exhausts their strength, and wastes their substance, and impairs their present comfort, while it fails to awaken any solid hope of future happiness.

Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we would persuade and adjure the hardened, by all that is bitter in remorse, by all that is intolerable in an awakened and unpurified conscience, by all that is fearful on the deathbed of impenitence, by all that is searching in the frown of an unreconciled Judge, by all that is repulsive in the fellowship of accursed spirits, by all that is woefully agonising in the gnawing of the worm that dieth not, and in the fire that is not quenched, to awaken from the dream of guilty insensibility, and to flee from the wrath to come to the hope set before them in the Gospel. Most tenderly do we beseech them, by the mercies of God, by that forgiveness which is with him, that he may be feared, by the love and the pity, the blood and the agony of the Lord Jesus, whom they have crucified afresh, and by the ineffable consolations of the Spirit of Grace, to whom they have done despite, that they seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. It is presumptuous to expect that the Spirit will always strive with the rebellious sinners who do always resist and grieve him; but while the door of hope is not shut, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

We need scarcely admonish those who have experience of the holy satisfactions of a religious life, to continue to walk in the ways which they have found to be pleasantness and peace. But we entreat them to suffer this word of exhortation. Let no one say, am I my brother's keeper?—when he sees a fellow-creature walking in the way which leadeth to

destruction. It is the office of brotherly kindness to warn and rebuke, and restore to counsel, erring souls, and not to suffer sin upon them,—“of some having compassion, making a difference, and others saving with fear, pulling them out of the fire.” To such labours of Christian love, applied to the godlike object of gathering the outcasts, and regaining the lost, the highest rewards have been promised and secured. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.

Now, unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

INDICES, &c.

GENERAL INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
ABERDEEN, 1616, reasons for annulling the Pretended Assembly holden at,	7	Annexation and suppression of Parishes, Overture anent the,	840
Aberdeen, the Presbytery of Strathbogie disjoined from the Synod of,	289	Antenuptial fornication, Act concerning satisfaction for,	136
Aberdeen, the Synod of Angus and Mearns disjoined from the Synod of,	304	Apology for Bourigaion condemned, the book entitled, an,	306
Abertarff, erection of the Presbytery of,	567	Appeals, Act anent, 1639,	42
Abjuration, Address of the Commission of 1711 concerning the Oath of,	474	Appeals, explanation of the Fifth Article of the Overtures passed in Assembly, 1643, anent,	190
Abjuration, Oath of,	473, 482, 489, 499, 501	Appeals, Overture anent,	73
Abjuration of Episcopacy,	13	Appeals, Overtures anent,	ib.
Abjuration of Episcopacy by Mr Geo. Grahame,	35	Appeals, Overture in regard to,	613
Abjuration of the Five Articles of Perth,	18	Appeals, regulations respecting,	237
Abolition of Slavery, Address to his Majesty on the, 1823,	986	Appeal to stop the finishing of the settlement of a Parish, an,	618
Absents from the Assembly to be censured,	161	Appendix,	1151
Abuses at Penny-Bridals, Act for restraining,	129	Arbuthnot, vacancy of the Parish of, 1820,	978
Acts of Assembly and Overtures, concerning the method of passing,	296	Argyle, Education of the Highland Boys in the Province of,	189
Acts of Assembly, Kirk-Sessions to purchase the,	786	Argyle, Synod of, to meet on the first Wednesday of September 1842,	1142
Acts of Assembly, Presbyteries and Kirk-Sessions recommended to furnish themselves with the,	391	Arminian errors, Act discharging the venting of,	329
Acts of Assembly, Presbyteries, &c., to have a copy of the,	30	Army, the Assembly's Answer to the Presbytery with the, 1644,	101
Acts of Assembly to be transmitted to Synods, Presbyteries, and Universities,	803	Army, Act for sending Ministers to the,	100
Acts rescissory before being passed must be transmitted to Presbyteries,	637	Army, Letter from the Presbytery with the,	96
Address, Pastoral, 1835,	1054	Army, recommendation anent Ministers to the, 1697,	263
Address, Pastoral, 1836,	1064	Articles of Perth abjured,	18
Address, Pastoral, 1838,	1090	Assemblies, Act condemning the Six Pretended,	5
Address, Pastoral, 1841,	1106	Assemblies, Act, 1638, concerning yearly,	32
Addresses. See Letters.		Assemblies, Act for the better dispatch of the business of,	522
Admission of Ministers by Presbyteries prior to 1638 ratified,	22	Assemblies, Act for the better dispatching the business of, 1819,	970
Admission to a parish, Questions to be put to a Minister at,	455	Assemblies of 1650, 1651, 1652, 1653, and 1654, note respecting the,	220
Admonition and Warning, 1798,	1158	Assemblies, Overture anent order to be taken for keeping them, when Presbyteries do not send their full number of commissioners,	73
Admonition, Pastoral, of 1799,	870	Assembly, 1645, their proceedings approved,	139
Admonition, Pastoral, 1834,	1163	Assembly, 1690, meeting of,	221
Agents who are members of the Assembly or Commission not to appear for parties at the bar,	818	Assembly, 1692, &c., note respecting,	235
America, North. Address to his Majesty on the situation of affairs in, 1777,	794	Assembly, 1695, note respecting,	215
Angus, appointment of the meeting of the Synod of,	72	Assembly, absents therefrom to be censured,	161
Angus, &c. Commission to visit,	296	Assembly of 1638, Act against such as do not acknowledge the,	30
Angus and Mearns, discontinuance of the extraordinary correspondence with the Synod of,	522	Assembly, Act in regard to the manner of electing members of,	618
Angus and Mearns, Synod of, disjoined from the Synod of Aberdeen, and extraordinary correspondents appointed,	304	Assembly, Act regulating the election of members of,	523
Annan, erection of the Presbytery of,	671	Assembly's Answer to the English Ministers' Letter, 1641,	50
		Assembly's Answer to Declaration of English Parliament of 1642,	58

	PAGE		PAGE
Assembly's Answer to the English Ministers' Letter, 1642,	67	Bishops, deposition of pretended,	10, 11
Assembly's Answer to the paper sent from the Committee of Estates of 24th July 1638,	168	Blair's, President, opinion as to the profanation of the Sabbath,	988, 1154
Assembly's Answer to the paper sent from the Committee of Estates of 28th July 1648,	181	Blind Man not to be taken on trials without leave from the Assembly, a,	745
Assembly condemns certain passages contained in "The Marrow of Modern Divinity," 1720,	536	<i>Bona fide</i> Acting Elders only qualified to be Representative Elders,	1097
Assembly, concerning the better attendance of members on the,	434	Boston, Mr Thomas—Act declaring him to be incapable of receiving a presentation or call to any parish in this Church, without special allowance of the Assembly,	732
Assembly, concerning commissions to members of, 1720,	533	Bothwell, recommendation by Assembly to subscribe towards the defraying of the expense in the appeal in the cause relative to the Schoolmaster of,	881
Assembly-house doors to be kept shut during the calling of the roll,	832	Bounty, Act concerning the management of the Royal,	610
Assembly-house, anent ordering of the,	72	Bourignon, Madame A. The book entitled an Apology for her condemned,	306
Assembly-house, Act respecting the arrangement of the, 1802,	888	Bourignonism, Act against, 1709,	438
Assembly-house, the ordering anent it approved of,	44, 46,	Bourignonism, Act for suppressing, 1710,	443
Assembly Registers, Act approving the, 1638,	2	Brechin, Presbytery of, approved of for their firmness in asserting their right to examine Schools of every description,	958
Assembly Registers, Act concerning the preservation of the,	473	Burghs, Act anent provision for Ministers in,	198
Assembly's Petition to Parliament, 1645,	118	Burghs, Act concerning commissions from,	167, 567, 773
Assembly's Supplication to the Committee of Estates, 1648,	187	Burghs, Act concerning the form of commissions from,	563
Assistants and Successors, Overture anent,	90	Burghs, Act anent the attestation of kirk-sessions to commissioners from,	828
Assistants, Interim Act and Overture concerning ordained,	821	Burghs—their commissioners to obtain an Index of the Acts of Assembly,	31
Atheistical opinions of the Deists, Act against the,	253	Burial in kirks, anent,	26
Attendance of members of the Commission, Act anent the better,	320	Burials in kirks, Act against,	79
Attendance of members on the General Assembly, concerning the better, 1709,	434	Buravoe, appointment of the Presbytery of,	1009
Attestations of Commissions to the General Assembly, 1725,	576	Bursaries, Act concerning, 1705,	384
Auchterarder—conduct of that Presbytery in the case of Mr W. Craig,	519	Bursaries, Act for bestowing them on students having Irish,	329
Auchterarder, approbation of the conduct of the Commission in the case of the Presbytery of,	522	Bursaries in explanation of Act 13th, 1704, anent,	387
Augmentation of parochial stipends, Commission of 1792 instructed to apply to the Legislature for an,	839	Bursaries for students having the Irish language revived, 1756,	727
Augmentation to ministers' stipends, application to Parliament for an, 1750,	702	Bursaries for students having the Irish language,	395
		Bursaries, students having the Irish language to be preferred to, 1715,	500
BAIN, Mr James, of Paisley, declared incapable of receiving a presentation or call to any parish, without the special allowance of the Assembly,	763	Bursars, Act concerning Presbyteries maintaining,	191
Bands, Act against unlawful,	48	Bursars, Act superseding the obligations of Synods and Presbyteries to maintain,	645
Banns, anent the proclamation of,	279	Bursars and students having the Irish language, concerning, 1710,	444
Baptism of infants, Act respecting the,	461	Bursars, anent the maintenance of,	48
Baptism for the children of ordinary beggars, recommendation to Presbyteries anent the,	166	Bursars, having the Irish language, anent,	418
Baptism not to be administered in private,	226	Bursars having the Irish language, certain Presbyteries enjoined to have,	282
Barrier Act, the,	260	Bursars, maintenance of,	439
Beggars, Justices of the Peace to be applied to concerning,	456	Bursars of Divinity, Presbyteries and Synods recommended to provide for,	163
Beggars to be restrained,	568	Bursars of Theology, approbation of Overtures respecting, 1645. Every bursar to have an annual payment of L. 100 at the least; said maintenance to be taken from Kirk penalties; every Presbytery of twelve Kirks to maintain a bursar, and where Presbyteries are fewer in number, to join with others; Kirks to be stented in proportion to communicants in each parish; how said maintenance is to be collected; bursars' time at schools of divinity not to exceed four years; none to neglect payment of said maintenance; bursars to produce testimonials from the Universities,	119
Behaviour in time of Divine Worship, Act concerning,	432	Bursars of Theology having the Irish language, Synods recommended to maintain,	304
Behaviour of Ministers and Probationers, Act concerning the, 1745,	682		
Benefices, anent old Ministers bruiking their,	46		
Bible, the Gaelic Quarto, 1826,	995, 1161		
Bible to be read in Schools as a regular exercise,	847		
Biblical Criticism, anent the establishment and endowment of a professorship of,	1095		
Biggar,—Act for the present entry of the newly erected Presbytery there,	98		
Bieniaszeuski, Mr Nicodemus, from Lithuania, Act for the maintenance of,	660		
Bills, Overtures anent,	73		

	PAGE		PAGE
Bursars of Theology, Presbyteries recommended to maintain,	243	Catechetical doctrine, ministers recommended to preach,	252
Bursars of Theology to be pious youths and persons known to be of good expectation and approved abilities,	217	Catechetical doctrine, act for preaching,	538
Bursars ordinance concerning,	110	Catechetical Standards of the Church, Act for the Examination of Students on the,	1073
Bursars, who prove unworthy, to be discouraged,	468	Catechising of youth,	21
Business of Assemblies, Act for better dispatching the, 1718,	522	Catechising, Act, 1639, anent ministers,	43
Business of Assemblies, Act for the better dispatching the, 1819,	970	Catechising to be more carefully observed,	64
CAITHNESS, erection of the Presbytery of,	573	Catechising, Act concerning, 1649,	211
Caithness, Commission to visit,	295	Catechising and Lecturing, anent, 1652,	1151
Caithness, erection of the Synod of,	561	Catechism—a uniform one to be used throughout the kingdom in examinations for the Communion,	39
Caithness, Synod of—half of the ministers of the Presbytery of Zetland excused from attendance,	148	Catechism approved of, the Larger,	168
Caithness, Synod of—the Presbyteries in Orkney and Zetland joined thereto,	140	Catechism approved of, the Shorter,	171
Caithness and Orkney, the Presbytery of Zetland disjoined from the Synod of, 1648,	191	Catechism containing gross errors, a little,	ib.
Caithness, Act in favour of the Presbytery of, 1700,	296	Catechism to be taught in Schools,	847
Caithness, anent the supply of,	250	Causes of a Solemn National Fast and Humiliation,	227
Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland—Act joining these Presbyteries into one Synod to meet at Thurso, 1704,	326	Causes and remedies of the bygone evils of the Kirk, Act, 1639, Act containing the,	36
Calendar, Act regulating the meetings of Synod in consequence of the change of the,	715	Chapel, Gaelic, in Glasgow, Regulations for a new, 1798,	863
Calling of ministers, Act anent the, 1835,	1044	Chapel of Ease in Dunfermline, Regulations respecting the,	802
Calling of ministers, note respecting the discussion on the Overtures anent the, 1833,	1028	Chapels of Ease, Regulations to be observed in framing Constitutions for,	997
Calling of ministers, note of the discussion on the Overtures relative to the, 1834,	1037	Chapels of Ease, Act and Regulations respecting erection of, 1798,	861
Calling of ministers, note of the discussion in 1839, respecting the re-transmission of the Overture with regulations anent the,	1097	Chapels of Ease, declaratory enactment as to, 1834,	1034
Calling of ministers, note of the discussion in 1840 on the re-transmission of the Overture with regulations anent the,	1103	Chapels of Ease, note respecting the discussion in 1834, on the Overtures as to,	1035
Calling of ministers, Overtures for regulating the, 1710,	447	Chaplains, Act anent,	294
Calling of ministers, Overture and Interim Act on the, 1834,	1037	Charity, Act anent recommendations for,	252
Calling of ministers, Overture with regulations anent the, 1836,	1060	Charity, anent petitioners for,	443
Calling of ministers, Overture with regulations anent the, 1837,	1069	Charity—no recommendations to be given by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, &c. to persons without their own bounds,	56
Calling of ministers, Overture with regulations anent the, 1838,	1066	Children of noblemen, and others of quality, Presbyteries to do all in their power to prevent them from being sent to foreign countries, lest they be corrupted by Popery. See <i>Papists</i> ,	194
Calling of ministers, Overture with regulations anent the, 1842,	1128	Children not to be sent out of the kingdom without licence of Presbyteries or Synods,	25
Calling of ministers, Presbyteries and Synods to consider the interests of particular congregations in the,	147	Children sent without the kingdom, Act anent,	141
Calling of ministers, qualifications of persons claiming to vote in the,	695	Children of strangers coming from the Protestant churches may be baptized,	457
Calling of ministers, respect to be had to the character of those voting in the,	697	Christian Knowledge, Society for Propagating, 445, 462, 481, 492, 504, 509, 514,	527
Calls, Declaratory Act concerning moderation of,	811	Christian knowledge, recommendation for furthering the design of propagating,	433
Calls, recommendation for preventing competing,	430	Christian knowledge, anent the propagating of,	431
Campbell's, Professor, case, Act concerning,	658	Church—commissioners appointed to wait on his Majesty, anent its affairs, 1690,	423
Campbell's, Professor, case, explanation of Act 10, 1736, in,	644	Church, Act for preventing division in the,	459
Campvære, anent the Kirk of,	52	Church, Act for maintaining the purity and peace of the,	482
Campvære, Act in favour of the Kirk of,	335	Church, Act for restoring and preserving unity in the,	469
Carriers, remedy against Sabbath-breaking by,	193	Church, annual contributions recommended in aid of the funds of the, 1816,	952
Canons, Act condemning the Book of,	9	Church Discipline, Overtures concerning,	323
Carsphairn and Dairy reunited to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright,	324	Church-Extension Churches, Overtures on, 1835,	1053
Carthage, Address to the King upon occasion of taking the Forts near,	662	Church History Class, anent attendance on, 1833,	1025
		Civil execution against excommunicated persons, Act anent an order for using,	68
		Civil Places and Power of Kirkmen, Act against,	29
		Claim, Declaration, and Protest, anent the encroachments of the Court of Session,	1130
		Claim of Right, Address to her Majesty on the subject of the,	1141

	PAGE		PAGE
Claim of Right, note respecting the discussion on the,	1130	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1716,	507
Clerks to subscribe their books before they come to the Assembly,	64	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1717,	513
Collections ordered for the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, 462, 481, 492, 504, 514, 527, 590, 600, 605, 617,	509,	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1718,	520
Collections, Act in regard to the making of, 1777,	795	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1719,	524
Collections for the poor not to be made during Divine service,	198	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1720,	533
Collections for Assembly's Schemes, Act recommending, 1836,	1067	Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1721,	541
Collections for the Schemes of the Church recommended, 1837,	1074	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1722,	543
Collections for the Schemes of the Church recommended, 1838,	1081	Commission to the Earl of Hopetoun to represent the King, 1723,	560
Collections for the Schemes of the Church recommended, 1839,	1096	Commission to the Earl of Findlater to represent the King, 1724,	566
Collections for the Schemes of the Church recommended, 1840,	1102	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1725,	570
Collections, Parochial, Act for, 1842,	1127	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1726,	578
Colleges, Visitation of,	21	Commission to the Earl of Findlater to represent the King, 1727,	585
Colleges, concerning the promoting of religion and learning in,	532	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1728,	593
Colonial Churches, enactment and recommendation concerning, 1830,	1023	Commission to the Earl of Buchan to represent the King, 1729,	603
Commemoration of the Revolution of 1688, Address to his Majesty respecting the,	827	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1730,	610
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King in the Assembly, 1690,	221	Commission to the Earl of Loudon to represent the King, 1731,	613
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King, 1694,	235	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1732,	617
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King, 1695,	246	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1733,	622
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King, 1697,	256	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1734,	626
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King, 1698,	267	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1735,	630
Commission to Lord Carmichael to represent the King, 1699,	277	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1736,	633
Commission to Viscount Seafield to represent the King, 1700,	289	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1737,	642
Commission to the Earl of Annandale to represent the King, 1701,	301	Commission to the Marquis of Lothian to represent the King, 1738,	646
Commission to the Earl of Marchmont to represent the King, 1702,	312	Commission to the Earl of Hyndford to represent the King, 1739,	649
Commission to the Earl of Seafield to represent the Queen, 1703,	316	Commission to the Earl of Hyndford to represent the King, 1740,	653
Commission to Lord Ross to represent the Queen, 1704,	325	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1741,	661
Commission to the Marquis of Annandale to represent the Queen, 1705,	361	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1742,	664
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the Queen, 1706,	392	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1743,	669
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the Queen, 1707,	398	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1744,	673
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the Queen, 1708,	420	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1745,	678
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the Queen, 1709,	432	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1746,	683
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the Queen, 1710,	440	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1747,	691
Commission to the Marquis of Annandale to represent the Queen, 1711,	450	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1748,	693
Commission to the Duke of Athol to represent the Queen, 1712,	459	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1749,	698
Commission to the Duke of Athol to represent the Queen, 1713,	478	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1750,	701
Commission to the Duke of Athol to represent the Queen, 1714,	485	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1751,	704
Commission to the Earl of Rothes to represent the King, 1715,	495		

	PAGE		PAGE
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1752,	706	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1788,	827
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1753,	716	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1789,	830
Commission to the Earl of Hopetoun to represent the King, 1754,	718	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1790,	833
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1755,	721	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1791,	835
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1756,	722	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1792,	836
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1757,	728	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1793,	840
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1758,	731	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1794,	843
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1759,	735	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1795,	847
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1760,	738	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1796,	850
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1761,	741	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1797,	856
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1762,	746	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1798,	858
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1763,	752	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1799,	865
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1764,	757	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1800,	875
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1765,	758	Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1801,	882
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1766,	762	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1802,	887
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1767,	766	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1803,	893
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1768,	772	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1804,	895
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1769,	777	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1805,	899
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1770,	779	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1806,	901
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1771,	782	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1807,	906
Commission to the Earl of Glasgow to represent the King, 1772,	783	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1808,	911
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1773,	785	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1809,	915
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1774,	786	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1810,	917
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1775,	788	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1811,	924
Commission to Lord Cathcart to represent the King, 1776,	790	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1812,	929
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1777,	794	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1813,	932
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1778,	796	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1814,	939
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1779,	800	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1815,	943
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1780,	804	Commission to Lord Napier to represent the King, 1816,	948
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1781,	805	Commission to the Earl of Errol to represent the King, 1817,	954
Commission to the Earl of Dalhousie to represent the King, 1782,	808	Commission to the Earl of Errol to represent the King, 1818,	960
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1783,	815	Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1819,	966
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1784,	819	Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1820,	973
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1785,	822	Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1821,	980
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1786,	824	Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1822,	982
Commission to the Earl of Leven to represent the King, 1787,	825	Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1823,	985

	PAGE		PAGE
Commission to the Earl of Morton to represent the King, 1824,	989	Commission of 1713, appointment of,	481
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1825,	990	Commission of 1714, appointment of,	489
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1826,	994	Commission of 1715, appointment of,	503
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1827,	999	Commission of 1716, appointment of,	519
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1828,	1003	Commission of 1717, appointment of,	515
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1829,	1005	Commission of 1718, appointment of,	521
Commission to Lord Forbes to represent the King, 1830,	1008	Commission of 1719, appointment of,	531
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1831,	1012	Commission of 1720, appointment of,	537
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1832,	1018	Commission of 1721, appointment of,	541
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1833,	1022	Commission of 1722, appointment of,	555
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1834,	1028	Commission of 1723, appointment of,	564
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1835,	1042	Commission of 1724, appointment of,	569
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1836,	1057	Commission of 1725, appointment of,	573
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the King, 1837,	1068	Commission of 1726, appointment of,	584
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the Queen, 1838,	1076	Commission of 1727, appointment of,	587
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the Queen, 1839,	1092	Commission of 1728, appointment of,	602
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the Queen, 1840,	1098	Commission of 1729, appointment of,	609
Commission to Lord Belhaven to represent the Queen, 1841,	1104	Commission of 1730, appointment of,	612
Commission to the Marquis of Bute to represent the Queen, 1842,	1112	Commission of 1731, appointment of,	614
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1642,	68	Commission of 1732, appointment of,	617
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1643,	94	Commission of 1733, appointment of,	624
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1644,	100	Commission of 1734, appointment of,	628
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1645,	129	Commission of 1735, appointment of,	631
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1646,	142	Commission of 1736, appointment of,	640
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1647,	162	Commission of 1737, appointment of,	644
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1648,	196	Commission of 1738, appointment of,	648
Commission for the Public Affairs of the Kirk, 1649,	211	Commission of 1739, appointment of,	651
Commission of 1694, appointment of,	213	Commission of 1740, appointment of,	655
Commission of 1696, appointment of,	252	Commission of 1741, appointment of,	662
Commission of 1697, appointment of,	262	Commission of 1742, appointment of,	668
Commission of 1698, appointment of,	273	Commission of 1743, appointment of,	672
Commission of 1699, appointment of,	286	Commission of 1744, appointment of,	674
Commission of 1700, appointment of,	297	Commission of 1745, appointment of,	682
Commission of 1701, appointment of,	309	Commission of 1746, appointment of,	690
Commission of 1702, appointment of,	314	Commission of 1747, appointment of,	684
Commission of 1703, appointment of,	318	Commission of 1748, appointment of,	686
Commission of 1704, appointment of,	333	Commission of 1749, appointment of,	689
Commission of 1705, appointment of,	389	Commission of 1750, appointment of,	702
Commission of 1706, appointment of,	396	Commission of 1751, appointment of,	705
Commission of 1707, appointment of,	416	Commission of 1752, appointment of,	711
Commission of 1708, appointment of,	425	Commission of 1753, appointment of,	717
Commission of 1709, appointment of,	435	Commission of 1754, appointment of,	719
Commission of 1710, appointment of,	447	Commission of 1755, appointment of,	721
Commission of 1711, appointment of,	457	Commission of 1756, appointment of,	725
Commission of 1712, appointment of,	466	Commission of 1757, appointment of,	729
		Commission of 1758, appointment of,	734
		Commission of 1759, appointment of,	737
		Commission of 1760, appointment of,	740
		Commission of 1761, appointment of,	745
		Commission of 1762, appointment of,	751
		Commission of 1763, appointment of,	756
		Commission of 1764, appointment of,	767
		Commission of 1765, appointment of,	780
		Commission of 1766, appointment of,	782
		Commission of 1767, appointment of,	788
		Commission of 1768, appointment of,	777
		Commission of 1769, appointment of,	779
		Commission of 1770, appointment of,	780
		Commission of 1771, appointment of,	783
		Commission of 1772, appointment of,	784
		Commission of 1773, appointment of,	785
		Commission of 1774, appointment of,	787
		Commission of 1775, appointment of,	789
		Commission of 1776, appointment of,	791
		Commission of 1777, appointment of,	793
		Commission of 1778, appointment of,	798
		Commission of 1779, appointment of,	799
		Commission of 1780, appointment of,	799
		Commission of 1781, appointment of,	799
		Commission of 1782, appointment of,	799
		Commission of 1783, appointment of,	799
		Commission of 1784, appointment of,	799

	PAGE		PAGE
Commission of 1785, appointment of, .	823	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1732, .	620
Commission of 1786, appointment of, .	824	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1733, .	622
Commission of 1787, appointment of, .	826	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1734, .	628
Commission of 1788, appointment of, .	828	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1735, .	632
Commission of 1789, appointment of, .	832	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1736, .	640
Commission of 1790, appointment of, .	833	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1737, .	645
Commission of 1791, appointment of, .	835	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1738, .	648
Commission of 1792, appointment of, .	839	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1739, .	652
Commission of 1793, appointment of, .	842	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1740, .	659
Commission of 1794, appointment of, .	846	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1741, .	662
Commission of 1795, appointment of, .	849	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1742, .	672
Commission of 1796, appointment of, .	852	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1743, .	668
Commission of 1797, appointment of, .	857	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1744, .	677
Commission of 1798, appointment of, .	862	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1745, .	682
Commission of 1799, appointment of, .	870	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1746, .	690
Commission of 1800, appointment of, .	879	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1748, .	696
Commission of 1801, appointment of, .	886	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1749, .	699
Commission of 1802, appointment of, .	892	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1750, .	702
Commission of 1803, appointment of, .	895	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1751, .	705
Commission of 1804, appointment of, .	898	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1752, .	711
Commission of 1805, appointment of, .	901	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1753, .	717
Commission of 1806, appointment of, .	905	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1754, .	719
Commission of 1807, appointment of, .	909	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1755, .	722
Commission of 1808, appointment of, .	914	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1756, .	727
Commission of 1809, appointment of, .	916	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1757, .	729
Commission of 1810, appointment of, .	922	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1758, .	734
Commission of 1811, appointment of, .	928	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1759, .	737
Commission of 1812, appointment of, .	930	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1760, .	740
Commission of 1813, appointment of, .	934	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1761, .	745
Commission of 1814, appointment of, .	943	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1762, .	751
Commission of 1815, appointment of, .	947	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1763, .	756
Commission of 1816, appointment of, .	951	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1764, .	757
Commission of 1817, appointment of, .	959	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1765, .	760
Commission of 1818, appointment of, .	965	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1766, .	762
Commission of 1819, appointment of, .	971	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1767, .	768
Commission of 1820, appointment of, .	976	Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1768, .	777
Commission of 1821, appointment of, .	981		
Commission of 1822, appointment of, .	984		
Commission of 1823, appointment of, .	987		
Commission of 1824, appointment of, .	989		
Commission of 1825, appointment of, .	992		
Commission of 1826, appointment of, .	995		
Commission of 1827, appointment of, .	1000		
Commission of 1828, appointment of, .	1003		
Commission of 1829, appointment of, .	1006		
Commission of 1830, appointment of, .	1009		
Commission of 1831, appointment of, .	1015		
Commission of 1832, appointment of, .	1020		
Commission of 1833, appointment of, .	1025		
Commission of 1834, appointment of, .	1030		
Commission of 1835, appointment of, .	1043		
Commission of 1836, appointment of, .	1057		
Commission of 1837, appointment of, .	1068		
Commission of 1838, appointment of, .	1079		
Commission of 1839, appointment of, .	1093		
Commission of 1840, appointment of, .	1100		
Commission of 1841, appointment of, .	1104		
Commission of 1842, appointment of, .	1115		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1725, .	574		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1726, .	582		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1727, .	587		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1728, .	603		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1729, .	608		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1730, .	612		
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1731, .	615		

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	PAGE		PAGE
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1841,	1105	Commission to those who were sent by the Church of Scotland to the Westminster Assembly,	94
Commission for managing the Royal Bounty, appointment of the, 1842,	1122	Commission to Ministers and Elders to Westminster Assembly, 1648,	196
Commission of Assembly, 1646—their proceedings approved of,	157	Commission of 1698, instructions to the,	274
Commission of Assembly, 1647—their proceedings approved of,	168	Commission of 1699, instructions to the,	288
Commission of Assembly, 1648—their proceedings approved of,	200	Commission of 1700, instructions to the,	298
Commission of Assembly, 1696—their proceedings approved of,	265	Commission of 1701, instructions to the,	309
Commission of Assembly, 1697—their proceedings approved of,	273	Commission of 1703, instructions to the,	319
Commission of Assembly, 1698—their proceedings approved of,	285	Commission of 1704, instructions to the,	333
Commission of Assembly, 1699—their proceedings approved of,	293	Commission of 1705, instructions to the,	389
Commission of Assembly, 1700—their proceedings approved of,	302	Commission of 1706, instructions to the,	396
Commission of Assembly, 1701—their proceedings approved of,	320	Commission of 1707, instructions to the,	417
Commission of Assembly, 1703—their proceedings approved of,	331	Commission of 1708, instructions to the,	425
Commission of Assembly, 1705—their proceedings approved of,	393	Commission of 1709, instructions to the,	436
Commission of Assembly, 1713—their proceedings approved of,	490	Commission of 1710, instructions to the,	447
Commission of the General Assembly, Act approving Overtures anent a, 1694,	239	Commission of 1711, instructions to the,	451
Commission, anent the better attendance of members on the,	320	Commission of 1712, instructions to the,	466
Commission, anent the better attendance of members on the,	385	Commission of 1713, instructions to the,	483
Commission, anent the better attendance of members on the,	665	Commission of 1717, instructions to the,	545
Commission concerning the electing of the members of the, 1736,	640	Commission—instructions to them in respect to the settlement of parishes, 1743,	672
Commission, concerning the powers of the,	ib.	Commission to the Assembly, form of a, 1695,	247
Commission, Overture about the manner of deciding causes before the, 1743,	673	Commission, Special, appointed to co-operate with the Presbytery of Strathbogie in supplying the Parishes of the Suspended Ministers with Divine ordinances, 1840,	1102
Commission, Presbyteries to be careful to send in one at least of their number to attend the meetings of the,	390	Commission, Special, to co-operate with certain Presbyteries in reference to certain Vacant Parishes, 1841,	1111
Commission, qualifications of members of the,	529	Commission, Special, with reference to the Difficulties of the Church, 1842,	1142
Commission, regulations respecting the constitution of the,	385	Commission Book, concerning the method of approving the,	394
Commission of the Assembly, regulations respecting the—number of members, how to be nominated, &c.,	331	Commissioner from the University of Edinburgh, Act concerning the election of a, 1723,	563
Commission for examining and considering the process against Mr John Simson,	503	Commissioner from his Majesty—none appeared in Assembly, 1640,	44
Commission appointed to co-operate with the Presbytery of Lorn, 1712,	473	Commissioners to General Assembly, Act for punctual sending of,	270
Commission for planting the North, Act approving Overtures anent a,	265	Commissioners at Westminster Assembly, Letter from the, 1644,	101
Commission for planting the North, and other affairs,	273	Commissioners at Westminster Assembly, Letter from the, 1645,	111
Commission for visiting the Presbytery of Middlebie,	299	Commissioners from Burghs to Assembly, to be always Elders,	167
Commissions for visiting the North side of Tay,	232, 244	Commissioners from Presbyteries, anent the number of 1839,	1093
Commission for visiting the South side of Tay, 1690,	233	Commissioners from Universities to the Assembly, Act concerning,	560
Commission to visit Angus and Mearns, Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross, 1700,	295	Commissioners to the Assembly must subscribe the Confession of Faith,	327
Commission of Assembly to Angus, &c., 1700, approbation of the proceedings of the,	309	Commissioners to Westminster Assembly, reference to the Commission anent the,	94
Commission to visit Caithness, Orkney, and Zetland,	295	Commissioners to Assembly, anent the expenses of,	39
Commission to some Ministers to go to Ireland, 70, 87	308	Commissioners to Assembly, Act anent the election of Professors of Divinity to be,	74
Commission to Zetland, approbation of the proceedings of the,		Commissioners to Assembly, Missionary Ministers and Preachers not to be elected,	716
		Commissioners to the Assembly, from the Presbyteries of the Northern and Western Islands, may be elected any time previous to the 1st of May,	1081
		Commissioners of the Kingdom at London, Assembly's Letter to the, 1642,	65
		Commissioners of Assembly, 1642, approbation of the proceedings of,	76
		Commissioners of Assemblies, 1643 and 1644, approbation of the proceedings of the,	115
		Commissioners, propositions from English, 1643,	80
		Commissioners of English Parliament—their	7 K

	PAGE		PAGE
propositions to be presented to the Assembly, 1643,	76	Assembly, 1638, to be sworn to and subscribed by all persons,	25
Commissioners to Westminster Assembly, Assembly's Letter to the, 1644,	107	Confession of Faith, Commissioners to the Assembly must subscribe the,	327
Commissioners to Westminster Assembly, answer to the, 1615,	134	Confession of Faith—those who speak or write against it to be censured,	26
Commissioners to Westminster Assembly, their Commission renewed, 1645,	131	Confession of Faith to be subscribed by Probationers and Intrants,	225
Commissioners to Westminster Assembly re-appointed, 1646,	143	Confession of Faith, &c., to be translated into the Highland language,	287
Commissioners to Westminster Assembly, their Commission renewed, 1647,	161	Confession of Faith to be subscribed, not according to the King's, but the Assembly's interpretation of it,	31
Commissioners sent to his Majesty, approbation of the, 1649,	201	Confession of Faith and Covenant, Act ordaining the subscription of the,	42
Commissioners to wait on his Majesty anent the affairs of the Church, 1690,	234	Conforming Ministers, declaration to be made by, 1694,	23
Commissioners to General Assembly—Presbyteries recommended to take steps for the payment of their expenses,	25	Congregations, no Minister to be intruded contrary to the will of the,	26
Commissioners sent from Presbyteries, Declaratory Act for explaining the Acts relative to the number of, 1835,	1052	Conspiracy, address to the King on the discovery of a horrid, 1723,	561
Commissioners of Assemblies, their proceedings to be examined,	167	Contribution for the erection of Schools, anent a,	399
Commissions from Burghs, anent the attestation of Kirk-Sessions to,	826	Contumacious persons, Act anent,	296
Commissions of Assemblies, 1650 and 1694, approbation of the proceedings of the,	251	Conversion of the Jews, Act on the, 1838,	1080
Commissions, anent printing,	910	Conversion of the Jews, Act on the, 1839,	1096
Commissions, anent supplying certain defects in the forms of,	767	Conversion of the Jews, Act on the, 1840,	1101
Commissions, anent the form of,	819	Conversion of the Jews, Act on the, 1841,	1105
Commissions, anent the form of,	765	Conversion of the Jews, Act on the, 1842,	1124
Commissions from Burghs and Universities, anent the form of,	563	Correspondence between Synods,	29
Commissions from Burghs and Universities, anent,	567	Corruptions in the persons and lives of Ministers,	24
Commissions from Universities, alterations of the form of, 1726,	554	Corruptions in the office of the Ministry,	22
Commissions from Presbyteries, Universities, and Burghs, anent the form of,	773	Corruptions of the time, Act for censuring Ministers for their silence, and who speak not to the, 1648,	188
Commissions to Members of Assembly, anent the forms of,	576	Covenant, Act against secret disaffecteds of the,	99
Commissions, Standing Order on the forms of, 1841,	1110	Covenant, Act for censuring speakers against the,	45
Commissions to Ruling Elders, anent,	569	Covenant, Act for subscribing the,	75
Commissions, Presbyteries recommended to observe a uniform method in granting,	247	Covenant, Act of the Lords of Council ordaining the signing of the,	41
Committee appointed by Assembly, 1702, to retire immediately for the purpose of nominating a Commission, and drawing up instructions thereto, a communication having been made by the High Commissioner that his Majesty had been seized with dangerous illness,	313	Covenant, anent expectants who refuse to subscribe the,	45
Committees of Assembly—directions given to them anent Bills, References, and Appeals,	74	Covenant, supplication to the King's Commissioner, &c., anent the signing of the,	40
Common Prayer. Act condemning the Book of,	9	Court of High Commission, act condemning the,	9
Communicants, concerning the admission of,	589	Court of Session, Claim, Declaration, and Protest anent the encroachments of the,	1130
Communion, a uniform Catechism to be used in examinations preparatory to the,	39	Cumberland, Duke of, congratulatory Letter to the, 1746,	686
Compliers with the public enemies of the Kirk and Kingdom to be censured,	140	Cumberland, Letter from the Duke of, 1746,	690
Compliers in the first class—Act debarring them from ecclesiastical office,	160	Custom-house, Act anent perjuries at the, 1719,	530
Conference of Ministers, Lawyers, and Physicians, concerning the trial and punishment of Witchcraft, Charming, and Consulting,	216	Custom-houses in Scotland, Act against perjuries in,	641
Confession of Faith, Act anent subscribing the, 1700,	294	DALRY and Carsphairn parishes reunited to the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright,	324
Confession of Faith, Act anent the subscribing of the,	285	Dalrymple, Mr Robert, repented to the office of the ministry,	792
Confession of Faith, Act approving the,	158	Dancing, Act anent promiscuous,	311
Confession of Faith, as condescended upon by		Dancing, Act discharging promiscuous, 1649,	201
		Dangers and duties, warning by the Assembly to members of the Kirk, regarding, 1649,	203
		Dangers, solemn and seasonable warning respecting present, 1645,	123
		Deacons and elders, who neglect family worship, to be censured,	259
		Deacons to be ordained in congregations where they are wanting, but to have no decisive voice in calling ministers, or in the exercise of discipline,	529
		Deacons to maintain family worship,	559
		Declaration against all oaths and bands imposed, without consent of the Church,	170

	PAGE		PAGE
Declaration against the unlawful Engagement,	171	Deposition of Lindsay, pretended Bishop of Edinburgh,	10
Declaration and acknowledgment to be subscribed by engagers in the unlawful war against England, when received to public satisfaction,	202	Deposition of Lindsay, pretended Archbishop of Glasgow,	ib.
Declaration and exhortation by the Assembly to their brethren of England, in regard to the troubles and dangers of the time, 1647,	148	Deposition of Lindsay, pretended Bishop of Dunkeld,	12
Declaration of the Assembly of 1648 to their brethren of England,	183	Deposition of Maxwell, pretended Bishop of Ross,	10
Declaration of the English Parliament to Assembly of 1642,	58	Deposition of Sidsers, pretended Bishop of Galloway,	ib.
Declaration of English Parliament, 1643, the Assembly's answer to the,	89	Deposition of Spottiswood, pretended Archbishop of St Andrews,	ib.
Declaration of the Lords and Commons of the Parliament of England to the General Assembly, 1643,	77	Deposition of Wedderburn, pretended Bishop of Dunblane,	ib.
Declaration subscribed by the Scottish Lords at Oxford, Act concerning the,	99	Deposition of Whytford, pretended Bishop of Brechin,	ib.
"Declaration, the Large"—supplication to his Majesty's Commissioner concerning that book,	39	Deposition of the ministers by the committees—Act, 1639, approving the,	38
Declaratory enactment as to Chapels of Ease, 1834,	1035	Directions respecting secret and family worship, 1647,	154
Declaratory enactment in regard to Parliamentary Churches,	1024	Directory for Divine worship, Act for preparing a,	80
Declaratory enactment of 1834 respecting Chapels of Ease, the Church resolved at all hazards to adhere to the principle of the, 1842,	1141	Directory for election of ministers,	212
Deficients in supplying the North, Act anent the,	270	Directory for public worship agreed upon in England, approbation and establishment of, 1645,	116
Deists, Act against the Atheistical opinions of the,	253	Directory for worship, recommendation concerning the observation of the,	387
Deists, ministers recommended to put into execution the Act against the,	267	Discipline, Act anent, 1652,	1152
Demolishing of idolatrous monuments, Act anent the,	44	Discipline, Act anent the overtures concerning,	323
Denmark, Queen of, Address of Condolence to his Majesty on the death of the, 1775,	788	Discipline not to be exercised by prelatical preachers and separatists from the Church,	505
Denmark, &c., Letter to Scotsmen in,	163	Discipline, Overtures concerning Church,	336
Deposed ministers, Act, 1639, anent receiving them,	38	Discipline, the large Overtures on. See <i>Overtures</i> ,	337
Deposed ministers, Act against sudden admitting of,	168	Discipline, three Acts of Assembly, 1652, for observing the rule of,	1151
Deposed ministers, Act anent the reposition of,	79	Dispatch of business, Act for the better, 1819,	970
Deposed ministers, Act discharging their being reposed to their former places,	121	Dissent, recording of reasons of—Act, 1730, relative thereto, declared to be no longer binding, 1734,	627
Deposed ministers, cautions anent, 1652,	1153	Dissents, Act relative to, 1644,	111
Deposed ministers, Act against suddenly receiving them,	46	Dissents against a deliverance of the Assembly not to be received until the matter in which it is pronounced shall, for that sederunt, be disposed of,	1125
Deposed ministers not acquiescing in their sentence to be excommunicated,	29	Dissents from judgments of Inferior Courts, Overture for regulating the effect of,	715
Deposed or suspended ministers—Act discharging them from the exercise of the ministry, or meddling with the stipend,	190	Dissent, Reasons of, to be kept in <i>relentis</i> , and not entered in the Register,	612
Deposed ministers to be reported by Presbyteries to the General Assembly,	439	Distressed professors in Ireland, Petitions from some,	69, 74, 97
Deposition of Abernethie, pretended Bishop of Caithness,	12	Divine worship, concerning behaviour in the time of,	432
Deposition of Ballantyne, pretended Bishop of Aberdeen,	10	Divinity Hall, course of University education to be observed by Students previous to their entering the,	862
Deposition of Campbell, pretended Bishop of the Isles,	11	Divinity Hall, Overture respecting the attendance of Students at the,	858
Deposition of Ebenezer Erskine and other ministers, Seceders from the Church, 1740,	653	Divinity, Overtures respecting Course of Study to be pursued by Students of, 1823,	987
Deposition of Fairlie, pretended Bishop of Lismoir,	11	Divinity Students to give at least one year of regular attendance at the Hall, 1826,	997
Deposition of Guthrie, pretended Bishop of Murray,	ib.	Divinity, young men to be examined by Presbyteries in regard to Literature and Philosophy, before they are enrolled as Students of,	1000
Deposition of Dr George Garden, Aberdeen,	307	Division in the Church, Act for preventing of,	499
Deposition of Grahame, pretended Bishop of Orkney,	11	Doctrine, Act concerning, 1722,	518
Deposition of Mr John Hepburn,	335	Doctrine, anent purity of,	446
		Duels, Act discharging,	200
		Dunfermline, regulations respecting the Chapel of Ease in,	802
		Dunfermline Presbytery, Act concerning some Overtures of the,	622

	PAGE		PAGE
Dunfermline, Presbytery of, appointed to admit Mr Richardson at Inverkeithing, . . .	707	Episcopacy abjured by Mr George Graham, late pretended Bishop of Orkney, . . .	35
Dunkeld, disjunction of certain parishes from the Presbytery of, . . .	1058	Episcopacy declared to have been abjured by the Confession of Faith, 1580, and to be removed out of the Kirk, . . .	13
ECCLESIASTICAL judicatories, Act concerning the revising the Overtures about the method of procedure in, . . .	419	Erroneous Books, Act discharging the importing, vending, or spreading of, . . .	160
Education of Highland Boys, . . .	189	Erroneous Doctrine, Act against preaching or disseminating, . . .	329
Education of young noblemen, gentlemen, and others, children of Popish parents, Presbyteries to see to the, 1695, . . .	247	Error, Act against the spreading of, . . .	612
Education scheme, note respecting the origin of the, . . .	990	Error, Act for preventing, 1735, . . .	632
Elders, Act anent the election of, 1842, . . .	1125	Erskine, Ebenezer—Act and Sentence concerning him and those adhering to his protest, . . .	624
Elders and deacons, concerning the duty of, . . .	559	Erskine, Ebenezer, and those adhering to him, Act and recommendation respecting, 1734, . . .	629
Elders and deacons who neglect family worship, to be censured, . . .	259	Erskine, Ebenezer, and others, Act concerning, 1738, . . .	646
Elders in congregations, anent the admission of, 1652, . . .	1153	Erskine, Ebenezer, and others, Act concerning, 1739, . . .	649
Elders, members of Assembly, concerning the qualification of, . . .	645	Erskine, Ebenezer, and others, Sentence of Deposition against, 1740, . . .	653
Elders not to be ordained until twenty-one years of age, . . .	793	Estates, Committee of, the Assembly's Answer to their paper of July 24, 1648, . . .	168
Elders—Overture to prevent elders being ordained in congregations with which they are in nowise connected, . . .	622	Estates, Committee of, the Assembly's Answer to their paper of July 24, 1648, . . .	181
Elders, Presbyteries directed to inquire in regard to alleged irregularities in the electing and ordaining of, . . .	784	Estates, Committee of, the Assembly's humble supplication to the, 1648, . . .	187
Elders, representative, must be <i>bona fide</i> acting elders, . . .	1097	Evils of the Kirk, Act, 1639, containing the causes and remedies of the bygone, . . .	26
Elders, rules respecting the qualifications of such as are to be ordained, 1816, . . .	952	Evils of the Kirk, King's Commissioner's consent to the Act relative to the bygone, . . .	41
Elders, ruling, anent commissions to, . . .	569	Examination of Schools, order to Presbyteries concerning the, 1819, . . .	971
Elders, ruling, their duties and qualifications, . . .	588	Examination of Students of Divinity, annual, . . .	1073
Elders to act in Presbyteries and Synods, Act concerning admitting, 1652, . . .	1152	Examination of Students not residing in Scotland before they enter the Divinity Hall, 1835, . . .	1052
Elders to maintain family worship, . . .	559	Examination of Students on the Catechetical Standards, . . .	1073
Elders to make conscience of family worship, . . .	241	Excommunicated Papists and Papists' Children, lists of them to be presented to the Council, . . .	56
Elders elected to the Assembly, Overture anent certificates of the ordination of, . . .	826	Excommunicated persons, Act against Ministers haunting with, . . .	88
Election of elders, Act anent the, 1842, . . .	1125	Excommunicated persons, Act anent an order for using civil execution against, . . .	ib.
Election of ministers, directory for, . . .	212	Excommunicated persons, Act recommending the execution of the Act of Parliament for uplifting pecunial pains against, . . .	160
Elections of members of Assembly, Act regulating, . . .	523	Excommunicated persons, anent frequenting with, . . .	25
Enemies of the Kirk and Kingdom, Act for censuring the compliers with the, . . .	140	Excommunication, Act anent, . . .	328
Engagement, anent the, . . .		Excommunication of the Archbishops of St Andrews and Glasgow, and of the Bishops of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Ross, Brechin, Aberdeen, and Dunblane, . . .	10
Engagers in the unlawful war against England, anent the receiving of them to public satisfaction, . . .	201	Excommunication of the Earl of Seaforth, Ordinance for the, . . .	136
England—anent the restraining of people from passing into that country to matrimony, . . .	39	Exculpations, Overture for repealing that part of the Form of Process anent, 1762, . . .	751
England, Assembly's exhortation to their brethren in, 1649, . . .	213	Exercise and Addition, Presbyteries recommended to set up, . . .	243
England, Declaration and Exhortation by the Assembly to their brethren in, . . .	148	Exhortation from the Assembly to their brethren of England, 1649, . . .	213
England, Declaration and Exhortation of the Assembly to their brethren of, . . .	183	Expectants, Act concerning the admission of, 1652, . . .	1152
England, Letter from some Ministers in, 1641, . . .	49	Expectants, anent the order of trial of, . . .	54
England, Letter from some Ministers in, 1642, . . .	66	Expectant, anent the trial of, . . .	26
England, Letter from some Ministers in, 1643, . . .	78	Expectants educated in corrupt colleges, &c., anent, . . .	48
England, Letter from the Presbytery with the army there, 1644, . . .	96	Expectants—none to preach under that name unless such as shall have been tried and found qualified, . . .	140
England, Overture anent Ministers ordained in, 1734, . . .	720	Expectants, renovation of former Acts for trial and admission of, . . .	161
English Ministers' Letter, Assembly's Answer to, 1641, . . .	50	Expectants refusing to subscribe the Covenant, . . .	45
Enormities and Corruptions in the Ministry. See Ministry, . . .	137		
Episcopal Intruders, appointment concerning, . . .	506		

	PAGE		PAGE
Expectants to be tried before being permitted to preach in public, . . .	48	Chapter iv. Concerning the sin of fornication, adultery, and scandalous carriage tending thereto, . . .	407
Expectants to take with them testimonials when they remove to another Presbytery, . . .	ib.	Chapter v. Concerning appeals from a Kirk-session to a Presbytery, &c., . . .	410
FALSEHOOD and forgery of a lying, scandalous pamphlet, put forth under the name of Mr Alexander Henderson, after his death, . . .	190	Chapter vi. Concerning processes which naturally begin at the kirk-session, but are not to be brought to a final determination by them, . . .	411
Families, ministerial visitation of, . . .	426	Chapter vii. Concerning processes against Ministers, . . .	ib.
Family Exercises, Act anent, . . .	43	Chapter viii. Concerning processes in order to the censure of the greater excommunication, . . .	413
Family Exercises to be more carefully observed, . . .	64	Chapter ix. Concerning the order of proceeding to absolution, . . .	415
Family Worship, . . .	21, 43	Form of Process, Overture on the—trial of causes, 1835, . . .	1049
Family Worship, Act anent, . . .	259	Form of Commissions, Act anent the, . . .	765
Family Worship, directions of Assembly regarding, 1647, . . .	154	Form of Commissions, Act anent the, 1768, . . .	773
Family Worship, Pastoral Letter relative to, 1836, . . .	1064	Forms of Commissions, Act anent the supplying certain defects in the, . . .	767
Family Worship, recommendation concerning, . . .	451	Forms of Commissions to members of Assembly, Act establishing the, 1725, . . .	576
Fast, Act appointing a, 1642, . . .	72	Formula, Overture regarding the signing of the, . . .	570
Fast, Act appointing a, 1690, . . .	227	Formula to be subscribed by Ministers and Probationers, . . .	456
Fast, Act appointing a, 1699, . . .	279	Fornication, antenuptial, Act concerning satisfaction for, . . .	136
Fast, Act appointing a, 1700, . . .	290	Fullerton, <i>quoad sacra</i> Parish of, annexed to the Presbytery of Irvine, . . .	1075
Fast, Act appointing a, 1701, . . .	305	Funds of the Church, annual contributions recommended in aid of the, 1816, . . .	952
Fast, Act appointing a, 1704, . . .	336	Funeral Sermons discharged, . . .	26
Fast, Act appointing a, 1705, . . .	391	Gaelic Bible, Act authorising the use of the Quarto edition of the, 1826, . . .	995
Fast, Act appointing a, 1706, . . .	397	Gaelic Bible, report of Assembly anent the, . . .	1161
Fast, Act appointing a, 1709, . . .	434	Gaelic Scriptures, new edition of the, 1816, . . .	950
Fast, Act appointing a, 1710, . . .	442	Gairloch, erection of the Presbytery of, . . .	567
Fast, Act appointing a, 1726, . . .	581	Galloway, Synod of, to meet at Wigton, instead of Newton-Stewart, 1776, . . .	793
Fast, Act appointing a, 1741, . . .	661	Garden, Dr George, deposed, . . .	307
Fast, Act appointing a, 1756, . . .	725	General Assemblies, Act concerning yearly, . . .	32
Fast, Act appointing a, 1835, . . .	1054	General Assembly, concerning the better attendance of members on the, 1709, . . .	434
Fast, Act appointing a, 1841, . . .	1105	Gillespie, Mr Thomas, minister at Carnock, Act deposing, . . .	707
Fast, Act appointing a, 1842, . . .	1145	Gipps, Thomas, vindication of the Church of Scotland from the calumny of, . . .	270
Fast, all the congregations in the town, where the Assembly holds, to keep the, . . .	111	Glasgow, 1610, reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly holden at, . . .	7
Fast ordained to be kept previous to Assembly, 1647, . . .	147	Glasgow, regulations for a new Gaelic Chapel in, 1788, . . .	863
Fast, Pastoral Address relative to a, 1835, . . .	1054	Glebes, Act concerning the extent and marches of, 1802, . . .	891
Fast, Pastoral Address relative to a, 1841, . . .	1106	Glebes, Act for ascertaining the extent of, 1762, . . .	751
Fast, Pastoral Address relative to a, 1842, . . .	1145	Glebes and manses, recommendation to the Commissioners for Public Affairs anent, . . .	166
Fast, resolution in regard to a, 1783, . . .	818	Glebes, Proposals for the melioration of, . . .	834
Fasts, Act anent Ministers who do not observe, . . .	225	Glenelg, alteration of the day of the meeting of the Synod of, 1835, . . .	1051
Fasts, Act for the better observance of, . . .	545	Glenelg, erection of the Synod of, . . .	567
Fasts, concerning the observance of, 1710, . . .	443	Governors of youth. Act anent, . . .	294
Fife, Synod of, to meet on second Wednesday of October, 1776, . . .	792	Graham, James, Act concerning the proclamation of, 1646, . . .	141
Fife, Synod of, to meet on the second Tuesday of October, . . .	795	Grahame, Mr George, his abjuration of Episcopacy, . . .	35
Fire in Edinburgh, 28th October 1701, great loss sustained to the Church thereby, . . .	323	Greenock, formation of the Presbytery of, . . .	1035
Fishing and going of mills on Sabbath discharged, 29, 38		Grievances of the Church, from Toleration and Patronage, . . .	501
Fordoun, Presbytery of, Report of the committee on the reference from—case of the vacancy of Arbutnot, 1820, . . .	978	HANOVER, Act recommending prayers for the succession in the House of, . . .	450
Foreign parts, Overture anent Ministers ordained in, 1754, . . .	720		
Form of Process, Act anent the, 1706, . . .	393		
Form of Process, Act approving of a, . . .	403		
Form of Process, Act on the, 1835, . . .	1049		
Form of Process, anent preparing of a, . . .	336		
Form of Process in the Judicatories of the Church of Scotland, with relation to scandals and censures, the, . . .	404		
Chapter i. Concerning Church government, discipline, scandals, and censures in general, . . .			
Chapter ii. Concerning the entering of processes, citation of parties, and witnesses, and taking depositions, and anent fugitives from discipline, . . .	405		
Chapter iii. Concerning swearers, cursers, profaners of the Lord's Day, drunkards, and other scandals of that nature, . . .	407		

	PAGE		PAGE
Haunters with Papists and excommunicated persons, Act against,	39	Inferior Courts judging in causes appealed from them to the Superior Courts, Overture anent members of,	720
Hebrew class, Act anent attendance on, 1833,	1025	Inferior Courts, Overture anent members thereof judging in causes appealed from them,	783, 784
Hebrew Exercise, Act anent a, 1836,	1059	Inferior Courts, Overture as to printing extracts from the Records of, 1830,	1011
Henderson, Alexander, cleared from the aspersions cast upon him, in a lying scandalous pamphlet put forth after his death,	190	Infidelity and immorality, Act against,	721
Hepburn, Act anent Mr John,	332	Infirmity, recommendation for a collection to aid in erecting an,	601, 616
Hepburn, sentence of deposition against Mr John,	383	Innovations, Act for preventing,	260
Hepburn, suspension of Mr John,	255	Innovations in the worship of God, Act against,	418
Heretical publications, Act discharging the importing, vending, or spreading of,	160	Intrants—Act against the unlawful oaths exacted of them by the Prelates,	8
Heritors, Act against Ministers making agreements with,	736	Intrants to be tried whether they be qualified for the places to which they are presented,	39
Highland Boys, education of,	189	Intruders into kirks, Act against,	310
Highland Boys, extraordinary collection ordered for the, 1649,	216	Intrusion, against,	26
Highland Boys of Argyle; Moray, Ross, and Argyle, exempted from contributions for the,	197	Intrusion of Ministers, Act against, 1736,	641
Highland language, Confession of Faith, &c., to be translated into the,	287	Intrusion of Ministers, Act to prevent the, 1835,	1044
Highland language, recommendation to maintain Bursars of Theology having the,	304	Intrusion upon kirks, against,	243
Highlands, anent the distribution of Bibles, &c., in the,	227	Ireland, petitions from some distressed professors in,	69, 74, 97
Highlands, Act anent planting of the, 1699,	282	Ireland, Commission to some Ministers to go to,	70, 87
Highlands, Act anent the erection of Schools in the,	227	Irish—Act for bestowing bursaries on students having that language,	329
Highlands, Act anent the erection of Schools in the,	330	Irish language, Act for the further encouragement of students having the,	472
Highlands, Act for facilitating the planting of the,	512	Irish language, concerning bursars and students having the, 1710,	444
Highlands, against the transportation of Ministers from the,	584	Irish language, concerning probationers having the,	432
Highlands and Islands, measures to spread the knowledge of Christ in the,	142	Irish language—preachers having this language not to be planted in the Lowlands,	512
Highlands, Islands, &c. Preachers sent thereto to be punctually paid out of the Church's public money,	499	Irish language—Presbyteries discharged from settling in the Lowlands such as have this language,	424
Highlands, anent Libraries in the,	332	Irish language, recommendation to Presbyteries and Universities anent students that have the,	82
Highlands, anent lists for the kirks in the,	55	Irish language, revival of bursaries for students having the, 1756,	727
Highlands, approbation of overture for promoting the knowledge of God in the, 1699,	287	Irish language—students having Irish to be tried as to their knowledge therein,	517
Highlands, care to plant the,	245	Irish language—students having this language to be preferred to bursaries, 1715,	500
Highlands, Committees to be sent by the Commission to plant kirks in the, 1716,	512	Irish language, Synods recommended to maintain bursars of theology having the,	304
Highlands, &c., concerning the Libraries in the,	388	Irish language—such as can preach in it not to be settled in the Lowlands,	245
Highlands, concerning the planting of the,	418	Irish National Education, note respecting the discussion on, 1833,	1027
Highlands, concerning the planting of the,	432	Irish Psalms, Act anent the,	244
Home Missions, Act on,	1129	Irregular licence or ordination by the Prelates to be censured,	309
Honours in Kirks, Act against the hanging of,	79	Irregularities by vagrant Ministers, Act anent,	254
Hospital for diseased poor, collection to aid in erecting an,	601	Irvine, disjunction of certain Parishes from the Presbytery of,	1035
Hundred and Eleven Propositions, Act concerning the,	164	Irvine, <i>quoad sacra</i> Parish of Fullarton annexed to the Presbytery of,	1075
Hungary, &c., Letter to Scotsmen in,	163	Islay and Jura, appointment of the Presbytery of,	1054
IDOLATROUS monuments, Act anent the demolishing of,	44	JEDBURGH, Act disjoining the parish of Castleton from the Presbytery of,	671
Immorality and infidelity, Act against,	721	Jews, Act on the conversion of the, 1838,	1080
Impiety and schism, Act against,	47	Jews, Act on the conversion of the, 1839,	1096
Independent jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, resolution anent the, 1838,	1085	Jews, Act on the conversion of the, 1840,	1101
India Mission Scheme, note respecting the origin of the,	990	Jews, Act on the conversion of the, 1841,	1105
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1835,	1044	Jews, Act on the conversion of the, 1842,	1124
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1836,	1058	Judicatories, Act anent the reviving of the Registers of the Church,	293
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1837,	1069		
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1838,	1080		
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1839,	1093		
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1840,	1101		
India Missions, Act in favour of, 1842,	1127		
Infants, Act respecting the baptism of,	461		

	PAGE		PAGE
Judicatories of the Kirk, Act restoring the,	21	King, Address to, on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales, 1795,	848
Judicatories, Inferior—Overture about the Members thereof judging in Superior Courts, 1741,	663	King, Address to the, on his Preservation, 1796,	850
KENT, Duchess of, Address to her Royal Highness the,	1100	King, Address to the, on the Birth of the Princess Charlotte of Wales, 1796,	851
King, Remonstrance to the, 1645,	132	King, Address to the, on the Marriage of the Princess Royal, 1797,	856
King, Supplication of Assembly, 1638, to the,	32, 33	King, Address to the, on the situation of Affairs, 1798,	860
King, Supplication to the, 1642,	57	King, Address to the, on his Escape from Assassination, 1800,	876
King, Supplication of Assembly, 1648, to the,	198	King, Address to the, on the situation of Affairs, 1800,	878
King, Address to the, 1690,	231	King, Address to the, on the situation of Affairs, 1801,	884
King, Address by the Assembly to the, 1698,	269	King, Address to the, on the situation of Affairs, 1802,	889
King, an Address to the, on the discovery of a horrid Conspiracy, 1723,	561	King, Address to the, on the defeat of a daring Conspiracy, 1803,	894
King, Address to the, by the Commission of 1727, on his Accession to the Throne,	599	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1804,	897
King, Address to the, on his Accession to the Throne, 1728,	598	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1805,	899
King, Address to the, on the Marriage of the Princess Royal, 1734,	627	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1806,	903
King, Address to the, on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales, 1736,	633	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1807,	908
King, Congratulatory Address to the, on occasion of taking the Forts near Carthageia. 1741,	662	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Public Affairs, 1808,	913
King, Address to the, on the present critical juncture of Affairs, 1744,	675	King, Address to the, on the arduous situation of Public Affairs, 1809,	915
King, Address to the, on the Victory obtained over the Rebels, 1746,	685	King, Address to the, on the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Accession, 1810,	921
King, Address to the, on occasion of the General Peace, 1749,	700	King, Address to his Majesty, George IV., on his Accession to the Throne, &c., 1820,	975
King, Congratulatory Address to the, on the Birth of a Prince, 1750,	763	King, Address to the, 1821,	980
King, Address to the, on the declaration of War against the French King, 1756,	724	King, Address to the, on the Abolition of Negro Slavery in the West Indies, 1823,	986
King, Address to the, on the Successes of his Arms, 1760,	739	King, Address to the, 1823,	985
King George III., Address to his Majesty, on his Accession to the Throne, 1761,	743	King, Address to his Majesty on the Death of the Duke of York, 1827,	999
King George III., Address to his Majesty, on the happy event of his Marriage, 1762,	754	King, Address to his Majesty, William IV., on his Accession to the Throne, 1831,	1014
King, Address to the, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, 1763,	778	King, Address to the, on his providential Escape, 1833,	1025
King, Address to the, on Public Affairs, 1769,	780	King, Address to the, on the Abolition of Slavery, 1834,	1027
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Princess, 1770,	788	King, Address of Thanks to the, in respect to his Grace the Commissioner's compliance with the wishes of the Church and people of Scotland in reference to the Sabbath, 1834,	ib.
King, Address of condolence to the, on the Death of the late Queen of Denmark, 1775,	790	King, Address of Thanks to the, on the prospect of increased means of Religious Instruction and Pastoral Superintendence, 1835,	022
King, Address to the, on the present situation of Affairs, 1776,	787	King's Commissioners consent to the Covenant, the,	41
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Prince, 1774,	791	King's dedication of L.500 sterling annually, for pious uses, the Assembly's desire anen the,	65
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Princess, 1776,	794	King's Letter to the Assembly, 1641, the,	45
King, Address to the, on the present situation of Affairs in North America, 1777,	800	King's Letter, the, 1642,	52
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Prince, 1779,	806	King's Letter, the, 1643,	73
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Prince, &c., 1781,	819	King's Letter, the, 1646,	135
King, Address to the, on the situation of Public Affairs, 1782,	830	King's Letter, the, 1690,	222
King, Address to the, on the Peace, 1783,	830	King's Letter, the, 1697,	257
King, Address to the, on the Birth of a Princess, 1784,	838	King's Letter, the, 1698,	267
King, Address to the, on his Recovery from Sickness, 1789,	841	King's Letter, the, 1699,	277
King, Address to the, on the Marriage of the Duke of York, 1792,	845	King's Letter, the, 1701,	301
King, Address to the, on the subject of the War, 1793,		King's Letter, the, 1702,	312
King, Address to the, on the subject of the War, 1794,		King's Letter, the, 1715,	496
		King's Letter, the, 1716,	507

	PAGE		PAGE
King's Letter, the, 1719,	524	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1808,	912
King's Letter, the, 1722,	544	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1810,	919
King's Letter, the, 1725,	571	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1820,	974
King's Letter, the, 1726,	579	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1822,	982
King's Letter, the, 1727,	585	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1825,	991
King's Letter, the, 1728,	595	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1831,	1013
King's Letter, the, 1737,	642	King's Letter, Answer to the, 1832,	1019
King's Letter, the, 1743,	669	Kintyre, disjunction of certain Parishes from the Presbytery of,	1058
King's Letter, the, 1745,	678	Kirk of Campvere, Act in favour of the,	335
King's Letter, the, 1746,	683	Kirkcudbright, the Parishes of Dalry and Cars- phairn reunited to the Presbytery of,	324
King's Letter, the, 1747,	691	Kirk Government and Ordination, Act approv- ing the propositions respecting,	121
King's Letter, the, 1756,	723	Kirk restored, Judicatories of the,	21
King's Letter, the, 1761,	741	Kirkmen, Act against the civil places and power of,	29
King's Letter, the, 1762,	746	Kirk-Sessions, anent voicing in,	26
King's Letter, the, 1763,	752	Kirk-Sessions, anent the choosing of,	53
King's Letter, the, 1765,	758	Kirk-Sessions—Books to be yearly tried by Pres- byteries,	39
King's Letter, the, 1778,	796	Kirk-Sessions, Overtures concerning,	540
King's Letter, the, 1783,	815	Kirk-Sessions, resolutions about Overtures con- cerning,	543
King's Letter, the, 1792,	836	Kirk-Sessions to have a copy of the Acts of As- sembly,	31
King's Letter, the, 1794,	843	Kirk-Sessions to purchase the Acts of Assem- bly,	785
King's Letter, the, 1798,	858	Kirks, Act against burials and hanging of ho- nours in,	79
King's Letter, the, 1800,	875	Kirks, Act anent the furthering the plantation of,	160
King's Letter, the, 1801,	882	Kirks, anent trial of the quality of,	54
King's Letter, the, 1802,	887	Kirks, disjunction of,	166
King's Letter, the, 1804,	895	LANGHOLM, erection of the Presbytery of,	671
King's Letter, the, 1806,	901	Larbert, Commission of 1794 instructed to judge of appeals in the case of the presenta- tion of Mr Robert Knox to the parish of,	816
King's Letter, the, 1807,	906	Larger Overtures, Act concerning the, 1718,	524
King's Letter, the, 1808,	911	Larger Overtures, the. See <i>Overtures</i> ,	337
King's Letter, the, 1810,	918	Larger Overtures, Presbyteries to send in their opinions respecting the, 1708,	430
King's Letter, the, 1820,	973	Larger Overtures, Presbyteries recommended to consider and report on the,	438
King's Letter, the, 1822,	982	Larger Catechism approved of,	168
King's Letter, the, 1825,	990	Larger Overtures, reference concerning the, 1710,	449
King's Letter, the, 1831,	1012	Latin Class, Overture anent attendance on the, 1841,	1105
King's Letter, the, 1832,	1018	Lawyers who are members of Assembly not to appear as Procurators for parties at the bar,	705
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1641,	51	Lawyers who are members of the Assembly or Commission not to appear as Procurators for parties at the bar,	818
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1643,	88	League and Covenant agreed upon by the Com- mittees of the Convention of Estates, and General Assembly appointed to meet with the Commissioners of the Parliament of England,	85
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1646,	144	League and Covenant approved of by Assembly, 1643,	86
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1649,	217	League and Covenant to be subscribed by all students of philosophy at their entry and lau- reation, and by others before their first receiv- ing the Lord's Supper,	166
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1690,	222	League and Covenant to be taken at the first re- ceiving of the Sacrament of the Supper by students at their first entry to College,	191
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1696,	254	League and Covenant, ordinance for the Earl of Seaforth's excommunication for opposing the,	136
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1697,	258	Learning, anent the advancement of,	400
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1698,	268	Learning, &c., approbation of Overtures con- cerning, 1645; Schools and Colleges to be	
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1699,	278		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1701,	302		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1702,	314		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1715,	496		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1716,	508		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1719,	525		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1722,	544		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1725,	571		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1726,	579		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1727,	586		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1728,	596		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1737,	643		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1743,	670		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1745,	679		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1746,	684		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1747,	692		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1756,	723		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1761,	742		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1762,	747		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1763,	753		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1765,	759		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1778,	797		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1783,	816		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1792,	837		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1794,	844		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1798,	859		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1800,	877		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1801,	883		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1802,	884		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1804,	896		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1806,	902		
King's Letter, Answer to the, 1807,	907		

	PAGE		PAGE
visited twice in the year; grammar school-masters to be skilled in the Latin tongue, for poesy as well as prose; Greek not to be taught in grammar schools or private places, unless it be in the way of preparation for entering College; none to be admitted Students of Greek in Colleges unless able to make a Latin theme; none to be promoted from an inferior to a superior class unless they be found to have profited; none to have the degree of Ministers who are found unworthy; none who have entered at one College to be admitted to another without a testimonial from the Masters of the College where he first entered, and none of those who may be thus admitted to be received into a higher class than that which he should have occupied in the College from whence he came; correspondence to be kept up among Universities, and Commissioners of Colleges to meet for consultation at every General Assembly,	117, 118	Letters and Addresses:—	
Lecturing, Act anent, 1704,	327	From the Assembly to the King, 1646,	144
Lecturing and Catechising, anent, 1652,	1151	From the Assembly to the Parliament of England, 1646,	ib.
Lecturing on a portion of the Word of God recommended to Ministers,	238	From the Assembly to the Lord Mayor, &c. of London, 1646,	145
Lecturing, Presbyteries are diligently to inquire how ministers observe the Acts concerning,	394	From the Assembly to the Westminster Assembly, 1646,	146
Lerwick, appointment of the Presbytery of,	1009	From the Assembly to Scotsmen in Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and Hungary,	163
Letters and Addresses:—		From Westminster Assembly to the General Assembly, 1648,	166
From the King to the Assembly, 1641,	45	From the Assembly to the Committee of Estates,	168
From Ministers in England, to the Assembly, 1641,	49	From the Assembly to the Committee of Estates,	181
From Assembly to the English Ministers, 1641,	50	From the Assembly to the Westminster Assembly, 1648,	186
From the Assembly to the King,	51	From the Assembly to the King, 1648,	198
From the King to the Assembly, 1642,	52	From the Assembly to the King, 1649,	217
From the Assembly to the King, 1642,	57	From the King to the Assembly, 1690,	222
From the Assembly to the Commissioners of the kingdom at London, 1642,	65	From the Assembly to the King, 1690,	ib.
From some Ministers in England, 1642,	66	From Mr Thomas Lining and others to the Assembly,	225
From the Assembly to these Ministers,	67	From the Assembly to the King, 1690,	231
From distressed Professors in Ireland, 1642,	69	From the Assembly to the King, 1696,	254
From the King to the Assembly, 1643,	73	From the King to the Assembly, 1697,	257
From distressed Professors in Ireland, 1643,	74	From the Assembly to the King, 1697,	258
From some Ministers in the Kirk of England, 1643,	78	From the King to the Assembly, 1698,	267
From Westminster Assembly of Divines, 1643,	83	From the Assembly to the King, 1698,	268
From the Assembly to the King, 1643,	88	From the Assembly to the King, 1698,	269
From the Assembly to the Parliament of England, 1643,	89	From the King to the Assembly, 1699,	277
From the Assembly to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, 1643,	90	From the Assembly to the King, 1699,	278
From the Presbytery with the Army, 1644,	96	From the Assembly to Mr Alexander Shields, Mr Francis Boreland, Mr Archibald Stobo, and Mr Alexander Dalgliesh,	291
From distressed Christians in Ireland, 1644,	97	From the King to the Assembly, 1701,	301
From the Assembly to the Presbytery with the Army, 1644,	101	From the Assembly to the King, 1701,	302
From the Commissioners sent to the Westminster Assembly, 1644,	ib.	From the King to the Assembly, 1702,	312
From the Westminster Assembly, 1644,	103	From the Assembly to the King, 1702,	314
From the Assembly to the Westminster Assembly of Divines, 1644,	105	From the Commission of 1702 to Queen Anne, on her Accession to the Throne,	315
From the Assembly to their Commissioners at Westminster, 1664,	107	From the Queen to the Assembly, 1703,	316
From the Assembly to the Kirks in the Netherlands,	108	From the Assembly to the Queen, 1703,	317
From the Commissioners at London, 1645,	111	From the Queen to the Assembly, 1704,	325
From the Westminster Assembly, 1645,	113	From the Assembly to the Queen, 1704,	326
From the Assembly to Parliament, 1645,	118	From the Queen to the Assembly, 1705,	382
From the Assembly to the Westminster Assembly, 1645,	131	From the Assembly to the Queen, 1705,	ib.
From the Assembly to the King, 1645,	132	From the Assembly to the Queen, 1707,	419
From the Assembly to their Commissioners at London, 1645,	134	From the Queen to the Assembly, 1708,	421
From the King to the Assembly, 1646,	135	From the Assembly to the Queen, 1708,	422
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1708,	423
		From the Queen to the Assembly, 1710,	440
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1710,	441
		From the Queen to the Assembly, 1712,	460
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1712,	ib.
		From the Commission of 1711 to the Queen,	467
		From the Commission of 1711 to the Queen,	470
		From the Commission of 1711 to the Queen,	474
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1712,	476
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1712,	477
		From the Queen to the Assembly, 1713,	478
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1713,	479
		From the Queen to the Assembly, 1714,	485
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1714,	486
		From the Assembly to the Queen, 1714,	487
		From the King to the Assembly, 1715,	496
		From the Assembly to the King, 1715,	ib.
		From the King to the Assembly, 1716,	507
		From the Assembly to the King, 1716,	508
		From the Assembly to the King, (congratulatory on the suppression of the Rebellion,) 1716,	510
		From the King to the Assembly, 1719,	524
		From the Assembly to the King, 1719,	525

Letters and Addresses :—

From the King to the Assembly, 1722,	544
From the Assembly to the King, 1722,	ib.
From the Assembly to the King, on the Growth of Popery, 1722,	546
From the Assembly to the King, on the discovery of a horrid Conspiracy, 1723,	561
From the King to the Assembly, 1725,	571
From the Assembly to the King, 1725,	ib.
From the King to the Assembly, 1726,	579
From the Assembly to the King, 1726,	ib.
From the King to the Assembly, 1727,	585
From the Assembly to the King, 1727,	586
From the Assembly to the King, in regard to the Growth of Popery, &c., 1727,	593
From the Assembly to the King, on his Majesty's Accession to the Throne, 1728,	598
From the Commission of 1727 to the King, on his Majesty's Accession,	599
From the Assembly to the King, on the Marriage of the Princess-Royal, 1734,	627
From the Assembly to the King, on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales, 1736,	633
From the Assembly's Commissioners to the King, on the grievance of Patronage,	634
From the King to the Assembly, 1737,	642
From the Assembly to the King, 1737,	643
From the Assembly to the King, on occasion of Taking the Forts near Carthagena,	662
From the King to the Assembly, 1743,	669
From the Assembly to the King, 1743,	670
From the Assembly to the King, on the critical Juncture of Affairs in 1744,	675
From the King to the Assembly, 1745,	678
From the Assembly to the King, 1745,	679
From the King to the Assembly, 1746,	683
From the Assembly to the King, 1746,	684
From the Assembly to the King, on occasion of the Victory over the Rebels, 1746,	685
From the Assembly to the Duke of Cumberland, on occasion of the same, 1746,	686
From the Duke of Cumberland to the Commissioner to the Assembly of 1746,	690
From the King to the Assembly, 1747,	691
From the Assembly to the King, 1747,	692
From the Assembly to the King, on the General Peace, 1749,	700
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Prince, 1750,	703
From the King to the Assembly, 1756,	723
From the Assembly to the King, 1756,	ib.
From the Assembly to the King, on the occasion of his Declaration of War against the French King, 1756,	724
From the Assembly to the King, on account of the signal Successes of his Arms, 1760,	739
From the King to the Assembly, 1761,	741
From the Assembly to the King, 1761,	742
From the Assembly to the King, on his Accession to the Throne of these realms, 1761,	743
From the King to the Assembly, 1762,	746
From the Assembly to the King, 1762,	747
From the Assembly to the King, on his Marriage, 1762,	748
From the Assembly to the Queen, on her Marriage, 1762,	749
From the Assembly to the Princess of Wales, on the King's Marriage, 1762,	750
From the King to the Assembly, 1763,	752
From the Assembly to the King, 1763,	753
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, 1763,	754

Letters and Addresses :—

From the Assembly to the Queen, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales,	755
From the King to the Assembly, 1765,	758
From the Assembly to the King, 1765,	759
From the Assembly to the King, anent the new erections in the Highlands, 1765,	760
From the Assembly to the King, on Public Affairs, 1769,	778
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Princess, 1770,	780
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Prince, 1774,	787
From the Assembly to the King, on the Death of the late Queen of Denmark, 1775,	788
From the Assembly to the King, on the present situation of Affairs, 1776,	790
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Princess, 1776,	791
From the Assembly to his Majesty, on the present situation of Affairs in North America, 1777,	794
From the King to the Assembly, 1778,	796
From the Assembly to the King, 1778,	797
From the Assembly to the King, on the present situation of Affairs, 1778,	798
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Prince and situation of Affairs, 1779,	800
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Prince, 1781,	806
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Public Affairs, 1782,	808
From the King to the Assembly, 1783,	815
From the Assembly to the King, 1783,	816
From the Assembly to the King, on the Peace, 1783,	817
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of a Princess, 1784,	819
From the Assembly to the King, anent the Commemoration of the Revolution of 1688,	827
From the Assembly to the King, on his Recovery from Sickness, 1789,	830
From the Assembly to the Queen, on his Majesty's Recovery, 1789,	831
From the King to the Assembly, 1792,	836
From the Assembly to the King, 1792,	837
From the Assembly to the King, on the Marriage of the Duke of York with the Princess Royal of Prussia,	838
From the Assembly to the King, on the subject of the War, 1793,	840
From the King to the Assembly, 1794,	843
From the Assembly to the King, 1794,	844
From the Assembly to the King, on the subject of the War, 1794,	845
From the Assembly to the King, on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales, 1795,	848
From the Assembly to the Prince of Wales, on his Marriage,	ib.
From the Assembly to the King, on his late Preservation, 1796,	850
From the Assembly to the King, on the Birth of the Princess Charlotte of Wales,	851
From the Assembly to the King, on the Marriage of the Princess Royal,	856
From the King to the Assembly, 1798,	858
From the Assembly to the King, 1798,	859
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Public Affairs,	860
From the King to the Assembly, 1799,	865
From the Assembly to the King, 1799,	866
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Public Affairs,	867

Letters and Addresses:—	PAGE
From the Assembly to the People of Scotland, warning them against listening to Missionaries or itinerant Preachers sent by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home,	870
From the King to the Assembly, 1800,	875
From the Assembly to the King, on his Providential Escape from Assassination, 1800,	876
From the Assembly to the King, in Answer to his Letter, 1800,	877
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Affairs,	878
From the King to the Assembly, 1801,	882
From the Assembly to the King, 1801,	883
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Public Affairs,	884
From the King to the Assembly, 1802,	887
From the Assembly to the King, 1802,	888
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Public Affairs, 1802,	889
From the Assembly to the King, on the Defeat of a daring Conspiracy, 1803,	894
From the King to the Assembly, 1804,	895
From the Assembly to the King, 1804,	896
From the Assembly to the King, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1804,	897
From the Assembly to the King, on the arduous situation of Affairs, 1805,	899
From the King to the Assembly, 1806,	901
From the Assembly to the King, 1806,	902
From the Assembly to the King, on the arduous situation of Affairs,	903
From the King to the Assembly, 1807,	906
From the Assembly to the King, 1807,	907
From the Assembly to the King, on the arduous situation of Affairs,	908
From the King to the Assembly, 1808,	911
From the Assembly to the King, 1808,	912
From the Assembly to the King, on the situation of Affairs, 1808,	913
From the King to the Assembly, 1810,	918
From the Assembly to the King, 1810,	919
From the Assembly to the King, on the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Majesty's Accession to the Throne,	921
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1811,	924
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1811,	925
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1811,	927
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1812,	929
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1813,	932
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1814,	939
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1814,	940
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1814,	941
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1815,	944
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1815,	945
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1816,	946
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1816,	949
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1817,	954
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1817,	956
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1817,	957

Letters and Addresses:—	PAGE
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1818,	960
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1818,	962
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1818,	964
From the Prince Regent to the Assembly, 1819,	966
From the Assembly to the Prince Regent, 1819,	969
From the King to the Assembly, 1820,	973
From the Assembly to the King, 1820,	974
From the Assembly to the King, on his Accession to the Throne, 1820,	975
From the Assembly to the King, 1821,	980
From the King to the Assembly, 1822,	982
From the Assembly to the King, 1822,	983
From the Assembly to the King, 1823,	985
From the Assembly to the King, on the Abolition of Negro Slavery in the West Indies, 1823,	986
From the King to the Assembly, 1825,	990
From the Assembly to the King, 1825,	991
From the Assembly to the King, on the Death of the Duke of York, 1827,	999
From the King to the Assembly, 1831,	1012
From the Assembly to the King, 1831,	1013
From the Assembly to the King, on his Accession to the Throne,	1014
From the Assembly to the Queen, on his Majesty's Accession,	1015
From the King to the Assembly, 1832,	1018
From the Assembly to the King, 1832,	1019
From the Assembly to the King, on his providential Escape from Assassination, 1833,	1023
From the Assembly to the King, an Address of Thanks, 1834,	1029
From the Assembly to the King, on the Abolition of Slavery, 1834,	ib.
From the Assembly to the King, an Address of Thanks for the prospect of increased means of Religious Instruction and Pastoral Superintendence, 1835,	1043
From the Assembly to the People of Scotland, relative to a Fast, 1835,	1054
From the Queen to the Assembly, 1838,	1076
From the Assembly to the Queen, 1838,	ib.
From the Assembly to the Queen, on her Majesty's Accession, 1838,	1077
From the Assembly to the Queen Dowager, on the Death of his late Majesty, 1838,	1079
From the Assembly to the People of Scotland, 1838,	1090
From the Assembly to the Queen, on her Marriage, 1840,	1098
From the Assembly to Prince Albert, 1840,	1099
From the Assembly to the Duchess of Kent, 1840,	1100
From the Assembly to the Queen, on the Birth of the Princess-Royal, 1841,	1104
From the Assembly to the People, relative to the Fast, 1841,	1106
From the Queen to the Assembly, 1842,	1113
From the Assembly to the Queen, 1842,	1114
From the Assembly to the Queen, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, 1842,	1115
From the Assembly to the Queen, on the Claim of Right, 1842,	1141
From the Assembly to the People of Scotland, 1845,	1145
From the Assembly to the People of Scotland, relative to Sabbath Profanation, 1834,	1163
Leechman, Professor, Act concerning, 1744,	676
Lewis, Act erecting the Presbytery of,	664

	PAGE		PAGE
Liberties of the Kirk encroached upon, . . .	173	Lord's Table, such as do not walk suitably to	
Libraries in Presbyteries, Act for erecting, . .	438	the Gospel to be debarred from the, 1652, . .	1153
Libraries in the Highlands, Act concerning the,	396	Lorn, Act dividing the Presbytery of, . . .	606
Libraries in the Highlands, anent, . . .	332	Lorn, Commission appointed to co-operate with	
Libraries in the Highlands, Islands, &c., concern-		the Presbytery of, 1712, . . .	473
ing the, . . .	388	Lothian and Tweeddale, anent the meeting of	
Licence or ordination without the bounds of the		the Synod of, 1759, . . .	736
Church prohibited in the case of those who		Lothian and Tweeddale, alteration of the day of	
have been educated within its bounds, . . .	803	meeting of the Synod of, 1835, . . .	1051
Licence to Probationers, Overture anent the form		Lykwakes, Act against, . . .	128, 311
of a, . . .	569		
Licensing of Probationers, anent the, 1708, . .	429	M'MILLAN, Act anent Mr John, . . .	332
Licensing of Probationers, Act concerning the,		M'Millan, Mr John, and others, Act concern-	
1727, . . .	594	ing their irregularities, . . .	506
Licensing of Probationers, Overture about the,		Magistrate's concurrence in curbing and punish-	
1741, . . .	663	ing prevalent vices to be procured, . . .	64
Licensing of Probationers, Act and Overture		Maitland, Lord. The Assembly's Commission	
about the manner of, 1742, 1743, . . .	665, 671	to his Lordship to present their Supplication	
Licensing of Probationers, Act anent, 1754, . .	719	to the King, &c., . . .	67
Licensing of Probationers, Overture on the sub-		Malignancy, anent Ministers deposed for, . .	200
ject transmitted in 1767, . . .	768	See <i>Ministers deposed for Malignancy</i> .	
Licensing of Probationers, Interim Act concern-		Manses and Glebes, recommendation to the Com-	
ing the, 1781, . . .	807	missioners for Public Affairs anent, . . .	166
Licensing of Probationers, Act concerning the,		Manses and Stipends, measures taken to make	
Licensing of Probationers, Overture from the		them free to the intransit, . . .	142
Synod of Fife respecting the, . . .	823	Markets on Monday and Saturday, anent, . .	25
Licensing of Probationers, Act respecting the,		Markets on Saturdays and Mondays, application	
1813, . . .	934	to be made to Parliament respecting the altera-	
Licentiate from abroad not to be allowed to		tion of, . . .	226
preach in Scotland till they be re-examined,		Marriage, Act concerning, . . .	450
Lining, Mr Thomas, and others, Assembly's		Marriage, Overture concerning promises of	
proceedings anent, . . .	224	marriage made by minors to those with whom	
Linlithgow, 1606, Reasons annulling the pre-		they have committed fornication, 1644, . .	110
tended Assembly holden at, . . .	6	Marriage to be celebrated only after the procla-	
Linlithgow, 1608, Reasons annulling the pre-		mation of banns, . . .	226
tended Assembly holden at, . . .	ib.	Marriages, resolution concerning, . . .	821
Lithuania, Act for the maintenance of a Student		"Marrow" Controversy, . . .	534, 548
from, 1740, . . .	660	"Marrow of Modern Divinity," Act concerning	
Lithuania, Act for the maintenance of two Stu-		a book entitled, 1720, . . .	534
dents from, . . .	546	Masters who have servants that profane the	
Lochmaben, Act disjoining certain parishes of		Lord's Day, Act against, . . .	79
the Presbytery of, . . .	671	Members of Assembly, Act concerning the elec-	
London, the Assembly's Letter to the Lord		tions of, 1738, . . .	648
Mayor, &c., of, 1646, . . .	145	Members of Assembly, Presbyteries to see that	
Long Island, Act erecting the Presbytery of, .	567	commissions to them be in due form, 1744, .	675
Long Island, Act disjoining the Presbytery of,		Members of Assembly, their commissions and	
1742, . . .	664	attestations thereof, 1720, . . .	533
Lord's Day, anent the Profanation of the, 25, 38,		Members of Commission, qualifications of, .	529
56, 72, 79, 141, 193, 226, 387, 429, 559, 988,	1154	Members of the Kirk of Scotland, Exhorta-	
Lord's Day, instruction to the Commission of		tions and Directions to them regarding the	
1794, respecting the due observation of the, .	846	dangers of religion and the unlawful engage-	
Lord's Day profaned by multitudes of people		ment in war against England, . . .	171
walking idly on the streets of Edinburgh, Pier,		Merse and Teviotdale, sermon preached by Mr	
and Shore, and Links of Leith, &c., . . .	387	Gabriel Wilson of Maxton before the Synod	
Lord's Supper, Article relating to the more fre-		of, . . .	565
quent celebration of the, 1638, . . .	25	Middlebie, Commission for visiting the Presby-	
Lord's Supper, Act anent the more frequent ce-		tery of, . . .	299
lebration of the, 1751, . . .	705	Middlebie, Act disjoining certain parishes of the	
Lord's Supper, Clause respecting the admini-		Presbytery of, . . .	671
stration of that ordinance in the Act 1645,		Ministerial Communion, Act of 1799 regarding,	868
approving the Directory for Public Worship,		Ministerial Communion, Act of 1799 on this	
Lord's Supper not to be administered in private,	226	subject rescinded, 1842, . . .	1125
Lord's Supper, recommendation anent the more		Ministerial Freedom, Act concerning, 1734, .	630
frequent administration of the, . . .	311	Ministerial Visitation, anent, . . .	395
Lord's Supper, strict trial to be taken of those		Ministerial Visitation of Families, Overtures re-	
who are admitted to the, . . .	394	garding, . . .	399
Lord's Supper, recommendation concerning the		Ministerial Visitation of Families, directions re-	
administration of the, . . .	451	garding, . . .	426
Lord's Supper, Act appointing the more fre-		Ministers, Act anent the calling of, . . .	1044
quent celebration of the Sacrament of the, .	471	Ministers, Act against petitions to the Privy	
Lord's Supper, concerning the more frequent ce-		Council in their name without their knowledge	
lebration of the, . . .	568	and consent, . . .	64
Lord's Table, concerning the admission of per-		Ministers, Act for censuring those who speak	
sons to the, . . .	589	not to the corruptions of the time, 1648, .	188

	PAGE		PAGE
Ministers, Act for regulating the transportation of,	236	Ministers recommended to preach on the principles of the Reformation and Revolution, . .	698
Ministers admitted to parishes to be members of Presbyteries and Synods in whose bounds the parish lies,	719	Ministers, respect to be had to the character of those Persons who vote in the Election of, . .	697
Ministers, against slandering of,	71	Ministers' Stipends, Act and Recommendation anent,	313
Ministers already ordained, Questions to be put to them when admitted to a parish,	456	Ministers, sentences passed against them from 1650, until the re-introduction of Prelacy, declared null and void,	230
Ministers and Preachers unqualified, Act of 1799 regarding,	868	Ministers seceding from the Church, Act concerning the, 1738,	646
Ministers and Probationers—their behaviour,	682	Ministers seceding from the Church, Act concerning the, 1739,	649
Ministers and Probationers to subscribe the Formula,	455	Ministers sent North, Act in favour of, 1700,	296
Ministers, anent receiving deposed,	38	Ministers to go for the supply of the North quarterly, appointment of,	264
Ministers, anent the calling of,	447	Ministers to study Popish Controversies more, and to deal wisely with the consciences of those who have fallen to Popery,	281
Ministers at their ordination, questions to be put to,	455	Ministers, transportation of,	61, 62, 63
Ministers are carefully to inform their people of the errors of the Church of Rome,	422	Ministers, transportation of,	327
Ministers and Probationers having the Irish language not to be settled in the Lowlands,	428	Ministers to the Army, Recommendation anent,	263
Ministers appointed to supply vacant churches to obey punctually,	260	Ministers, their deposition by the Committees approved,	38
Ministers appointed to supply the North, 1698,	275	Ministers, vagrant, Act anent the irregularities of,	254
Ministers, corruptions in the persons and lives of,	24	Ministers when transported, not to be tried again,	54
Ministers deposed for malignancy (when they are put into a capacity for admission to the ministry) not to be allowed to become ministers of congregations, the pastors whereof have been deposed for a similar cause,	200	Ministers who are deposed or suspended discharged from the exercise of the ministry, or meddling with the stipend,	190
Ministers deposed not to be reponed to their former places,	129	Ministers who have not obeyed their appointment to go North,	259
Ministers deposed not to be suddenly admitted to particular congregations,	168	Ministers who observe not the order of the Church, regarding fasts, thanksgivings, administration of the sacraments, &c., Act anent,	225
Ministers deposed or suspended, to be reported by Presbyteries to the General Assembly,	439	Ministers who acquiesce not in the sentence of Deposition, Act against,	29
Ministers, directory for election of,	212	Ministry, anent Intrants to the,	390
Ministers, entry and conversation of,	22	Ministry, corruptions in the office of the,	22
Ministers in burghs, steps to secure provision for,	198	Ministry, enormities and corruptions observed in the— In their lives—fruitless conversation, worldliness, slighting of family worship, tippling, minced oaths, &c. In their callings—corrupt entry into the ministry, silence in the public cause, idleness, want of zeal, lifelessness in preaching, &c.,	137, 138
Ministers in England, Letter from, 1641, 1642, 1643,	49, 66, 78	Ministry—none to be admitted to the office before reaching the age of 25, excepting where qualities are rare and singular,	25
Ministers of the Church of Scotland, Act against their removing out of the kingdom, 1690,	226	Ministry, Presbyteries to appoint some to direct the studies of young men coming forward to the,	142
Ministers bruiking their benefices, anent old,	46	Ministry, remedies for corruption in the, Presbyteries to see that vacants kirks are filled with godly men, and to be accurate in private trials and visitations of kirks— Ministers to humble themselves, to have a godly conversation, to commune among themselves, and to improve their ministry with diligence,	138, 139
Ministers making agreements with their heritors about stipends, Overture for an addition to the Act about,	738, 740	Ministry, recommendation anent Intrants to the, 1708,	429
Ministers not to attend the theatre,	729	Ministry, trial and admission of Expectants to the,	161
Ministers not to be transported from the Highlands excepting upon great and weighty reasons,	584	Missionary Ministers not to be elected as Commissioners to the Assembly,	716
Ministers not to make agreements with their heritors about stipend,	736	Missions, Home, Act regarding,	1129
Ministers not to preach in vacant churches without the bounds of their own Presbytery, unless invited by the Presbytery within whose bounds they lie, or by some neighbouring minister,	457	Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1835,	1044
Ministers haunting with excommunicated persons, Act against,	88	Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1836,	1058
Ministers obliged to reside in their parishes,	22		
Ministers, Overture anent processes against,	1143		
Ministers, Overture anent the calling of, 1834,	1037		
Ministers, Presbyteries to proceed circumspectly in processes against,	241		
Ministers publishing of books, &c., anent,	400		
Ministers, qualifications of Persons claiming to vote in the calling of,	695		
Ministers, Recommendation to them in regard to their preaching,	636		
Ministers recommended to preach Catechetical Doctrine,	252		

	PAGE		PAGE
Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1837,	1069	North, anent the planting of the,	265
Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1838,	1080	North, appointment of Ministers to go to the,	264
Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1839,	1093	1697,	264
Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1840,	1101	North, approbation of Overtures for more	
Missions, India, Act in favour of, 1842,	1127	speedily and certainly supplying the, 1695,	218
Moderation of a Call agreeable to immemorial		North, Ministers appointed to supply the,	241
and constitutional practice,	811	North, some Ministers appointed to supply the,	275
Moderator in Provincial Assemblies, Act con-		1698,	276
cerning election of a, 1644,	111	North, some Probationers appointed to go, 1698,	276
Money, concerning the Church's Public,	564	Notice to the Reader, prefixed to the Acts of 1638,	1
Money granted by her Majesty for defraying the		Novations, anent,	48
public expenses of the Church, Act respecting		Novations, Overture transmitted anent, 1695,	218
the right application of the,	465	Novations, Synods and Presbyteries to be advised	
Money, the Church's Public, Act for the right		with before they are determined in,	42
management of the, 1719,	529		
Montrose, Presbytery of Brechin recommended		OATH of Abjuration, Act concerning the,	473
for asserting their rights to examine all the		Oath of Abjuration, Address to the Queen con-	
Schools of,	958	cerning the,	476
Monumental Church, recommendation to pro-		Oath taken by the Sovereign to maintain the	
mote subscriptions for the, 1819,	972	Church of Scotland,	478
Moray, the Presbytery of Strathbogie united to		Oaths, Act against contrary,	63
the Synod of,	289	Oaths and Bonds imposed without the consent	
Mortifications, Act anent,	299	of the Church, Act and Declaration against,	170
Mortifications, anent,	394	Observation of Fasts, concerning the,	443
Mull, Act erecting the Presbytery of,	606	Observation of the Lord's Day, Act for the bet-	
Murdering of Children—the Act of Parliament		ter,	429
thereanent appointed to be read from the		Ordained Assistants, Interim Act and Overture	
pulpits,	748	concerning,	821
		Ordinances may be dispensed to strangers coming	
NATIONAL Education in Ireland, note respecting		from other Protestant Churches,	457
the discussion on the Overtures concerning,		Ordination, Act condemning the Book of,	9
1833,	1027	Ordination and Kirk Government, Act approv-	
National Fast, Act anent a, 1700,	290	ing the Propositions of the Westminster As-	
National Fast appointed, 1701,	305	sembly respecting,	121
National Fast, Act concerning a, 1706,	397	Ordination, Questions to be put to Ministers at	
National Fast, appointment of a, 1726,	581	their,	455
National Fast, Act appointing a, 1756,	725	Ordination without relation to a particular	
National Thanksgiving, Act concerning a,	424	charge, Presbyteries recommended to be cau-	
Nenthorn, Parish of, disjoined from the Presby-		tious in granting,	821
tery of Lauder, and annexed to the Presby-		Ordination of elders, Act of 1816, anent the,	952
tery of Kelso, 1776,	792	See <i>Elders</i> ,	
Netherlands, Assembly's Letters to the Kirks		Order in Council respecting Prayers for the	
in the,	108	Royal Family, note of discussion on the,	
New Churches, Overtures on, 1835,	1053	1820,	979
New Churches, titles of, 1842,	1128	Orkney, Caithness, and Zetland, joined in one	
Non-Communicants and profaners of the Sabbath		Synod, 1704,	321
to be proceeded against,	56	Orkney and Zetland Presbyteries joined to the	
Non-Residence, Act against,	22	Provincial of Caithness,	140
North, Act anent the deficient in supplying the,	270	Orkney, Act in favour of the Presbytery of,	
North, Act anent the supply of the,	299	1700,	293
North, Act anent the supply of the, 1701,	303	Orkney, anent the erection of another Presbytery	
North, Act approving of the proceedings of the		in,	403
Committee of 1694, for the,	251	Orkney, anent the Synod of,	ib.
North, Act approving Overtures for planting		Orkney, Commission to visit,	295
the,	271	Orkney, concerning the erection of the Synod	
North, Act approving Overtures for planting		of,	573
the, 1699,	283	Orkney, Synod of, to meet on the 3d Wednes-	
North, Act approving Overtures concerning		day of April,	1142
the planting of the, 1703,	322	Orphan Children of Soldiers, recommendation	
North, Act continuing supplies of preaching for		anent the,	766
the, 1696,	255	Orphans and Widows of Ministers, recommenda-	
North, Act declaring Appeals of Committee for		tion of a Fund for the maintenance of the,	520
1694 fallen from,	ib.	Orphans and Widows of Ministers—former	
North, Act for rendering effectual the supplies		recommendation concerning them revived,	631
for the,	300	1735,	
North, Act for rendering effectual the supplies		Orphans and Widows of Ministers—time for	
for the,	360	contributing to the Fund prolonged,	564
North, Act in favour of Ministers sent to the,		Orphans and Widows of Ministers, Act concern-	
1700,	296	ing the Fund for the provision of the, 1745,	680
North, Act nominating Ministers to go to the,		Overture anent the ordering of the Assembly's	
1696,	251	House approved,	46
North, anent Ministers who have not obeyed		Overtures and Acts of Assembly, concerning the	
their appointment to go,	259	method of passing,	296

	PAGE		PAGE
Overtures, &c., concerning the method of giving them in to the Assembly, . . .	393	6. Of the Synod's Proceedings in Processes, . . .	370
Overtures, Act anent Presbyteries neglecting to send up their opinion on, . . .	733	7. Of the Privy Censures of Presbyteries, . . .	372
Overtures, Act concerning Presbyteries neglecting to send up their opinion on, . . .	715, 718	8. Of the Closing of the Synod, . . .	373
Overtures, Act concerning the Larger, 1718, . . .	524	CHAPTER V.	
Overtures not to be brought into the Assembly the same day in which they were moved in the Committee, . . .	781	<i>Of the Proceedings and Methods in General Assemblies.</i>	
Overtures, the Larger, 1705, . . .	337	1. Of the Constitution and Opening of this Judicatory, . . .	373
CHAPTER I.		2. Of the Committees of the General Assembly, . . .	375
<i>General Directions.</i>		3. Of the Proceedings in the Committee of Overtures, . . .	ib.
1. Of the right Manner of Constituting of Church Judicatories, . . .	338	4. Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Bills, References, and Appeals, . . .	376
2. Of the Moderator of a Church Judicatory, . . .	ib.	5. Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Synod Books, and the Commission of former Assemblies, . . .	377
3. Of Clerks to Church Judicatories, and their Registers, . . .	339	6. Of the General Assembly's Methods of Proceedings, . . .	ib.
4. Of Proceedings in all Church Judicatories, and the Members' Behaviour therein, . . .	340	7. Of the Commissions appointed by General Assemblies, . . .	380
5. Of the Closing of all Church Judicatories, . . .	341	8. Of the Closing of the General Assembly, . . .	381
CHAPTER II.		Overtures, reference concerning the Larger, 1710, . . .	449
<i>Of the Proceedings and Methods of Kirk-Sessions.</i>		Overtures respecting a Commission of the Assembly approved of, . . .	239
1. Of the Constitution of this Judicatory, . . .	342	Overtures transmitted by the Assembly, Overture intended to remedy the delay of Presbyteries in sending up their opinions on, 1761, . . .	746
2. Of the Election and Constituting of Elders and Deacons, . . .	ib.	PAISLEY, disjunction of certain parishes from the Presbytery of, . . .	1035
3. Anent Marriage, . . .	343	Papists, Acts renewed against, . . .	39
4. Of the Admission of Infants to Baptism, . . .	ib.	Papists' names and number to be taken up, . . .	25
5. Of Admission to the Lord's Table, and debarring from it, . . .	ib.	Papists' names to be given in to the Privy Council, 1695, . . .	247
6. Of proceeding with Drunkards, Swearers, Profaners of the Sabbath, and such like Scandalous Persons, . . .	344	Papists' names to be sent to the Privy Council, . . .	334
7. Of Processes for Uncleaness, Fornication, and Adultery, . . .	ib.	Papists' names to be sent to his Majesty's Advocate, 1715, . . .	506
8. Of Processes which natively begin at the Kirk-Session, but are not to be brought to a final determination by them, . . .	347	Papists, Overtures anent, . . .	56
9. Of the Privy Censures in the Sessions, . . .	ib.	Papists, Overtures anent the education of the children of, . . .	ib.
CHAPTER III.		Papists, Protestants not to marry with, . . .	334
<i>Of the Proceedings and Methods in Presbyteries.</i>		Papists, recommendation to Presbyteries anent, 1690, . . .	226
1. Of the Constitution of this Judicatory, . . .	348	Papists, their children and excommunicated persons, Presbyteries enjoined to observe the Overtures concerning, . . .	
2. Of Licensing Probationers or Preachers, . . .	ib.	Presbyteries to give in lists of Papists to General Assembly, and to require of those who have been, or are still Papists, that they bring home such of their children as are in foreign countries; Parents, before they send their children abroad, to acquaint the Presbytery of the bounds, and such as do not comply to be processed; Presbyteries to inquire whether pedagogues remain steadfast in the true religion. The names of all excommunicated persons to be given in annually to the Assembly, &c., . . .	195
3. Of Vacant Congregations, and Planting thereof, . . .	350	Paraphrase of the Psalms brought from England, Act for revising the, . . .	159
4. Of the Ordination of a Minister, . . .	352	Paraphrases, Act anent the, . . .	681
5. Of Transportations in general, and the Grounds and Reasons thereof, . . .	355	Parents not to send their children abroad before acquainting their Presbytery, . . .	141
6. Of Parochial Visitations by the Presbytery, . . .	358	Parish Churches, Act against such as withdraw themselves from their own, . . .	157
7. Of Censuring of Ministers, . . .	361	Parish Churches, Act discharging Presbyteries to consent to the suppressing of, 1740, . . .	655
8. Of Appeals from a Kirk-Session to the Presbytery, . . .	362	Parishes,—their disjunction or annexation from one Presbytery to another, not to be determined by Synods without authority from the Assembly, . . .	681
9. Of References made by the Kirk-Session to the Presbytery, . . .	363		
10. Of Censuring such Scandals which are so gross, that the Kirk-Session does not absolve from, as of Adultery, &c., . . .	364		
11. Of a Process in order to the highest Censure of Excommunication, . . .	ib.		
12. Of Presbyterial Exercises, . . .	366		
13. Of Privy Censures in the Presbyteries, . . .	ib.		
CHAPTER IV.			
<i>Of the Proceedings and Method in Provincial Synods.</i>			
1. Of the Constitution and Opening of this Judicatory, . . .	367		
2. Of the Committees of Synods, . . .	368		
3. Of Proceedings of Committees for Overtures, . . .	369		
4. Of the Proceedings of the Committees for Bills, References, and Appeals, . . .	ib.		
5. Of the Proceedings of the Committees for the Examination of the Presbytery Books or Registers, . . .	370		

	PAGE		PAGE
Parishes, Overture anent the annexation and suppression of,	84	Penny Bridals, recommendation concerning, . .	395
Parliament of England, Assembly's Letter to the,	144	Penny Bridals, Act for restraining Abuses at, .	129
Parliament of England,—Declaration of the Lords and Commons to the General Assembly, 1643,	77	Penny Weddings, recommendation against Abuses at,	531
Parliament, Petition to the, 1645,	118	People, Warning and Admonition to the, 1798, .	1158
Parliament, Petition to, respecting the Catholic claims,	933	Perjuries at the Custom-houses in matters of Trade, Act concerning,	530
Parliament, Act, 1661, c. 18, of, for the due observance of the Sabbath,	1155	Perjuries in Custom-houses, Act against, . .	641
Parliamentary Church, districts erected into parishes, <i>quoad sacra</i> ,	1024	Perth abjured, the Five Articles of,	18
Parliament,—Assembly's supplication to them, anent Ministers' stipends and tithes, 1649, .	203	Perth, 1618, Reasons for annulling the pretended Assembly, holden at,	8
Parliament, Act, 1672, c. 22; 1693, c. 40; 1695, c. 13, of, against Profaneness,	1155	Perth and Stirling, Act appointing the places of meeting of the, 1743,	672
Parliament of England,—Propositions given by their Commissioners to a committee to be presented to the Assembly, 1643,	76	Petition to High Court of Parliament, respecting the Irish Invasion,	118
Parliament of England, Assembly's Answer to the, 1642,	58	Petitioners for charity, to produce testimonials as to their life and conversation,	443
Parliament of England,—the Assembly's Answer to their Declaration, 1643,	89	Plantation of Kirks, Act for pressing and furthering the,	160
Parochial Collections throughout the Church, Act for, 1842,	1127	Planting vacant Churches, especially <i>tanquam jure devolute</i> , Overtures concerning the, 1720,	539
Parochial Registers,—the different kinds recommended to be kept,	953	Pluralities, discussion on, 1816,	950
Parochial Schools, Presbyteries to see to the settlement of,	699	Pluralities, Act anent, 1817,	959
Parochial Schools to be erected where not already planted, 1758,	733	Pluralities, note respecting the discussion on, 1825,	991
Parochial Schoolmasters, Declaration in favour of an increase of their salary, 1802,	891	Pluralities, note respecting the discussion on, 1826,	998
Pastoral Address, relative to a Fast, 1841,	1106	Pluralities, note respecting the discussion on, 1828,	1002
Pastoral Address, relative to a day of humiliation and prayer, 1842,	1145	Pluralities, Overture anent,	1145
Pastoral Address, 1835,	1054	Poland, &c., Letter to Scotsmen in,	163
Pastoral Address, 1838,	1090	Poor—the collection for them not to be taken during the time of Divine service,	198
Pastoral Admonition of 1799,	870	Poor to be maintained by their own Parishes, .	568
Pastoral Admonition on Sabbath Profanation, 1834,	1163	Popish and Prelatic Faction, call by the Parliament of England to unite against the, . .	81
Pastoral Admonition on the subject of Sabbath Sanctification, note respecting the, 1841, .	1042	Popish Schools and Colleges without the kingdom, Presbyteries to inquire whether any children have been sent to,	141
Pastoral Letter on Family Worship, 1836,	1064	Popery, Address to the Queen on the Growth of, 1714,	491
Patronage, Address of the Commission of 1711, concerning,	470	Popery, Address to the King on the Growth of, 1722,	546
Patronage, Address of the Assembly's Commissioners to his Majesty on the grievance of,	634	Popery, Address to the King in regard to the Growth of, 1727,	593
Patronage, directions given to the Commission of Assembly, in regard to the grievance of, 1736,	640	Popery, Act against, 1704,	334
Patronage declared to be a grievance, 1842,	1127	Popery, Act against,	281
Patronage, note respecting the discussion on the Overtures anent, 1833,	1028	Popery, anent the repressing of,	25
Patronage, Memorial sent to Members of Parliament by the Commission of 1714, respecting the grievance of,	502	Popery, anent reception of converts from, 1703, .	323
Patronage, notice of the discussion in 1784, respecting the repeal of the law of,	820	Popery, Act for preventing the Growth of, 1719, .	526
Patronage, Representation and Address of the Commission of 1711 thereanent, approved of,	467	Popery, Act for the better execution of former Acts against, 1714,	490
Patronages, Parliament commended by the Assembly for abolition of,	203	Popery, Act for suppressing and preventing the Growth thereof, 1707,	401
Peace, Address on the, 1783,	817	Popery and Profanity, Act against,	505
Peace, Address to the King on the, 1749,	700	Popery, Act for suppressing of,	517
Pecunial pains against excommunicated persons, Act recommending the enforcement of,	160	Popery, Act for preventing the Growth of, 1747, .	694
Pedagogues, Act anent,	294	Popery, Act regulating the reception of converts from,	297
Penalties for restraining vice, ordinance for up-lifting,	110	Popery, Ministers to be careful to inform their people of the abominable errors of,	422
Penny Bridals, Act against,	311	Popery, Resolution anent, 1779,	801
		Popery, scandalous persons who embrace, . .	328
		Popery, steps to prevent the Growth of,	538
		Prayer, Assembly's appointment of a Diet for, 1690,	223
		Prayer, Diet for, 1694,	235
		Prayer, Diets for, 1695,	246
		Prayer enjoined for the Princess of Wales, as well as the other members of the Royal Family, 1795,	849
		Prayer for the Royal Family, 1736,	634

	PAGE		PAGE
Prayers for the Royal Family, note regarding the discussion on the Order in Council respecting, 1820,	979	Presbyteries instructed to have a Copy of the Acts of Assembly,	30
Prayers, Act relating to public,	72	Presbyteries may proceed to take all steps towards the settlement of a parish, notwithstanding an appeal, but may not complete it,	618
Preachers sent to the North to be punctually paid,	499	Presbyteries not obeying sentences of the Assembly, declared to be <i>ipso facto</i> sisted before the next General Assembly,	719
Preachers not to be elected as Commissioners to the Assembly,	716	Presbyteries neglecting to send up their opinion on Overtures, Act concerning,	715
Preaching, recommendation to Ministers and Probationers on the subject of,	636	Presbyteries, Overtures concerning,	540
Precentors, recommendation for maintenance of,	217	Presbyteries prohibited from taking young men on trials who have never studied at any University,	807
Prelates—Acts against the unlawful Oaths exacted by them of Intrants,	8	Presbyteries re-erected,	21
Prelates—such as receive licence or ordination from them declared censurable, 1701,	308	Presbyteries, Resolution about Overtures concerning,	543
Prelatical Preachers discharged from the exercise of Church Discipline,	505	Presbyteries, rule regarding their Representation in the General Assembly,	236
Presbyterial Libraries,	438	Presbyteries to consider matters referred to them, 1645,	135
Presbyterial Meetings ordered to be kept,	21	Presbyteries to correspond personally and by letter,	142
Presbyterial Visitations,	ib.	Presbyteries to keep a watchful eye over Students of Theology, and to be careful in regard to those whom they license to preach the Gospel,	390
Presbyterial Visitations recommended,	299	Presbyteries to keep separate Registers for inserting particulars relative to the Scheme for providing for Ministers' Widows, &c., 1744,	674
Presbyterial Visitations, anent,	395	Presbyteries to make annual trial of Parish Registers,	39
Presbytery Books, Synods enjoined to visit,	1097	Presbyteries to take notice of what is taught in Colleges,	457
Presbytery Elders to be chosen within two months after the meeting of Synod,	793	Presbyteries to transmit Annual Lists to the Trustees for the Widows' Fund, 1747,	693
Presbytery of Annan, erection of the,	671	Presbyteries to see to the Settlement of Parochial Schools,	699
Presbytery of Burraoe erected,	1009	Presentation, Act anent Settling Ministers in consequence of a,	719
Presbytery of Dunkeld, certain parishes disjoined from the,	1058	Presentations, anent Lists to his Majesty and other Patrons for,	54
Presbytery of Greenock erected,	1035	Presentations, Assembly's desires to his Majesty anent the Lists for,	86
Presbytery of Irvine, certain parishes disjoined from the,	ib.	Press, Act repressing the Licentiousness of the,	30
Presbytery of Isla and Jura, erection of the,	1058	Priests, anent Popish,	247
Presbytery of Jedburgh, the parish of Castleton disjoined from the,	671	Prince Albert, Address to his Royal Highness, 1840,	1099
Presbytery of Kintyre, certain parishes disjoined from the,	1058	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1811,	927
Presbytery of Langholm, erection of the,	671	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1812,	929
Presbytery of Lerwick erected,	1009	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1813,	932
Presbytery of Lewis erected,	664	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1814,	941
Presbytery of Lochmaben, certain parishes disjoined from the,	671	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1815,	946
Presbytery of Long Island erected,	567	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1816,	949
Presbytery of Long Island disjoined,	664	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1817,	957
Presbytery of Lorn, Act dividing the,	606	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1818,	964
Presbytery of Middlebie, certain parishes disjoined from the,	671	Prince Regent, Address to the, 1819,	969
Presbytery of Mull, Act dividing the,	606	Prince of Wales, Address to Queen Victoria, on the Birth of the, 1842,	1115
Presbytery of Paisley, certain parishes disjoined from the,	1035	Prince of Wales, Address to the King on the Marriage of the,	633
Presbytery of Uist erected,	664	Prince Regent's Letter, 1811,	924
Presbytery of Weem, erection of the,	1058	Prince Regent's Letter, 1814,	939
Presbytery Meetings to be more carefully observed,	64	Prince Regent's Letter, 1815,	944
Presbyterians separating from the Church, Act against some,	506	Prince Regent's Letter, 1817,	954
Presbyteries, Act approving the association of, 1690,	226	Prince Regent's Letter, 1818,	960
Presbyteries, anent Commissions from,	773	Prince Regent's Letter, 1819,	966
Presbyteries are recommended to be cautious in granting ordination to such persons as have no fixed charge, nor a reasonable prospect of such provision as shall enable them to support the ministerial character,	821	Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1811,	925
Presbyteries discharged from using any Formula, in licensing Probationers or ordaining Ministers, but such as is approved by the General Assembly,	519	Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1814,	940
Presbyteries in General Assembly, Act concerning the representation of,	465	Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1815,	945
Presbyteries in the Northern and Western Islands may elect their Commissioners to the Assembly at any time before the 1st of May,	1081	Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1817,	956
		Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1818,	962
		Prince Regent's Letter, Answer to the, 1819,	967
		Princess Charlotte of Wales, Address to the Prince Regent, on occasion of the Death of the,	964

	PAGE		PAGE
Princess-Royal, Address to the King, on the Marriage of the, 1734,	627	Proceeding in Ecclesiastical Judicatories, Act anent Overtures concerning the method of, 258,	272
Princess-Royal, Address to Queen Victoria, on the Birth of the, 1841,	1104	Proceedings of Assembly, 1645, approved,	139
Princess of Wales, Mother of George III., Address to the, on the King's Marriage, 1762,	750	Process, anent preparing a Form of,	336
Printed Acts of Assembly, Sessions to have the,	128	Process, Act anent the Form of, 1706,	393
Printing Commissions, Act anent,	910	Process, Act approving the Form of,	403
Printing of Ecclesiastical Processes discharged, where there is no allowance,	297	Process, Act on the Form of, 1835,	1049
Printing of Papers in Processes, Act concerning the,	588	Process, Overture on the Form of (trial of causes,) 1835,	1049
Printing of Proceedings of the Kirk, &c., not allowed, without Warrant subscribed by the Clerk of Assembly,	30	Processes, Ecclesiastical, no part of them to be printed without allowance,	297
Printing of the Acts of Assembly, anent the,	39	Processes, anent the giving in of,	237
Privy Censures, Presbyteries recommended to set up,	243	Processes against Ministers, Overture anent,	1143
Privy Council, the Lords of his Majesty's—the Assembly's desires to them, respecting unity in religion, &c.,	64	Processes against Ministers, Presbyteries to proceed circumspectly in,	241
Privy Council, Names of Papists to be sent to the,	334	Proclamation of Banns, Act anent,	279
Probationers, Act for Enrolling the Names of all, 1697,	257	Proclamation of Banns, anent,	26
Probationers, Act concerning the Trial and Licensing of,	453	Proclamation, Act concerning James Graham's, 1646,	141
Probationers and Ministers to Subscribe the Formula,	455	Procurators for parties at the bar, Lawyers who are Member of Assembly not to appear as, 705, 818	
Probationers, Act for further regulating the Trials of, 1714,	488	Profanation of the Sabbath, anent the, 25, 38, 56, 72, 79, 141, 193, 226, 387, 429, 559, 988, 1154	
Probationers, Act concerning the Licensing of, 1727,	594	Profanation of the Sabbath, President Blair's opinion as to the,	988
Probationers, Act and Overture about the manner of Licensing, 1742 and 1743,	665, 671	Profanation of the Lord's Day, Admonition and Information respecting the,	1153
Probationers, Act and Overture about Processes against,	688	Profaneness, Act of Parliament, 1672, 1693, 1695, and 1701, against,	1157
Probationers, Act respecting the Licensing of, 1813,	934	Profaneness, Act against,	261
Probationers and Students, Act for better observation of the Acts of Assembly regarding,	641	Profaneness, Act for the better execution of the Laws against,	487
Probationers, anent Testimonials of,	250	Profaneness, Act against, 1694,	241
Probationers, anent the Licensing of, 1754,	719	Profaneness, Act and Recommendation concerning,	395
Probationers appointed to go to the North, 1693,	276	Profaneness, Act against,	329
Probationers before they be licensed, questions to be put to,	456	Profaneness, Act against,	280
Probationers, concerning the Licensing of, 1708,	429	Profaneness, Act against, 1722,	559
Probationers silenced, Presbyteries to report to Assembly concerning,	439	Profaneness, Act against, 1746,	688
Probationers, Act, 1782, respecting the Licensing of,	811	Profaneness, Laws against,—Abbreviate of them to be reprinted, 1746,	687
Probationers, Lists of them to be Annually presented to the Assembly,	637	Profanity, King's Proclamation against, to be read from the pulpits,	505
Probationers, Overture about the Licensing of, 1741,	663	Professions in Schools, Act for the encouragement of scholars to,	129
Probationers, Overture about Processes against,	696	Professor of Theology, Act anent the appointment and ordination of, 1838,	1082
Probationers, Overture anent the form of a Licence to,	569	Professors to be the ablest men, and best affected to the Reformation,	47
Probationers, Overture respecting the Licensing of,	772	Professors of Divinity, Act anent their election to be Commissioners to Assemblies by Presbyteries,	74
Probationers prohibited from going to offer themselves for Ordinations, unless they carry testimonials with them,	456	Professors of Divinity to endeavour to make their Students well acquainted with the true method of preaching the Gospel,	637
Probationers, Regulations respecting,	238	Professors in Universities to send a copy of their dictates to the General Assembly,	142
Probationers to subscribe the Confession of Faith,	225	Professorship of Biblical Criticism, anent the establishment and endowment of a,	1095
Probationers, their behaviour,	682	Promiscuous dancing, Act against,	311
Procedure in Ecclesiastical Judicatories, concerning the revising the Overtures about the method of,	419	Propositions from English Commissioners relative to further reformation of religion, 1643,	80
Procedure in the case of scandalous persons, Act concerning, 1705,	383	Propositions, Act concerning the Hundred and Eleven,	164
		Protest by Ebenezer Erskine and others, 1733,	625
		Protestant line, Act recommending Prayers for the Succession in the,	450
		Protestants warned against marrying with Papists,	335
		Provincial Assemblies in 1638, order of the, 27, 28	
		Psalmody, Overture anent the,	690, 694, 697, 701, 704
		Psalmody, Overture about the,	706

	PAGE		PAGE
Psalms, Act anent the Irish,	244	Queen's Letter, 1712,	460
Psalms, Act for revising the Paraphrase of the,	159	Queen's Letter, 1713,	478
Psalms, anent the new Paraphrase of the,	217	Queen's Letter, 1714,	485
Psalms, recommendation concerning the singing of the,	687	Queen's Letter, 1838,	1076
Psalms, revising of the Paraphrase of the,	194	Queen's Letter, 1842,	1113
Psalm Tunes, recommendation for teaching the common,	483	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1703,	317
Public Accounts, concerning, 1723,	564	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1704,	326
Public Libraries in Presbyteries, Act for erecting,	438	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1705,	382
Public Money, Acts respecting the,	745	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1708,	421
Public Money, by order of Assembly, 1763—all application for it to be transmitted to the Agent for the Church before the 1st of May yearly,	756	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1710,	441
Public Worship, Act respecting those who withdraw themselves from,	157	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1712,	460
Public Worship, uniformity in. See Uniformity for this Kirk,	120	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1713,	479
Purging of Scandals, Overture about the manner of, 1741,	663	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1714,	486
Purity of Doctrine, Act for preserving of the,	446	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1838,	1076
Purity of Doctrine, Committee for preserving, (Professor Simson's case,) 500,	503	Queen's Letter, Answer to the, 1842,	1114
Purity of Doctrine, continuance of the Committee for, (Professor Simson's case,) 511	511	Questions to be put to Ministers at their ordination,	455
Purity of Doctrine, Act for maintaining, (Professor Simson's case,) 518	518	Questions to be put to Ministers who have been already ordained, when they are admitted to a parish,	ib.
Purity of Doctrine, Act and Commission for preserving Purity of Doctrine, (Professor Simson's case,) 591	591	Questions to be put to Probationers before they be licensed,	454
Purity of Doctrine, Act and Recommendation for preserving, (Professor Campbell's case,) 638	638	Quoad Sacra Churches,	1024
QUAKERS, means to be taken for reclaiming the, 248	248	Quoad Sacra Parishes, the Church resolved, at all hazards, to adhere to the principle of the Declaratory Enactment of 1834, respecting the Ministers of, 1842,	1141
Queen, Act recommending Prayers for the, 1711,	450	READING of the Scriptures, recommendation respecting the public,	931
Queen Adelaide—Address to her Majesty, on the King's Accession to the Throne,	1015	Reasons for the Fast, 1642,	72
Queen Charlotte—Address to her Majesty, on her Marriage, 1762,	749	Reasons of Dissent from the judgments of Inferior Judicatories to be kept in <i>retentis</i>, and not entered in the Register,	612
Queen Charlotte—Address to her Majesty, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, 1763,	755	Rebellion, Address to the King on the Suppression of the, 1716,	510
Queen Charlotte—Address to her Majesty, on the King's Recovery from Sickness, 1769,	831	Rebellion, Processes to be carried on against those concerned in the, 1746,	687
Queen Charlotte—Address to the Prince Regent, on the Death of, 1818,	969	Rebels in the North and South, Act against the, 1644,	99
Queen Dowager—Address to her Majesty, on the Death of William IV., 1079	1079	Records, Synod, Act recommending the signing of,	273
Queen, Address by the Commission of 1702 to the,	315	References, &c.—concerning the method of giving them in to the Assembly,	393
Queen, Address to the, 1703,	320	References, Overtures anent,	73
Queen, Address to the, 1707,	419	Reformation of Religion, Propositions by English Commissioners relative to,	80
Queen, Address to the, 1708,	423	Reformation, recommendation to Ministers to preach on the principles of the,	698
Queen, Address to the, on her Recovery from Indisposition, 1714,	487	Register of the Assembly, 1572 to 1573, Act approving an old,	37
Queen, Address to the, on the Growth of Popery, 1714,	491	Registers, Act approving the,	2
Queen, Address to the, on her Accession to the Throne, 1836,	1077	Registers, Act for trying the,	ib.
Queen, Address to the, on her Marriage, 1840,	1098	Registers produced before the Assembly, reasons proving the authenticity of the,	3
Queen, Address to the, on the Birth of the Princess-Royal, 1841,	1104	Registers of Assembly, concerning the preservation of the,	473
Queen, Address to the, on the Birth of the Prince of Wales, 1842,	1115	Registers of Assemblies, &c., Act for supplying and preserving the,	323
Queen, Address to the, on the subject of the Claim of Rights, 1842,	1141	Registers of Burial to be kept,	688
Queen's Letter, 1703,	316	Registers of the Church, Act anent the, 1704,	337
Queen's Letter, 1704,	325	Registers of Church Judicatories, Act anent the revising of the,	292
Queen's Letter, 1705,	382	Registers of Provincial Assemblies, Act concerning,	136
Queen's Letter, 1710,	440	Registers to be correctly written, and no blottings nor interlinings to be allowed,	394
		Registers to be kept by parishes, the different kinds of,	953
		Regulations anent the Calling of Ministers, Overture with, 1836,	1060
		Regulations anent the Calling of Ministers, Overture with, 1837,	1069

	PAGE		PAGE
Regulations anent the Calling of Ministers, Overture with, 1838,	1086	Sacrament of the Supper to be more frequently celebrated,	471
Regulations anent the Calling of Ministers, Overture with, 1842,	1128	Sacraments, a Catechism, containing errors in the number of the,	171
Regulations anent the Calling of Ministers, note of the discussion respecting the re-transmission of the Overture with, 1840,	1103	Sacraments, Act anent those ministers who administer them privately,	225
Regulations anent the Veto Act, note of the discussion respecting the re-transmission of the Overture with, 1839,	1097	Sacraments, anent the private administration of the,	226
Remedies for Corruptions in the Ministry. See <i>Ministry</i> ,	138	Sacred poesy, Act and Overture concerning some pieces of, 1745,	681
Remedies for the grievous common Sins of the Land, 1648. See <i>Sins of the Land</i> ,	192	Sailing and travelling on the Sabbath, recommendation to Presbyteries regarding unnecessary,	226
Remonstrance from the Assembly to the King, 1645,	132	St Andrews, the meeting of the pretended Assembly at, 1617,	7
Reponing Mr Robert Dalrymple, Act,	792	Salt-pans—reference from the Presbytery of Kirkaldy regarding their going on Sabbath,	72
Reponing of deposed Ministers, Act anent the,	79	Salvation, three Acts of Assembly for promoting the knowledge of the grounds of, 1652,	1151
Representation and Petition by twelve Ministers of the Church, anent the "Marrow," considered by the Assembly of 1722,	548	Scandalous and contumacious persons, Act anent,	296
Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly, rule regarding the,	236	Scandalous persons, Sessions and Presbyteries to be careful to censure all, 1652,	1153
Representative Elders to be <i>bona fide</i> Acting Elders,	1097	Scandalous persons, turning Popish, Act anent,	328
Representatives from Presbyteries, Act relative to the number of, 1839,	1093	Scandalous persons, method of procedure in the case of,	383
Representatives from Presbyteries, declaratory Act relative to the number of, 1835,	1052	Scandals, Overture anent the prescription of, 1642,	73
Representatives of Presbyteries in the General Assembly—proportion to be observed,	465	Scandals, Presbyteries to advise on some common order as to the trial thereof,	64
Rescinding of Act, 1799, relative to Ministerial Communion, 1842,	1125	Scandals, anent the purging of them in the case of soldiers,	442
Rescissory, recommendation concerning Acts. See <i>Acts Rescissory</i> ,	637	Scandals, Overture about the manner of purging of,	663
Resolution as to Patronage, 1842,	1126	Scarcity of provisions,—acknowledgment of this visitation of Divine Providence, 1783,	818
Re-union with Seceders, 1839,	1094	Schemes of the Church, recommendation of collections in behalf of the, 1836,	1067
Revised and ratified in 1638, several former Acts,	21	Schemes of the Church, Act recommending collections for the, 1837,	1074
Revolution of 1688, Address to the King respecting the Commemoration of the,	827	Schemes of the Church, Act recommending collections for, 1838,	1081
Revolution of 1688, National Thanksgiving in Commemoration of the,	829	Schemes of the Church, Act recommending collections for the, 1839,	1096
Revolution, recommendation to Ministers to preach on the principles of the,	698	Schemes of the Church, Act recommending collections for the, 1840,	1102
Richardson, Mr Andrew, to be admitted Minister of Inverkeithing,	707	Schemes of the Church, Act recommending collections for the, 1841,	1111
Roll, doors of Assembly-House to be kept shut during the calling of the,	832	Schism, Act against,	47
Roman Catholics, Petition to Parliament respecting the political privileges of,	933	Schism and Disorders, Act against,	332
Ross, anent the meeting of the Synod of, 1761,	745	Schism and Disorders in the Church, anent the suppressing of,	424
Ross, Synod of, to meet once in the year, 1759,	735	Schools and Colleges, advancement of learning in. See <i>Learning</i> ,	117
Ross, Sutherland, and Caithness, anent the supply of,	250	Schools, articles passed in 1642, respecting the provision of, viz.:— Every parish to have a school, and considerable places to have a grammar school; Ministers to give an account to the Presbyteries respecting these schools; Presbyteries to report to Synods, and Synods to the General Assembly, that schools are planted; Commissioners to report to next Assembly what has been done in the Highlands, Islands, and Borders, where there has been most neglect; Parliament to be supplicated to make provision for schools, and to allot a maintenance for Highland and Border youths to be bred in Universities; Visitation of schools,	63
Royal Bounty, Act concerning the management of the, 1730,	610	Schools, Act concerning, 1705,	384
Royal Bounty, the,	65	Schools, anent the settlement and provision of,	526
Royal Family, Act about praying for the, 1736,	634		
Ruling Elders—concerning Commissions,	569		
Ruling Elders, the duties and qualifications of,	588		
Ruling Elders, none to be ordained under 21 years of age, 1776,	793		
SABBATH, against the going of Mills, &c. on, 29, 38,			
Sabbath, anent the Profanation of the, 25, 38, 56, 72, 79, 141, 193, 226, 387, 429, 559, 988, 1154,	193		
Sabbath-breaking by Carriers,	988		
Sabbath, President Blair's opinion as to the,	1042		
Sabbath Sanctification, Admonition on the subject of,	163		
Sabbath, scholars in Universities to be taken account of on the,			

	PAGE		PAGE
Schools, Bible to be read as a regular exercise in,	847	Scripture Songs—the use of them recommended,	392
Schools, Catechism to be committed to memory in,	ib.	Scriptures, anent Expounding of the,	327
Schools for the Highlands,	282	Scriptures, New Edition of the Gaelic Translation of the, 1816,	950
Schools in the Highlands, anent the Erection of,	227	Scriptures, Recommendation respecting the Public reading of the,	931
Schools in the Highlands, Act anent Erecting,	330	Seaforth, Earl of—Ordinance for his Excommunication,	136
Schools in Landward Parishes, Presbyteries directed to Settle,	22	Seceders from the Church, Act concerning the, 1738,	646
Schools in the Lowlands, recommendation anent Erecting,	282	Seceders from the Church, Act concerning the, 1739,	649
Schools, injunction respecting the Visitation of,	923	Seceders from the Church, Act Deposing the, 1740,	653
Schools, Presbyteries' right to examine all,	958	Seceders, Act anent Re-union with, 1839,	1094
Schools, Order anent the Examination of, 1819,	971	Secret Worship, Directions of Assembly regarding, 1647,	154
Schools, Parochial, Presbyteries enjoined to see to the Erection of these where they are not already planted,	733	Separation, Act for Searching Books tending to,	75
Schools—Presbyteries to use all suitable endeavours to get a School erected in every Parish,	399	Separate Registers, Act appointing Presbyteries to keep,	674
Schools, Presbyteries to hold Visitations for the purpose of Settling Parochial,	699	Separate Registers, anent the method of keeping the, 1757,	728
Schools, Recommendation, Injunction, and Queries, respecting, 1813,	937	Sermon preached by Mr Gabriel Wilson of Maxton, before the Synod of Merse and Teviotdale, concerning the,	565
Schools, Report of Committee appointed to class Returns from Presbyteries respecting the Examination of, 1820,	976	Servants, care to be taken that they bring with them testimonials when they remove from one parish to another,	241
Schools, Report of Examination of, 1823,	987	Service-Book, Act condemning the,	9
Schools, Report as to, 1825,	992	Session, Court of, Protest anent the encroachments of the,	1130
Schools, Report as to, 1826,	995	Sessions to have the printed Acts of Assembly, Settlement of Parishes, instruction to the Commission respecting the,	672
Schools, Report concerning, 1827,	1001	Shields, Mr Alexander, &c., Letter from the Assembly to,	291
Schools, Report concerning, 1828,	1003	Ships not to be loosed on the Lord's Day,	141
Schools, Report and Injunction concerning, 1829,	1006	Shorter Catechism approved of,	171
Schools, Report concerning, 1830,	1010	Simson, case of Mr John,	500, 503, 511, 518, 591, 603, 607
Schools, Report concerning, 1831,	1016	Simoniack practices, Act against,	716
Schools, Report concerning, 1832,	1021	Simoniack practices, Act against, 1759,	737
Schools, Report concerning, 1833,	1025	Simony, Overture for the more effectual preventing of, 1818,	965
Schools, Report concerning, 1834,	1040	Singing, Act concerning the teaching of,	483
Schools, Sunday, Report concerning,	873	Singing of Psalms in Private Families recommended,	687
Schools—their Visitation recommended, 1647,	163	Sins of the Land, approbation of Overtures for the remedies of the, 1648 :—	
Schools, Visitation of,	21	Civil remedies—Acts of Parliament for restraining vice to be put in execution.	
Scholars in Universities to be taken account of on the Sabbath,	163	Domestic remedies—Care to be taken in the receiving of servants, every family to have a Bible and Psalm-book, the Worship of God to be practised, &c.	
Scholars to be encouraged to Professions in Schools,	128	General Ecclesiastical remedies—Suspension from the Sacraments, impartial proceedings against men of all quality, &c.	
Schoolmaster of Bothwell, Recommendation by the Assembly to Subscribe towards the defraying the Expense in the Appeal in the cause relative to the,	881	Particular Ecclesiastical remedies—1. Against ignorance, Ministers to be diligent in Catechising, ignorant persons to be debarred from the Communion, &c.	
Schoolmasters, Act anent,	294	2. Against profaneness, various recommendations for the better exercise of discipline; persons removing from one parish to another to take testimonials with them; great care to be observed in the performance of private censures in Presbyteries and Synods; Elders to have bounds assigned to them, and to observe how the Sabbath is kept; Ministers not to resort to excommunicated persons, unless by permission of	
Schoolmasters, Injunction respecting, 880, 886,	890		
Schoolmasters, Order respecting, 1808,	914, 917		
Schoolmasters, Parochial—Declaration in favour of an increase of their Salary, 1802,	891		
Schoolmasters, recommendation for Maintenance of,	217		
Schoolmasters to Sing part of a Psalm daily with their Scholars,	483		
Schoolmasters—such as have taken their degrees at College to be preferred,	395		
Schoolmasters to Instruct the Youth in Singing the common Tunes,	687		
Scottish Lords at Oxford—Act concerning the Declaration Subscribed by them—Power to the Commission to proceed against them to Excommunication,	99		
Scriptural Songs, Act concerning the, 1707,	419		
Scriptural Songs, anent Revising Mr Z. Boyd's labours on the,	194		
Scriptural Songs, concerning the publishing of a Version of the,	430		
Scriptural Songs, recommendation to Mr Zachary Boyd anent the,	159		

	PAGE		PAGE
Presbytery; Session-books to be visited, &c.	192, 193, 194	Standing Orders adopted in 1834, regarding	
&c.,		Overtures, References, Appeals, &c.	1036
Skye, Presbytery of, to be joined to the Synod		Standing Orders of the Church in force in 1838,	
of Argyle,	56	all the,	1082
Skye, erection of the Presbytery of,	567	Standing Orders, 1832, Meetings of Committee	
Slandering of Ministers, Act against,	71	of Overtures, mode of reading the Answer to	
Slavery, Address to his Majesty on the Abolition		the King's Letter, hearing reports of Com-	
of, 1823,	986	mittees, separate days for Causes and Over-	
Smuggling, Act against the sinful practice of,		tures, appearance of parties, and rules for	
1744,	675	hearing them, &c.,	1020
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Standing Orders respecting Fees for presenting	
recommendation concerning the,	445	petitions, the lodging of printed papers, &c.	1144
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Standing Orders, 1835,—1. On motions and	
representation of their Committee with Act		votes; 2. On the printing of papers,	1051
of Assembly thereupon, 1712,	462	Stipend, deposed or suspended Ministers dis-	
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		charged from meddling with the,	190
recommendation for contributions and sub-		Stipends, Act and Recommendation anent,	313
scriptions towards the, 1713,	481	Stipends, anent,	394
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Stipends, anent the settling of,	203
recommendation in favour of the, 1714,	492	Stipends, concerning an application to Parlia-	
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		ment, for an augmentation to, 1750,	702
public collection recommended for the,	504	Stipends, Act against the dilapidation of, 1762,	750
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Stipends, Commission of 1792 instructed to ap-	
Act for furthering the pious design of the,	509	ply to the Legislature for an augmentation of	
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		parochial,	839
recommendation for the further encourage-		Stipends, vacant, recommendations that those	
ment of the, 1717,	514	who go to the North should be supplied out	
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		of the,	243
their representation, with Act thereupon,	527	Stranraer and Wigton, certain parishes annexed	
1719,	589	to the Presbytery of, 1699,	278
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Strathbogie, Presbytery of, disjoined from the	
Act and Recommendation concerning the,	589	Synod of Aberdeen, and annexed to Moray,	289
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,		Strangers coming from other Protestant Churches	
Act and Recommendation in favour of the,	600	to have the benefit of sealing ordinances,	457
1728,		Students, Act anent,	253
Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge		Students—course of University education to be	
approved for their zeal in the translation		observed by them previous to their entering	
and publication of the Scriptures in the Gaelic		the Divinity Hall,	862
Language, 1816,	950	Students of Divinity, young men to be examined	
Socinian errors, Act discharging the venting		by Presbyteries on Literature and Philosophy	
of,	329	before they are enrolled as,	1000
Solemn and Seasonable Warning to the Noble-		Students of Divinity, Overtures as to the course	
men, Barons, Gentlemen, Burghs, Ministers,		of study to be pursued by, 1823,	987
and Commons of Scotland, as also to the		Students of Divinity to give at least one year of	
Scottish Armies, respecting present dangers,	123	regular attendance at the Hall, 1826,	997
1645,		Students of Divinity, Overture respecting them	
Soldiers, recommendation anent the orphan		transmitted in 1767,	768
children of,	766	Students of Divinity prohibited going to foreign	
Soldiers under Scandals, concerning,	442	places that they may offer themselves for	
Soldiers under Scandals, advice concerning,		licence, unless they carry testimonials with	
Songs, concerning the Scriptural,	419	them,	456
Songs, Scripture, recommended to be used,	392	Students of Divinity to pass their private Trial	
Songs, Scriptural, concerning the publishing of		in the Presbytery where they are proposed,	
a version of the,	430	before they can get a transference to an-	
Special Commission to co-operate with certain		other Presbytery, 1713,	494
Presbyteries in reference to certain vacant pa-	1111	Students of Divinity, Act concerning, 1727,	594
rishes, 1841,		Students in Divinity, Act concerning the be-	
Special Commission appointed to co-operate		haviour of, 1735,	631
with the Presbytery of Strathbogie, in sup-		Students of Divinity, Act for enrolling the	
plying the parishes of the seven suspended		names of all, 1697,	257
Ministers with Divine ordinances, 1840,	1102	Students of Divinity to be annually examin-	
Special Commission with reference to the pre-		ed,	1073
sent difficulties of the Church, appointment		Students of Theology, recommendation concern-	
of a, 1842,	1142	ing,	390
Special objections to presentees, declaratory Act		Students having the Irish language to be pre-	
as to,	1145	ferred to Bursaries, 1715,	500
Standing Order anent the Visiting of Synod		Students having Irish to be examined upon their	
Books, 1841,	1111	knowledge of that language,	517
Standing Order as to dissents, 1842,	1125	Students having Irish, Act for the further en-	
Standing Order on the Forms of Commissions,		couragement of,	472
1841,	1110	Students, Lithuanian, Act for the maintenance	
Standing Order, proposed, anent the method of		of two,	516
taking the Vote,	1144	Students not resident within the bounds of the	

	PAGE		PAGE
Church to be examined before entering the Hall, 1835,	1052	Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, day of meeting altered, 1835,	1051
Students, Overture respecting their attendance on the Divinity Hall,	858	Synod Meetings to be more carefully observed,	64
Students passing trials, Act anent,	328	Synod of Orkney to meet on the third Wednesday of April,	1142
Students to take the Covenant at their first entry to College,	191	Synod of Perth and Stirling, Act appointing the places of meeting of the, 1743,	672
Students to be examined on the Catechetical Standards before enrolment in the Divinity Hall,	1073	Synod Records, recommendation anent subscribing the,	273
Students who have the Gaelic language in the Northern and Western Isles, Overture that an indulgence should be given to,	825	Synod Registers, Act concerning,	136
Subordination of Church Judicatories, Act for preserving the,	623	Synod of Ross, Act anent the meeting of the, 1759,	735
Sunday Schools, Report concerning,	873	Synod of Ross, anent the meetings of the, 1761,	745
Superior Judicatories, Overture from the Synod of Perth and Stirling against receiving extrajudicial papers into the proceedings of,	807	Synod of Shetland, Act appointing the,	1009
Superstitious days, Act for censuring the observers of,	128	Synod of Sutherland and Caithness, alteration of the day of the meeting of the, 1836,	1064
Supplication to the King's Commissioner, &c., anent the signing of the Covenant,	40	Synod of Ulster. See <i>Ulster</i> ,	950
Supplication of Assembly, 1638, to the King,	32, 33	Synods, Act concerning the Election of a Moderator in,	111
Supplication to the King by Assembly, 1642,	57	Synods, Act regulating their meetings, in consequence of the change of the Calendar,	715
Supplication of Assembly, 1648, to Committee of Estates,	187	Synods enjoined to visit Presbytery-Books,	1097
Supplication of Assembly, 1648, to the King,	198	Synods to inquire at Presbyteries about vacancies within their bounds,	736
Supplication to the King's Commissioner regarding the Book called "The Large Declaration,"	39	Synods prohibited to disjoin or annex Parishes from one Presbytery to another, without authority from the Assembly,	681
Supplication to the King by Assembly, 1639,	43	TEACHERS, vagrant, report concerning,	873
Suspended or deposed Ministers—Act discharging them from the Exercise of the Ministry, or meddling with the Stipend,	190	Testimonials of Probationers, Act anent,	250
Suspension of Mr John Hepburn,	255	Thanksgiving, Act concerning a national,	424
Sutherland and Caithness, alteration of the day of the meeting of the Synod of, 1836,	1064	Thanksgiving, appointment of a day of, 1746,	689
Sutherland, anent the supply of,	250	Thanksgiving in Commemoration of the Revolution of 1688,	829
Sweden, &c., Letter to Scotsmen in,	163	Thanksgivings, Act for the better observance of,	545
Synod of Angus, appointment of the meeting of the,	72	Theatre, Ministers of this Church not to attend the,	729
Synod of Angus and Mearns, discontinuance of the extraordinary correspondence with the,	522	Theological Faculties, the 111 Propositions referred to the,	165
Synod of Argyle to meet alternately at Lochgilphead and Inverary, on the first Wednesday of September,	1142	Theological Learning, Overture and recommendation respecting the promoting of,	892
Synod-books to be brought up to the Assembly every year,	53	Theology, Bursars of. See <i>Bursars</i> ,	119
Synod-books to be presented yearly to the Assembly,	313	Theology, Professors of, appointment and ordination of,	1082
Synod-books, directions to the visitors of,	480	Tithes, the Assembly request that Parliament will allow certain tithes to be affected with the burden of pious uses, 1649,	203
Synod-books, additional directions to the visitors of,	562	Titles of Dignity declared to be banished out of the Reformed Kirk,	26
Synod-books, recommendation and injunction concerning the sending up of, 1792,	839	Titles, Feudal, of New Churches, amendment of Standing Order of 1838 relative to, 1842,	1128
Synod-books ordered to be sent up to every Assembly, 1835,	1044	Titles of New Churches, order as to the, 1842,	ib.
Synod-books, standing order anent the visiting of, 1841,	1111	Toleration, Address of the Commission of 1711, concerning the,	467
Synod of Caithness, erection of the,	581	Toleration, Act approving the Representation and Address of the Commission of 1711, thereanent,	ib.
Synod Clerks ordered to send up their books, 1837,	1075	Toleration, Memorial sent by the Commission of 1714 to Members of Parliament respecting,	502
Synod of Fife to meet on the second Tuesday of October,	795	Tongue, erection of the Presbytery of,	581
Synod of Fife to meet on the second Wednesday of October, 1776,	792	Translations of Scripture, Act and Overture concerning the, 1745,	681
Synod of Galloway—their place of meeting changed from Wigton to Newton-Stewart, 1776,	793	Transportation of Ministers,	54
Synod of Glenelg erected,	567	Transportation of Ministers, Articles on this subject agreed upon by Assembly, 1642, viz. —Parties having interest must be cited; reasons why a town such as Edinburgh is to be preferred; Professorships, and towns where Colleges are, should be attended to; noblemen's residences should be regarded; those who desire a transportation should give reasons; Ministers having the Irish Language to be transported to the Highlands, when found in the Lowlands; no Minister to transact with any parish to be trans-	
Synod of Glenelg, day of meeting altered, 1835,	1051		
Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale, Act anent the meeting of the, 1759,	736		

	PAGE		PAGE
ported thereto, without a hearing of him and his parish before the Presbytery; planting of vacant Kirks not to be tied to any within a Presbytery; chief Burghs recommended to train up young men for the ministry, that transplantations may be in time prevented, 61, 62, 63		schools; care of scholars on Sabbath; their commissioners to be instructed with answers to Overtures; provision for bursars of Divinity,	163
Transportation of Ministers, Act for regulating the,	236	Universities recommended to condescend on the best system of teaching Grammar and Philosophy, 1648,	142
Transportation of Ministers, Act anent citations in cases of,	327	Universities—Professors to be provided, and fabrics upheld out of the rents of the prelaties, &c.,	46
Transportation of Ministers from the Highlands not to be allowed, excepting for great and weighty reasons,	584	Universities—Professors to send a copy of their dictates to the General Assembly,	142
Trial of expectants, anent the,	26	Universities—their Commissioners to obtain an Index of the Acts of Assembly,	31
Trial of expectants, anent,	48	Universities to hold mutual correspondence,	47
Trial of expectants, anent the order of,	54	University of Edinburgh, Act concerning the election of a representative from, 1723,	563
Trial and admission of expectants, innovation of former Acts for,	161	VACANCIES, Act anent protracted,	978
Trials, anent Students passing,	328	Vacancies, Synods to inquire at Presbyteries about,	736
Trials of Probationers, further regulations concerning, 1714,	488	Vacant Churches to be punctually supplied,	260
Trials, Act anent admitting expectants to, 1652,	1152	Vacant Churches without the bounds of their own Presbytery—ministers not to preach without invitation from neighbouring ministers, &c.	457
Trials, Presbyteries to be accurate in, 1652,	1153	Vacant Churches, Overtures concerning the planting of, 1711,	458
Uist, Act erecting the Presbytery of,	664	Vacant Churches, Overtures concerning the planting of, 1720,	539
Ulster, Synod of, deliverance of the Assembly, 1816, on the communication from the,	951	Vacant Churches, resolutions about the Overtures concerning the planting of,	543
Uncleanness,—persons guilty of this sin to satisfy in the parish whereof the woman was a parishioner when guilt was committed,	782	Vacant Churches, Act and Overture concerning the method of planting, 1731,	614
Uniformity in this Kirk, the observation of the Directory in some points of public worship, approbation of the opinion of the committee for keeping, viz., anent reading and expounding the Scriptures to the Lord's Day; where and when baptism is to be administered; rules to be observed in the administration of the Lord's Supper; the practice of ministers bowing in the pulpit to be discontinued,	120	Vacant Churches, Act anent the method of planting, 1732,	620
Uniformity of Kirk Government, &c., Assembly's desire for,	59, 65	Vacant Churches,—Act relative to the planting thereof, passed in 1732, declared to be no longer binding, 1734,	627
Union of Offices, Act anent the,	959	Vacant Churches, remit to Presbyteries concerning an Overture for planting of,	630
Union of Offices, notice of the discussion on this subject in 1816,	950	Vacant Churches, anent the method of planting,	779, 781
Union of Offices, note respecting the discussion on the Overtures anent, 1825,	994	Vacant Congregations, Act concerning intrusion of ministers into, 1736,	641
Union of Offices, note respecting the discussion on, 1826,	998	Vacant Parishes, qualifications of persons claiming to vote in the calling of ministers to,	695
Union of Offices, note respecting the discussion on, 1827,	1000	Vagrant unfixed ministers, Act anent irregularities of,	254
Union of Offices, Overture anent,	1146	Vagrant teachers, report concerning,	873
Unity and Peace of the Church, Act for maintaining the, 1713,	482	Veto Act, Act commonly called the,	1044
Unity in the Church, Act for restoring and preserving, 1714,	489	Veto Act, note of the discussion at the enacting of the, 1835,	ib.
Unity, recommendation to preserve, 1735,	632	Veto Act Regulations, Overture anent the, 1835,	1045
Universal Redemption, a Catechism condemned, containing errors on the point of,	171	Veto Act Regulations, note of discussion on transmitting the Overture anent the, 1835,	ib.
Universities and Colleges, Act concerning the inspection of,	457	Veto Act Regulations, 1836,	1060
Universities, approbation of Overtures respecting Learning in, 1645. See Learning,	117	Veto Act Regulations, 1837,	1069
Universities, concerning Commissions from,	567	Veto Act Regulations, 1838,	1086
Universities, Act concerning their Commissioners to the Assembly,	560	Veto Act Regulations, note respecting the re-transmission of the Overture anent, 1839,	1097
Universities, anent Commissions from,	773, 781	Veto Act Regulations, note respecting the re-transmission of the Overtures anent, 1840,	1103
Universities, concerning the promoting of religion and learning in,	532	Veto Act Regulations, re-transmission of, 1842,	1128
Universities, Act concerning the form of a Commission from,	563	Vindication of the Church of Scotland from the calumny of Thomas Gipps,	270
Universities, form of Commission from, 1726,	584	Visitation of Families by Ministers, directions regarding,	426
Universities, recommendation of Overtures from the Commissioners of, 1647, viz., visitation of		Visitation of Kirks,	21
		Visitation of Parishes, Act anent,	299
		Visitation of Schools,	21
		Visitation of Schools, injunction respecting the,	923

	PAGE		PAGE
Visitation of Schools recommended, . . .	163	Westminster Assembly, the Assembly's Answer	
Visitations, anent Presbyterial, . . .	395	to their Commissioners at, 1645, . . .	134
Visitations on the North and South side of Tay,		Westminster Assembly, Letter to the, 1646, . . .	146
instructions to the Commission for, . . .	232	Westminster Assembly,—Confession approved	
Visiting of Synod Books, Standing Order anent		and adopted by the General Assembly, . . .	158
the, 1841, . . .	1111	Westminster Assembly, Letter from the, 1648, . . .	166
Visitors of Synod Books, directions to the, . . .	480	Westminster Assembly, Letter to the, 1648, . . .	186
Visitors of Synod Books, directions to, . . .	562	Westminster Assembly, renewal of the Commis-	
		sion to the Commissioners to the, 1648, . . .	196
WALES, Prince of—Address to him on his Mar-		Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism ap-	
riage, . . .	848	proved of, . . .	168
Wales, Princess of, Act enjoining prayer for the,	849	Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism ap-	
War against France, Address to his Majesty on		proved of, . . .	171
the Declaration of, 1756, . . .	724	Widows and Orphans of Ministers, recomend-	
Warning addressed to Noblemen, Barons, Gen-		ation concerning a Fund for maintaining the,	520
tlemen, Burghs, Ministers, and Commons of		Widows and Orphans of Ministers—time for con-	
Scotland; as also to the Scottish armies, re-		tributing to the Fund prolonged, . . .	564
specting present dangers, 1645, . . .	123	Widows and Orphans of Ministers, Act reviv-	
Warning and Declaration by the Assembly to		a former recommendation for raising a Fund	
members of the Kirk, regarding present dan-		for the, 1735, . . .	631
gers and duties, 1649, . . .	203	Widows of Ministers, Act concerning the	
Warning and Admonition to the People of Scot-		Fund for the Provision of the, 1745, . . .	680
land by the Commission of Assembly, March,		Widows of Ministers, Act concerning the Fund	
1798, . . .	1158	for a Provision to the, 1747, . . .	693
Weddings, Penny, recommendation against		Wigton and Stranraer, certain Parishes annexed	
abuses at, . . .	531	to the Presbyteries of, 1699, . . .	278
Weem, appointment of the Presbytery of, . . .	1058	Wilson, Mr Gabriel, Act concerning a Sermon	
Westminster Assembly, Assembly's Answer to		preached by, . . .	565
the, 1644, . . .	105	Witchcraft, &c., Conference of Ministers, Law-	
Westminster Assembly—Approval of their Pro-		yers, and Physicians, concerning, . . .	216
positions concerning Kirk Government and		Witches, Act against, . . .	44
Ordination, . . .	121	Worship of God, against innovations in the,	418
Westminster Assembly, Commission to those		Worship, Pastoral Letter, relative to Family,	
who were sent to the, . . .	94	1836, . . .	1084
Westminster Assembly—Commission of Mi-		Worship, Recommendation concerning Family,	451
nisters and Elders thereto renewed, 1645, . . .	131	YORK, Duke of, Address to his Majesty, on the	
Westminster Assembly—Commission of Mi-		Marriage of the, . . .	838
nisters and Elders thereto renewed, 1646, . . .	143	York, Duke of, Address to his Majesty, on the	
Westminster Assembly—Commissioners thereto		Death of the, . . .	999
re-appointed, 1647, . . .	161	Youth to be instructed in the principles of religion, . . .	384
Westminster Assembly, Declaration of English		Yule-Day, Act for censuring the observances of, . . .	128
Parliament anent the calling of the, . . .	77	ZETLAND, Act in favour of the Presbytery of, . . .	
Westminster Assembly, Letter from the, 1643, . . .	82	1700, . . .	293
Westminster Assembly, Letter to, 1643, . . .	90	Zetland and Orkney, Presbyteries joined to the	
Westminster Assembly, Letter from the Commis-		Provincial of Caithness, . . .	140
sioners sent to the, 1644, . . .	101	Zetland, appointment of the Synod of, . . .	1009
Westminster Assembly, renovation of the Com-		Zetland, Caithness and Orkney joined in one	
mission to those who went to the, 1644, . . .	ib.	Synod, 1704, . . .	326
Westminster Assembly, Letter from the, 1644, . . .	103	Zetland, Commission to visit, . . .	295
Westminster Assembly, Letter from the,		Zetland, Presbytery of—Act disjoining it from	
1645, . . .	113	the Synod of Orkney and Caithness, 1648, . . .	191
Westminster Assembly, Letter from the Commis-		Zetland, division of the Presbytery of, . . .	1009
sioners sent to the, 1645, . . .	ib.	Zetland, the half of the ministers in that Presby-	
Westminster Assembly, the Assembly's Letter to		tery only to keep the Provincial Assembly, . . .	148
the, 1645, . . .	131		

INDEX OF PROPER NAMES.

- ABERNETHIE, Mr John, pretended**
 Bishop of Caithness, 12
Adair, Mr William, 87
Adams, Mr John, 678
Adamson, Mr John, 3, 159, 194
Adamson, Mr John, Preacher, 506
Adamson, Dr John, 857
Airds, Lord of, 204
Alston, Mr James, 573
Anderson, Mr Alexander, 635
Annandale, William Earl of, (afterwards Marquis,) 301, 381, 450
Armine, Sir William, 77
Arnot, Dr Robert, 844, 845
Arran, Earl of, 180
Athol, John, Duke of, 459, 485

BAILLIE, Mr Robert, 44, 52, 71, 89, 84, 101, 144, 161, 196, 220
Bain, Mr James, 763
Baird, Dr George, 877, 878, 879, 923, 1010
Balcanquell, Mr Walter, Dean of Durham, 40
Ballantyne, Mr Adam, pretended Bishop of Aberdeen, 10
Balmerino, Lord, 144, 161, 196
Bannatyne, Mr John, 246, 256
Bathgate, Mr James, 707
Belhaven, Lord, 1012, 1018, 1022, 1028, 1042, 1057, 1068, 1076, 1092, 1098, 1104
Black, Mr Robert, 499
Blair, Mr Alexander, 4
Blair, Mr David, 227, 234, 292
Blair, Mr David, Separatist, 505
Blair, Mr Robert, 71, 137, 171
Blair, Solicitor-General, (President,) 1154
Bonar, Mr James, 3, 110
Bond, Mr William, 77, 81, 82, 86
Boreland, Mr Francis, 291
Borthwick, Mr Eleazar, 94
Boston, Mr Thomas, 732
Bourignon, M. A., 306
Boyd, Mr William, 225
Boyd, Mr Zachary, 159, 194
Brown, Dr Andrew, 933, 934
Brown, Mr James, 795
Brown, Mr John, 58, 78
Brunton, Dr Alexander, 986, 987, 996
Burges, Mr Cornelius, 85, 104, 115
Bute, Earl of, 742, 747
Bute, Marquis of, 1112
Byfield, Mr Adoniram, 85, 104, 115, 167

CALAMY, Mr, 220
Calderwood, Mr David, 171
Campbell, Mr Neil, pretended Bishop of the Isles, 11
Campbell, Dr John, 964, 965, 1163
Campbell, Professor George, 638
Campbell, Mr Niel, Glasgow, 644
Carlyle, Dr Alexander, 780
Carmichael, Lord, 221, 235, 246, 256, 267, 277
Carmichell, Mr James, 5
Carstares, Mr W., 383, 422, 498, 502
Carteret, Lord, 544
Cassils, Earl of, 89, 94, 113, 196
Cathcart, Charles Lord, 721, 722, 728, 731, 735, 738, 741, 746, 752, 785, 786, 788, 790
Chalmers, Dr Thomas, 1019
Cockburn, Mr William, 87
Colvin, Dr Robert, 1042
Cook, Dr George, 978, 992, 1000
Cook, Dr John, 950, 953
Cook, Mr John, 1027
Crawfurd, Mr Thomas, 159, 194
Crichton, Mr W., 258
Cromarty, Earl of, 325
Cumberland, Duke of, 686, 690
Cuning, Dr Patrick, 700, 724, 725
Cunningham, Mr Gabriel, 221

DALGLEISH, Mr Alexander, 291
Dalhousie, George Earl of, 794, 796, 800, 804, 805, 808
Daling, Mr Alexander, 707
Dalrymple, Dr William, 807
Dalrymple, Mr Robert, 792
Dalzel, Professor Andrew, 833
Darley, Henry, Esq., 77
Dartmouth, Earl of, 460
Davidson, Mr Archibald, 128
Dickson, Dr David, 1000, 1002, 1018
Dickson, Mr David, 171
Douglas, Mr Robert, 89, 94, 96, 135, 144, 161, 164, 196
Drew, Mr Joseph, 270
Drysdale, Dr John, 799, 820
Duguid, Mr William, 505
Duncan, Dr Andrew, 911
Dundas, David, Esq., 311
Dundas, John, Esq., 324
Dundas, Mr Henry, 837, 843
Dunfermling, Earl of, 52
Dunlop, Mr A., 1110
Durham, Mr James, 213

ELSYNGE, Mr Henry, 78

Errol, Earl of, 954, 960
Erskine, Mr Ebenezer, 624, 625, 629, 646, 649, 653
Erskine, Col. John, 635
Erskine, Mr Ralph, 623, 646, 649, 653

FAIRLIE, Mr James, pretended Bishop of Lismoir, 11
Farquhar, Mr James, 424
Fernie, Mr Thomas, 707
Findlater, Earl of, 566, 585
Finlayson, Dr James, 889, 890
Fisher, Mr James, 624, 625, 629, 646, 649, 653
Forbes, Lord, 990, 994, 999, 1003, 1005, 1008

GARDEN, Dr George, 307
Geddes, Mr John, Culross, 623
Gerard, Dr Gilbert, 894
Gib, Mr John, 623
Gibb, Dr Gavin, 957, 958
Gibson, Mr Alexander, 3
Gilchrist, Mr James, 506
Gillespie, Mr George, 89, 94, 101, 144, 148, 161, 196
Gillespie, Mr James, 801
Gillespie, Mr Thomas, 707, 708, 709, 710
Gipps, Mr Thomas, 270
Glasgow, David Earl of, 392, 398, 420, 432, 440
Glasgow, John Earl of, 757, 758, 762, 766, 772, 777, 779, 782, 783
Gordon, Mr James, Alford, 627, 635
Gordon, Dr Lewis, 946, 947
Gordon, Dr Robert, 1104, 1110
Gouge, Mr William, 167
Graham, Sir James, 1113
Grahame, Mr George, pretended Bishop of Orkney, 11, 35
Grahame, James, Montrose, 136, 140, 141, 202
Grant, Dr Patrick, 798
Grant, Mr William, 616
Grant, Dr Andrew, 913, 914
Gray, Mr John, 3, 4
Greenfield, Dr William, 851, 1160
Grierson, Mr James, 526
Grieve, Dr Henry, 817
Guthrie, Mr James, 171, 183
Guthrie, Mr James, Prelatical Preacher, 505
Guthry, Mr John, pretended Bishop of Moray, 11

- HALDANE, Dr Robert**, 1000
Halifax, Lord, 753
Hamilton, Dr George, 900
Hamilton, Mr George, Edinburgh, 278
Hamilton, Mr James, 71, 76, 87, 217
Hamilton, Mr Robert, 696
Hamilton, Mr William, 460, 477, 508, 511, 587, 594, 600
Hardy, Dr Thomas, 842
Hatcher, Thos. Esq., 77
Hawkesbury, Lord, 907, 912
Henderson, Mr Alexander, 50, 51, 52, 58, 86, 88, 89, 94, 101, 113, 144, 190
Henderson, Mr Hugh, 87
Henry, Dr Robert, 787
Hepburn, Mr John, 240, 255, 332, 385, 506
Herle, Mr Charles, 167
Hill, Dr George, 831, 832
Holderness, Lord, 723
Hope, Sir Thomas, 73
Hopetoun, Charles Earl of, 560
Hopetoun, John Earl of, 718
Hunter, Dr Andrew, 838, 839
Hunter, Mr Daniel, Carnock, 623
Hunter, Mr David, Saline, 707
Hutchison, Mr George, 87, 217
Hyndford, Earl of, 312
Hyndford, John Earl of, 649, 653
Hyndman, Dr John, 743, 744

INCHQUEEN, Lord, 204
Inglis, Dr John, 697, 898

JAFFRAY, Mr William, 115
Johnston, Mr Archibald, 30, 35, 89, 94, 141, 161, 196
Jones, Captain, 180
Justice, Mr James, 464

KEITH, Dr A., 1124
Ker, Mr Andrew, 76, 86, 115, 140
Ker, Mr John, 790, 791
Kerr, Mr Abraham, 792
Kennedy, Mr Hugh, 223, 231
Kinloch, Mr Robert, 693
Knox, Mr Robert, 846

LAMONT, Dr D., 984
Lanark, Earl of, 203
Lauderdale, Earl of, 144, 161
Law, Mr John, 227, 245
Lawrie, Mr Robert, 217
Lee, Dr John, 1002
Leechman, Professor William, 676
Lennox, Duke of, 180
Leslie, Mr George, 115
Leven, Alexander Earl of, 661, 663, 669, 673, 678, 683, 691, 695, 698, 701, 704, 706, 716
Leven, David Earl of, 815, 819, 822, 824, 825, 827, 830, 831, 833, 835, 840, 843, 847, 850, 856, 858, 865, 875, 882

Lindsay, Mr Alexander, pretended Bishop of Dunkeld, 12
Lindsay, Mr David, 76
Lindsay, Mr David, pretended Bishop of Edinburgh, 10
Lindsay, Mr Patrick, pretended Archbishop of Glasgow, 10
Lining, Mr Thomas, 225
Linning, Mr Thomas, 500
Liston, Mr John, 707
Livingstoun, Mr John, 71, 171
Lothian, Earl of, 235
Lothian, Marquis of, 626, 630, 633, 642, 646
Loudoun, Earl of, 543, 570, 578, 595, 610, 613
Lumsden, Mr John, 685, 686, 687

MACKAIL, Mr Hugh, 217
Mackail, Mr Matthew, 87
Mackenzie, Mr Colin, of Rossend, 505
Mair, Mr Thomas, 623, 646, 649, 653
Maitland, Lord, 67, 89, 94, 101, 113
Makellar, Dr Angus, 1099, 1100
Makghie, Mr J., 1153
Mar, Earl of, 486
Marchmont, Earl of, 312
Marshall, Mr Stephen, 77
Maxwell, Mr John, pretended Bishop of Ross, 10
Mearns, Dr Duncan, 981
Meek, Dr James, 848, 849
Meiklejohn, Dr Hugh, 921, 922, 998
Melbourne, Viscount, 1013, 1019
Meldrum, Mr George, 269, 318, 322
Melville, Earl of, 222
Middleton, Mr David, 505
Mitchell, Mr William, 441, 470, 471, 475, 487, 545, 548, 580
Moncreiff, Mr Alexander, 625, 629, 646, 649, 653
Moncreiff, Mr John, 168
Moncreiff, Sir Henry, 908
Moncreiff, Lord, 1045
Monro, George, 203, 204
Montrose, Duke of, 496
Moodie, Dr Wm., 867, 868, 873
Morton, Earl of, 966, 973, 980, 982, 985, 989
Muir, Dr William, 1022, 1077, 1079, 1092
Murray, Mr Robert, 3
M'Farlan, Dr Duncan, 969, 970, 1163
M'Farlan, Dr Patrick, 1029, 1030
M'Knight, Dr Thomas, 975, 976
M'Knight, Dr James, 778
M'Lelland, Mr John, 71, 87, 171
M'Millan, Mr John, 332, 506
M'Morine, Dr William, 932
M'Neil, Mr John, 506
M'Neillie, Mr John, 424

NAIRN, Mr David, 421
Nairn, Mr Thomas, 646, 649, 653

Napier, Lord, 887, 893, 895, 899, 901, 906, 911, 915, 917, 924, 929, 932, 939, 943, 948
Nevey, Mr John, 159
Newcastle, Duke of, 579, 596, 643, 684, 692
Nicoll, Dr Francis, 916
Nicolson, Mr Thomas, 4
North, Lord, 816
Nye, Mr Philip, 77

ORMOND, Marquis of, 204
Oswald, Dr James, 760, 761

PARK, Mr Robert, 245, 246
Paton, Mr Robert, 703
Pearson, Mr Alexander, 3
Peel, Sir Robert, 983, 991
Pelham, Lord, 888
Portland, Duke of, 859, 866, 876, 883
Primrose, Mr James, 86
Pringle, Mr Robert, 301

QUEENSBERRY, Marquis of, 449

RAMSAY, Mr Andrew, 3
Ramsay, Mr James, 662
Ramsay, Mr Robert, Glasgow, 71, 140
Ranken, Dr Alexander, 926, 927
Richardson, Mr Andrew, 707
Richie, Mr James, 3, 4
Rig, Mr John, 37
Ritchie, Dr David, 941, 943
Ritchie, Dr William, 884, 885
Robertson, Dr William, 754, 755, 756
Roborough, Mr Henry, 85, 104, 115, 167
Ross, Lord, 325
Roths, John Earl of, 495, 507, 513, 520, 524, 533, 541
Roths, Lord, 2
Row, Mr John, 3, 159, 171, 194
Rowan, Mr Robert, 511, 518
Roxburgh, Duke of, 525, 571
Rule, Mr Gilbert, 234
Russell, Lord John, 1076
Rutherford, Mr Samuel, 89, 94, 101, 113, 144, 161, 196
Ruthland, Earl of, 77
Ryder, Hon. R., 919, 925

SANDILANDS, Mr Thomas, 3, 4
Sandwich, Earl of, 759
Seafeld, Earl of, 277, 289, 316, 382
Seaforth, Earl of, 126
Shaw, Mr David, 788
Shaw, Mr Henry, 322
Sheriffs, Dr James, 908, 909
Shields, Mr Alexander, 225, 291
Sidmouth, Viscount, 940, 944, 955, 962, 967, 974
Sidserfe, Mr Thomas, pretended Bishop of Galloway, 10
Simpson, Mr Patrick, 221, 246, 247, 255

- Simson, Mr John, 500, 503, 511,
 518, 591, 603, 607
 Singer, Dr William, 978, 993,
 1005
 Smith, Mr James, 562
 Smith, Mr John, 171, 217
 Southwell, Mr Edward, 499
 Spalding, Mr John, 235
 Spang, Mr William, 52
 Spence, Mr John, 707
 Spencer, Earl, 902
 Spottiswood, Mr John, pretended
 Archbishop of St Andrews, 10
 Stark, Mr Robert, Kinross, 623,
 707, 708
 Stark, Mr Robert, Torryburn,
 707, 708
 Steedman, Mr Robert, 707
 Stirling, Dr John, 1011, 1023
 Stirling, Mr John, 420
 Stobo, Mr Archibald, 291
 Stoddart, Mr James, 707
 Suffolk, Earl of, 797

 TARBAT, Lord, 317
 Taylor, Mr John, 506
 Taylor, Dr William, 860, 861
 Taylor, Dr Wm, Jun., 903, 904
 Thomson, Dr Andrew, 998
 Thomson, Mr James, Dunfer-
 line, 707
 Thomson, Mr James, Burntisland,
 649, 653
 Thomson, Dr William Aird, 1043
 Townshend, Lord, 507, 586
 Traill, Mr Robert, 217
 Traill, Dr Robert, Glasgow, 748,
 749, 750
 Traquair, Earl of, 41
 Tullibardine, Lord, 257, 268
 Tweeddale, Marquis of, 669, 679
 Twisse, Mr William, 85, 104,
 115

 VANE, Sir Henry, 77

 WALES, George Prince of, 754,
 848
 Wales, Princess of, 849
 Wallace, Dr James, 1014, 1015
 Wallace, Mr Robert, 671
 Wardlaw, Mr James, 623
 Watson, Mr George, Merchant,
 Edinburgh, 510
 Webster, Mr James, 500, 503,
 511, 518
 Wedderburn, Mr Alexander, 3
 Wedderburn, Mr James, pretended
 Bishop of Dunblane, 10
 Weir, Mr John, 87
 Welsh, Dr David, 1114, 1115,
 1141, 1149
 Wemyss, John Earl of, 45
 White, Mr John, 85, 115
 Whitson, Dr George, 1007
 Whytfoord, Mr Walter, pre-
 tended Bishop of Brechin, 10
 Wilkie, Mr Thomas, 302, 326
 Williamson, Mr D., 314
 Wilson, Mr William, 624, 625,
 629, 646, 649, 653
 Winname, Mr Robert, 4
 Wishart, Mr William, 598, 599,
 680
 Wishart Mr George, 690,

 YORK, Duke of, 838, 999
 Yorke, C., 896

ROYAL COMMISSIONERS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

- 1638, Marquis of Hamilton
 1639, John Earl of Traquair
 1640,
 1641, John Earl of Wemyss
 1642, Charles Earl of Dunfermline
 1643, Sir John Hope of Craighall

 1690, John Lord Carmichael
 1692, Earl of Lothian
 1694, John Lord Carmichael
 1695, John Lord Carmichael
 1696, John Lord Carmichael
 1697, John Lord Carmichael
 1698, John Lord Carmichael
 1699, John Lord Carmichael
 1700, James Viscount Seafield
 1701, William Earl of Annandale
 1702, Patrick Earl of Marchmont
 1703, James Earl of Seafield
 1704, William Lord Ross
 1705, William Marquis of Annandale
 1706, David Earl of Glasgow
 1707, David Earl of Glasgow
 1708, David Earl of Glasgow
 1709, David Earl of Glasgow
 1710, David Earl of Glasgow
 1711, William Marquis of Annandale
 1712, John Duke of Athol
 1713, John Duke of Athol
 1714, John Duke of Athol
 1715, John Earl of Rothes
 1716, John Earl of Rothes
 1717, John Earl of Rothes
 1718, John Earl of Rothes
 1719, John Earl of Rothes
 1720, John Earl of Rothes
 1721, John Earl of Rothes
 1722, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1723, Charles Earl of Hopetoun
 1724, James Earl of Findlater and Seafield
 1725, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1726, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1727, James Earl of Findlater and Seafield
 1728, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1729, David Earl of Buchan
 1730, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1731, Hugh Earl of Loudoun
 1732, William Marquis of Lothian
 1733, William Marquis of Lothian
 1734, William Marquis of Lothian
 1735, William Marquis of Lothian
 1736, William Marquis of Lothian
 1737, William Marquis of Lothian
 1738, William Marquis of Lothian
 1739, John Earl of Hyndford
 1740, John Earl of Hyndford
 1741, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1742, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1743, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1744, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1745, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1746, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1747, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1748, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1749, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1750, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1751, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1752, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1753, Alexander Earl of Leven
 1754, John Earl of Hopetoun
 1755, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1756, Charles Lord Cathcart

- 1757, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1758, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1759, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1760, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1761, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1762, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1763, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1764, John Earl of Glasgow
 1765, John Earl of Glasgow
 1766, John Earl of Glasgow
 1767, John Earl of Glasgow
 1768, John Earl of Glasgow
 1769, John Earl of Glasgow
 1770, John Earl of Glasgow
 1771, John Earl of Glasgow
 1772, John Earl of Glasgow
 1773, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1774, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1775, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1776, Charles Lord Cathcart
 1777, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1778, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1779, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1780, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1781, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1782, George Earl of Dalhousie
 1783, David Earl of Leven
 1784, David Earl of Leven
 1785, David Earl of Leven
 1786, David Earl of Leven
 1787, David Earl of Leven
 1788, David Earl of Leven
 1789, David Earl of Leven
 1790, David Earl of Leven
 1791, David Earl of Leven
 1792, David Earl of Leven
 1793, David Earl of Leven
 1794, David Earl of Leven
 1795, David Earl of Leven
 1796, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1797, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1798, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1799, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1800, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1801, David Earl of Leven and Melville
 1802, Francis Lord Napier
 1803, Francis Lord Napier
 1804, Francis Lord Napier
 1805, Francis Lord Napier
 1806, Francis Lord Napier
 1807, Francis Lord Napier
 1808, Francis Lord Napier
 1809, Francis Lord Napier
 1810, Francis Lord Napier
 1811, Francis Lord Napier
 1812, Francis Lord Napier
 1813, Francis Lord Napier
 1814, Francis Lord Napier
 1815, Francis Lord Napier
 1816, Francis Lord Napier
 1817, William Earl of Errol
 1818, William Earl of Errol
 1819, George Earl of Morton
 1820, George Earl of Morton
 1821, George Earl of Morton
 1822, George Earl of Morton
 1823, George Earl of Morton
 1824, George Earl of Morton
 1825, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1826, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1827, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1828, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1829, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1830, James Ochoncar Lord Forbes
 1831, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1832, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1833, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1834, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1835, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1836, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1837, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1838, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1839, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1840, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1841, Robert Montgomery Lord Belhaven
 1842, John Marquis of Bute

MODERATORS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

- 1638, Mr Alex. Henderson, minister of Leuchars
 1639, Mr David Dickson, minister of Irvine
 1640, Mr Andrew Ramsay, minister at Edinburgh
 1641, Mr Andrew Ramsay, minister at Edinburgh
 1642, Mr Robert Douglas, minister at Edinburgh
 1643, Mr Alex. Henderson, minister at Edinburgh,
 formerly at Leuchars
 1644, Mr James Bonar, minister at Maybole
 1645, Mr Robert Douglas, minister at Edinburgh
 1646, Mr Robert Blair, minister at St Andrews
 1647, Mr Robert Douglas, minister at Edinburgh
 1648, Mr George Gillespie, minister at Edinburgh
 1649, Mr Robert Douglas, minister at Edinburgh
 1690, Mr Hugh Kennedy, minister at Edinburgh
 1692,
 1694, Mr John Law, minister at Edinburgh
 1695, Mr Patrick Simpson, minister at Renfrew
 1696, Mr Patrick Simpson, minister at Renfrew
 1697, Mr William Crichton, minister at Edinburgh
 1698, Mr George Meldrum, minister at Edinburgh
 1699, Mr George Hamilton, minister at Edinburgh
 1700, Mr David Blair, minister at Edinburgh
 1701, Mr Thomas Wilkie, one of the ministers of
 Canongate, Edinburgh
 1702, Mr David Williamson, one of the ministers
 of West Kirk, Edinburgh
 1703, Mr George Meldrum, Professor of Divinity,
 Edinburgh
 1704, Mr Thomas Wilkie, Canongate, Edinburgh
 1705, Mr William Carstairs, Principal of the Col-
 lege of Edinburgh
 1706, Mr William Wisbart, one of the ministers of
 South Leith

- 1707, Mr John Stirling, Principal of the College of Glasgow
 1708, Mr William Carstairs, Principal of the College of Edinburgh
 1709, Mr John Currie, Haddington
 1710, Mr William Mitchel, Edinburgh
 1711, Mr William Carstairs, Principal of the College of Edinburgh
 1712, Mr William Hamilton
 1713, Mr William Wishart, South Leith
 1714, Mr William Mitchel, Edinburgh
 1715, Mr William Carstairs, Principal of the College of Edinburgh
 1716, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1717, Mr William Mitchel, Edinburgh
 1718, Mr William Wishart, Principal of Edinburgh College
 1719, Mr James Grierson, Edinburgh
 1720, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1721, Mr Thomas Black, Perth
 1722, Mr William Mitchell, Edinburgh
 1723, Mr James Smith, Cramond
 1724, Mr William Wishart, Principal of Edinburgh College
 1725, Mr James Alston, Dirleton
 1726, Mr William Mitchell, Edinburgh
 1727, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1728, Mr William Wishart, Principal of Edinburgh College
 1729, Mr James Alston, Dirleton
 1730, Mr William Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1731, Mr James Smith, Edinburgh
 1732, Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of Glasgow College
 1733, Mr John Gowdie, Edinburgh
 1734, Mr James Gordon, Alford
 1735, Mr Alexander Anderson, St Andrews
 1736, Mr Lauchlan M'Intosh, Errol
 1737, Mr Neil Campbell, Principal of Glasgow College
 1738, Mr James Ramsay, Kelso
 1739, Mr James Bannatyne, Edinburgh
 1740, Mr George Logan, Edinburgh
 1741, Mr James Ramsay, Kelso
 1742, Mr Thomas Tullidolph, Principal of St Leonard's College, St Andrews
 1743, Mr Robert Wallace, Edinburgh
 1744, Mr John Adams, Dalrymple
 1745, Dr William Wishart, Principal of Edinburgh College
 1746, Mr John Lumsden, Professor of Divinity, King's College, Aberdeen
 1747, Mr Robert Kinloch, Edinburgh
 1748, Mr George Wishart, Edinburgh
 1749, Mr Patrick Cuning, Edinburgh
 1750, Mr Robert Paton, Renfrew
 1751, Mr John Lumsden, Professor of Divinity, King's College, Aberdeen
 1752, Dr Patrick Cuning, Edinburgh
 1753, Mr Alexander Webster
 1754, Mr Robert Hamilton, Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh
 1755, Mr George Reid, St Evox
 1756, Dr Patrick Cumming, Professor of Church History, Edinburgh
 1757, Mr William Leechman, Professor of Divinity, Glasgow
 1758, Mr Thomas Turnbull, Borthwick
 1759, Dr George Kay, Edinburgh
 1760, Dr Robert Hamilton, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1761, Dr John Hyndman, West Church, Edinburgh
 1762, Dr Robert Traill, Professor of Divinity, Glasgow
 1763, Dr William Robertson, Principal of the University, Edinburgh
 1764, Dr Alexander Gerard, Professor of Divinity, Marischal College, Aberdeen
 1765, Mr James Oswald, Methven
 1766, Mr John Hamilton, Glasgow
 1767, Mr James Morrison, Principal of the New College, St Andrews
 1768, Dr Gilbert Hamilton, Cramond
 1769, Dr James M'Knight, Maybole
 1770, Dr Alexander Carlyle, Inveresk
 1771, Mr Robert Walker, Edinburgh
 1772, Mr Adam Fergusson, Moulin
 1773, Dr John Drysdale, Edinburgh
 1774, Dr Robert Henry, Edinburgh
 1775, Dr David Shaw, Coylton
 1776, Dr John Ker, Forfar
 1777, Mr James Brown, Edinburgh
 1778, Dr Patrick Grant, Moray
 1779, Dr James Gillespie, St Andrews
 1780, Dr Hary Spens, Wemyss
 1781, Dr William Dalrymple, Ayr
 1782, Dr Jos. M'Cormick, Prestonpans
 1783, Dr Henry Grieve, Dalkeith
 1784, Dr John Drysdale, Edinburgh. (Dr John M'Farlane, Edinburgh, was also proposed.)
 1785, Sir H. Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart., West Church, Edinburgh
 1786, Mr Duncan Shaw, Aberdeen
 1787, Mr Robert Liston, Aberdeen
 1788, Dr Archibald Davidson, Principal of the University, Glasgow
 1789, Dr George Hill, Professor of Divinity, St Andrews
 1790, Dr John Walker, Colinton, Professor of Natural History, Edinburgh
 1791, Dr Robert Small, Dundee
 1792, Dr Andrew Hunter, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1793, Dr Thomas Hardy, Professor of Church History, Edinburgh
 1794, Dr Robert Arnot, Professor of Divinity, St Andrews
 1795, Dr James Meek, Cambuslang
 1796, Dr William Greenfield, Edinburgh, and Professor of Rhetoric there
 1797, Dr John Adamson, St Andrews
 1798, Dr William Taylor, Glasgow
 1799, Dr William Moodie, Edinburgh
 1800, Dr George H. Baird, Principal of the College, Edinburgh
 1801, Dr William Ritchie, Kilwinning
 1802, Dr James Finlayson, Edinburgh
 1803, Dr Gilbert Gerard, Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen
 1804, Dr John Inglis, Edinburgh
 1805, Dr George Hamilton, Gladsmuir
 1806, Dr William Taylor, jun., Glasgow

- 1807, Dr James Sheriffs, Aberdeen
 1808, Dr Andrew Grant, Kilmarnock
 1809, Dr Francis Nicoll, Mains and Strathmartin
 1810, Dr Hugh Meiklejohn, Abercorn
 1811, Dr Alexander Ranken, Glasgow
 1812, Dr William Macmorine, Carluverock
 1813, Dr Andrew Brown, Edinburgh
 1814, Dr David Ritchie, Edinburgh
 1815, Dr Lewis Gordon, Drainie
 1816, Dr John Cook, Professor of Divinity, St Andrews
 1817, Dr Gavin Gibb, Glasgow
 1818, Dr John Campbell, Edinburgh
 1819, Dr Duncan M'Farlane, Drymen
 1820, Dr Thomas Macknight, Edinburgh
 1821, Dr Duncan Mearns, Professor of Divinity, King's College, Aberdeen. (Dr George Cook of Laurencekirk was also put in nomination, but Dr Mearns was elected by a majority of 23.)
 1822, Dr David Lamont, Kirkpatrick-Durham. (Dr Cook was again nominated, but Dr Lamont was elected by a considerable majority.)
 1823, Dr Alexander Brunton, Professor of Oriental Languages, Edinburgh
 1824, Dr Andrew Duncan, Ratho
 1825, Dr George Cook, Laurencekirk
 1826, Dr Thomas Taylor, Tibbermore
 1827, Dr Robert Haldane, Principal of St Mary's College, St Andrews
 1828, Dr Stevenson M'Gill, Professor of Divinity, Glasgow
 1829, Dr Patrick Forbes, Old Machar, and Professor of Humanity, King's College, Aberdeen
 1830, Dr William Singer, Kirkpatrick-Juxta
 1831, Dr James Wallace, Whitekirk
 1832, Dr Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh
 1833, Dr John Stirling, Craigie
 1834, Dr Patrick M'Farlan, Greenock
 1835, Dr William Aird Thomson, Perth
 1836, Dr Norman M'Leod, Glasgow
 1837, Dr Matthew Gardiner, Bothwell. (Dr John Lee, Edinburgh, was also put in nomination, but Dr Gardiner was elected by a majority of 262 to 59.)
 1838, Dr William Muir, Edinburgh
 1839, Dr Henry Duncan, Ruthwell
 1840, Dr Angus Makellar, Pencaitland. (He was opposed by Dr Alexander Hill, Dailly, but elected by a majority of 197 to 147.)
 1841, Dr Robert Gordon, Edinburgh
 1842, Dr David Welsh, Professor of Church History, Edinburgh

CLERKS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, &c.—PROCURATORS AND AGENTS FOR THE CHURCH.

1638. Mr (afterwards Sir) Archibald Johnston was chosen Clerk and Procurator to the Church, and Mr Robert Dalgleish appointed Agent.
 1642. Mr Johnston was allowed to adjoin any to himself, or depute any that he might think fit in the offices of Clerk and Procurator.
 1643. This allowance was confirmed.
 1647. }
 1648. } The Acts of these years appear to have been extracted by Mr A. Ker.
 1690. Mr John Spalding was chosen Clerk, and Mr John Blair Agent.
 1694. Mr Robert Park, Advocate, was Clerk to the Assembly.
 1695. } In consequence of Mr Park's decease, Mr John Bannatyne, Minister of Lanark, was appointed
 1696. } to act as Clerk to this Assembly, and Mr Nicol Spence to assist him.
 1697. Mr John Bannatyne was continued Clerk, *pro tempore*.
 1698. Mr John Bannatyne was chosen Clerk to this Assembly.
 1699. Mr John Bannatyne was chosen Clerk to this Assembly.
 1700. Mr John Bannatyne was chosen Clerk to this Assembly.
 1701. Mr David Dundas, Advocate, was chosen Clerk; and Mr Nicol Spence continued in the office of Sub-Clerk to the Assembly and Commission thereof.
 1703. Mr John Dundas of Philipstoun, Advocate, was chosen Clerk to the Assembly and Commission, in room of Mr David Dundas, deceased.
 1706. The said Mr John Dundas appointed Advocate in Ordinary and Procurator for the Church.
 1708. Mr Nicol Spence conjoined with Mr John Blair as Agent.
 1711. Mr Nicol Spence appears to have been sole Agent.
 1731. Mr William Grant, Advocate, was elected Principal Clerk and Procurator, in room of Mr John Dundas, deceased.
 1738. Mr Robert M'Intosh was conjoined with Mr Nicol Spence in the offices of Agent and Sub-Clerk.
 1743. Mr Nicol Spence having died, Mr John Baillie, W.S., was elected conjunct with Mr Robert M'Intosh, the former taking the Agent's, and the latter the Sub-Clerk's department.
 1746. In consequence of the appointment of Mr William Grant to the office of his Majesty's Advocate, the Assembly made choice of Mr George Wishart, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, to be Principal Clerk, and Mr David Dalrymple, Advocate, to be Procurator for the Church.
 1753. Mr M'Intosh having died, Mr James Edmonstone, Writer in Edinburgh, was conjoined with Mr

- Baillie; Mr Baillie to act as Agent, and Mr Edmonstone to take the office of Sub-Clerk to the Assembly, and Clerk to the Committee for Managing the Royal Bounty.
1778. Dr John Drysdale, Edinburgh, was conjoined with Dr George Wishart in the office of Principal Clerk. Dr Wishart died previous to the Assembly of 1783.
1778. Mr William Robertson, Advocate, was appointed Procurator for the Church, in room of Mr David Dalrymple, (Lord Westhall,) promoted to the Bench.
1791. In consequence of the death of Mr Edmonstone, who for many years had held the offices both of Agent and Sub-Clerk, Dr William Gloag, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, was appointed Sub-Clerk of Assembly, and Clerk to the Committee for Managing the Royal Bounty; and Mr George Cairncross, Writer in Edinburgh, was appointed Agent for the Church.
1789. The office of Principal Clerk being vacant, Professor Andrew Dalzel, Edinburgh, was elected; Dr Alexander Carlyle, Minister of Inveresk, was also put in nomination, and on the roll being called, the majority of the votes appeared to be in his favour; but, after a long and anxious scrutiny, the election was declared to have fallen on Professor Dalzel.
1795. Mr William Murray, Writer in Edinburgh, was elected Agent for the Church.
1802. On the death of Dr Gloag, Mr Thomas Macknight, Leith, and Mr David Ritchie, Edinburgh, were appointed conjunct Sub-Clerks; Dr Ritchie resigned in 1808.
1806. Mr Robertson, (afterwards Lord Robertson,) having been promoted, Mr John Connell, Advocate, was elected Procurator. He was opposed by Mr James Moncreiff, Advocate.
1807. Mr Andrew Duncan, Ratho, was appointed to the office of Principal Clerk on the death of Professor Dalzel. He was opposed by Dr Robert Dickson, South Leith.
1809. Mr John Murray, W.S., was conjoined with his father in the office of Agent for the Church; he became sole Agent in 1825.
1826. Dr John Lee, Edinburgh, was elected Sub-Clerk, conjunct with Dr Macknight.
1828. On the death of Dr Duncan, Dr Lee was elected Principal Clerk of Assembly. At the same time, Mr Alexander Lockhart Simpson, Minister of Kirknewton, was elected Sub-Clerk, conjunct with Dr Macknight; he was opposed by Mr John Murray, Agent for the Church.
1831. On the death of Sir John Connell, Mr Robert Bell, Advocate, was appointed Procurator for the Church; he was opposed by Messrs R. Whigham and George Grant, Advocates.
1837. Mr William Young, W.S., was elected Agent for the Church, in room of Mr Murray, deceased; he was opposed by Messrs Harry Inglis and James Crawford, Jun, W.S. The votes on that occasion stood as follows:—For Mr Young, 153; for Mr Inglis, 110; for Mr Crawford, 68.

THE END.

ERRATUM.

Page 683, sixth line from the foot of the page, *for* "did not authorise the commission," *read* "did not authorise the Commissioner."

- Baillie; Mr Baillie to act as Agent, and Mr Edmonstone to take the office of Sub-Clerk to the Assembly, and Clerk to the Committee for Managing the Royal Bounty.
1778. Dr John Drysdale, Edinburgh, was conjoined with Dr George Wishart in the office of Principal Clerk. Dr Wishart died previous to the Assembly of 1783.
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